

February 5, 2021

Dear Parents,

You've likely heard on the news that yesterday morning the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) Dr Bonnie Henry and the Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside made a joint announcement outlining changes and updates to the COVID safety guidelines for K-12 schools.

Based on their announcement and a cursory read of the updated provincial guidelines from the Ministry of Education and BCCDC, there are no significant or urgent changes that we will have to make to our protocols. The primary focus on this update was on indoor mask use and we are already in compliance with the guidelines. Importantly, the ministry has not changed the requirement for the type of masks to be worn in schools, so there is no directive for triple layer masks or double-masking at this time.

In the coming weeks, we will thoroughly review the updated guidelines from the province and then update our school's Emergency COVID Plan (ECP), which we will then share before the end of the month.

Here at school we continue to monitor and alter our COVID protocols and practices as needed. Yesterday, we installed a second outdoor tent on the patio outside the Atrium to give our students additional places to gather, which in turn allows for more space to physically distance themselves.

Throughout the pandemic, we've been encouraging our students, even those in the same cohort, to do their best to physically distance when possible. To assist in our messaging, we've also installed stickers on our cafeteria benches to remind students to spread out. As always, your support and reminders to your children to follow safety protocols, including keeping distance inside or outside with or without masks, is greatly appreciated.

As part of their joint announcement yesterday, Dr Henry and Minister Whiteside re-emphasized how effective school COVID practices have been in keeping infections down among school-aged children. Also vital in the success of this endeavour is the contribution and support of our families, which we so greatly appreciate.

We would remind all our families that in the coming days and weeks with Super Bowl Sunday, the Family Day Weekend and eventually, Passover Break, how you can continue to keep our school community safe by staying home and staying within your family bubble. We really are inching toward the end of this pandemic and, with our continued vigilance and care, we can ensure better times together.

Regards,
Alex