

September 2, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of Elementary Students,

Re: Return-to-School survey results and educational support options

On August 26, 2020, the North Vancouver School District shared its [Stage 2 Restart Plan](#) with our community. The plan outlines the measures we are taking, in accordance with the recommendations of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and the Ministry of Education (MOE), to ensure a safe return to schools for all students and staff in September and throughout Stage 2 of [B.C.'s Five Stage Framework for K-12 Education](#).

While we are confident the health and safety measures and learning model outlined in our *Restart Plan* will ensure a safe and healthy learning environment in all schools, we acknowledge we have heard from families who may prefer a longer transition period to feel confident in their child returning to in-person, in-class instruction. For these students and their families, we are able to offer to them a new temporary educational support option. This option enables families to delay their child's return to full-time, in-class instruction, and without losing their child's space in their school or choice program. Details about this temporary educational support option are included in the next section.

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR NVSD ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Return to In-Person, In-Class Cohort-Based Instruction

We are pleased and excited that over 80% of families who completed our recent survey intend for their children to return to full-time face-to-face instruction in September. Highlights of our in-person, in-class elementary learning model, "The Classroom is the Cohort," can be found [HERE](#).

As we prepare to welcome our students and staff back into our schools, the primary focus has been, and will continue to be, on keeping our students and staff safe and healthy. All schools will implement enhanced [health and safety guidelines and protocols](#), including:

- A requirement for staff and students (with parental/guardian assistance) to assess their health daily and stay home if ill.
- Providing all students and staff with two reusable non-medical face masks.
- Measures to maximize physical distancing and minimize physical contact.
- Using learning groups to limit the number of different interactions students and staff have in a day.
- Increased cleaning and disinfecting frequency.
- Increased handwashing/sanitizing frequency.
- Enhanced ventilation and increased air flow.
- Encouraging and facilitating more outdoor learning opportunities.

Elementary Transition Support Option

The intent of the temporary educational support option is to maintain the student as part of their classroom cohort, support *some* educational continuity, and by a predetermined date, transition all students to their classroom cohort full-time. This option includes a combination of online district-based teacher support and in-class/cohort participation. However, it is not the same as an online learning program, nor is it intended to replace the robustness of in-person, in-class instruction.

Before choosing this option, please give careful consideration to the following:

- This option is suited to families who wish to have their child return to in-person, in-class instruction but would like more time and a more gradual transition.
- Families will be responsible for providing their child with regular and ongoing educational support at home.
- The success of a child's learning during the transition period will partially depend on the degree to which families ensure their child is engaging with learning and completing assignments.
- The learning needs of the child, including their level of independence as a learner, and a family's own availability to provide support, should be considered.
- A district-based teacher (not the classroom teacher) will support the child's online learning. For the online learning component, the child may be part of a multi-age (combined grade) and multi-school grouping of students.
- Families of students in French Immersion programs will be responsible for supporting their child's French Immersion language development to ensure a successful return to in-person instruction. The district-based teacher will not provide French Immersion language instruction in the transition option.

- The temporary educational support option will end at winter break (December 18, 2020). At that time, families will need to decide and plan for whether their child returns to in-person, in-class instruction, registers for [homeschooling](#) or registers for an [online and distributed learning program outside of the NVSD](#), for the remainder of the 2020/21 school year.

All students in the transition option will be provided with assignments and weekly check-ins by a district-based teacher who will support their learning and monitor their progress. In a typical week, families should anticipate up to two mornings of educational support from a teacher. This support will include an online cohort of students working on literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking learning goals. Students who begin this school year in the Elementary Transition Support option can expect district-based teacher check-ins to begin the week of September 21st.

As part of the Elementary Transition Support option, opportunities will be provided for students to visit their school and participate in some in-person activities. This is a critical component of this option, as it encourages students to maintain connections and supports a positive re-entry to in-person, in-class instruction during the 2020/21 school year.

When parents are ready for their child to return to full-time, in-class instruction, they will be asked to work with the school to discuss a re-entry plan. Procedures for returning to the classroom will be provided to families who have selected the Elementary Transition Support option.

Your child's school will be reaching out in the next week to confirm participation in this temporary education support option.

Support for Students with Severe Immune Suppression

According to the Provincial Health Officer and the BCCDC, *most children with compromised immune systems can return to school when safety measures are in place*. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Parents/guardians of children with complex medical conditions or underlying risk factors, or parents/guardians who are immunocompromised themselves, should consult with their medical healthcare provider to determine the level of risk regarding their child's return to in-class instruction.

For students who are recommended not to attend school by a medical professional (doctor's note has been provided), please contact your school principal directly to discuss the *Hospital Home Bound Instruction Program*. This program includes remote learning opportunities and involves school administrators, classroom teachers and/or case managers consulting with families to provide a program that best meets the healthcare and learning needs of the student.

For more information, please refer to the BCCDC's [Guidance for Families of Immunocompromised Children in School and Group Gatherings](#) and [COVID-19 and Children with Immune Suppression](#) documents.

Ongoing Communication

By the end of this week, Principals/Vice-Principals will be reaching out to all families to share school-specific back-to-school information. Should you have any questions or concerns with the information in those communications, including this update, please reach out to your school Principal. Please also continue to check the COVID-19 Back to School FAQ as updates are posted on a regular basis. For more information about the North Vancouver School District Stage 2 Restart Plan, please click [HERE](#).

Thank you for your patience and trust in the school district as we continue to plan to safely welcome students and staff back to school.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Pearmain".

Mark Pearmain
Superintendent of Schools

Translation Options

To view this update in a language option of your choice, please review and enable the message translation options available through your email provider. While not exhaustive, we have provided links to popular email providers: [Microsoft Outlook](#) and [Gmail](#).