

May 7, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Many of you may have watched [Premier Horgan's address yesterday afternoon](#) outlining plans for a phased re-opening of the province's economy. [BC's Restart plan](#) works through the steps we will be taking as a Province to:

- Provide people with clear information on what's changed and what's coming.
- Continue to build confidence in government and the PHO's response to COVID-19.
- Reinforce the "Golden Rules" to keep people safe
- Manage expectations about the months ahead – this won't be over until there is a vaccine – while providing people with hope that we will get through this, together.

We know people are worried about their health and that of their families, that there is anxiety about the future and a sense of isolation, and that many people are suffering financially during this time. It is also true that the hard work of British Columbians and the sacrifices that have been made have resulted in a lot of progress toward flattening the curve, and we are now in a situation where a careful restart, while keeping our focus on safety and protecting the vulnerable, makes sense.

This isn't a return to "normal" but a time for hopeful, careful steps in that direction.

May long weekend, we should see hospital procedures that were delayed getting back on track, as well as other health services being made available. More business will restart, and more people will be back to work. Public gatherings will still need to be kept to small groups, and all of us will need to continue to maintain the important safety protocols we have all made part of our routines especially frequent handwashing, coughing and sneezing etiquette, and staying home when sick. COVID-19 won't be behind us until there is a vaccine, and that could be 12-18 months away. So, the protocol changes we have made are the new normal.

As long as everything with COVID-19 continues to trend in the right direction, we are planning for a partial return to face to face instruction on June 1, consistent with "Phase 3" of the restart plan. This will likely mean smaller groups of students being scheduled on a part time basis. This will be voluntary for families; while all students will be invited, it will not be required for all to attend. More specific health and safety guidelines will be forthcoming to address issues related to school settings in Phase 3. Our plans will be developed under the guidance of the PHO, BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC. Other advance planning will need to be done regarding scheduling, logistics, and how to manage a model of learning with some learners on-site and others who may remain at home. We will keep in communication with you as the situation develops and more information is available.

We appreciate all that you are doing to support the learning of your children at home, and look forward to providing further information about next steps for a safe expansion of learning at school.

Stay well, everyone.

Paul Carriere,
Superintendent of Schools