



February 28, 2022

Dear parents and guardians:

The Government of Alberta announced more changes to public health restrictions, effective March 1, 2022. The following is a summary of changes and health measures that will continue to be in place.

Masks

Northland students have not been required to wear masks since February 14, 2022. Starting March 1, 2022, the province no longer requires adults in schools to wear masks, including teachers, school staff, visitors, parents and school bus drivers. We continue to encourage masks to help protect students and staff. However, students, staff and visitors in Northland schools and facilities will make their own decisions about whether wearing a mask is right for them and those decisions should be respected.

The current isolation requirements following a positive test result have not changed. So, for instance, if a fully vaccinated student returns to school on day six (6) of their isolation with no symptoms, they must be fully masked in school for the entirety of the day and continue to do so for their full isolation period.

Provincial guidelines for schools

The province has lifted the remaining COVID-19 guidelines for schools, such as cohorts and physical distancing. After nearly two years with these health measures in place, it will take Northland schools some time to adjust their routines. Your patience while Northland schools work through these new details is appreciated.

Continued safety measures

To ensure the health and safety of Northland students, staff and communities, the following health measures will continue to be in place:

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in schools.
- Encouraging healthy habits among students and staff, such as washing and sanitizing hands and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Northland took a proactive approach against potential airborne transmission of COVID-19. In September 2021, Northland School Division upgraded filters to improve air quality and better protect students and staff against potential airborne transmission of COVID-19. The school division installed MERV 13-rated filters, which are capable of capturing particles between 0.3 micros and 1.0 with 98% efficiency.
- To lower the risk of transmission of COVID-19, all school divisions received voluntary rapid test kits and medical masks for students and staff from the Government of Alberta. Click on the website link on how to properly use an at-home rapid test <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4q7EuAbgE8>.
- Students and staff are encouraged to use the Alberta Health Daily Checklist to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. The checklist can be found at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-alberta-health-daily-checklist>.
- Visitors are not permitted in the school or central office locations without an appointment. To make an appointment contact the school or central office location directly.

Moving forward

Lifting these provincial health measures marks a big shift in how we continue to navigate COVID-19. As we move forward, we will provide more communication on next steps to bring back events that make Northland schools engaging, fun and a place where students love to come.

We thank you for your continued support during this challenging time. If anything changes with respect to the health measures we will provide more communication. If you are looking for mental health resources, please visit the Northland School Division Mental Health Resource webpage <https://www.nsd61.ca/about-us/division-news/post/covid-19-mental-health-resources>.

Sincerely,



Dr. Nancy Spencer-Poitras
Superintendent of Schools
Northland School Division