



*Bringing Learning to Life!*

# Vancouver Island North School District No. 85

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September 15, 2021

Dear Families and Staff,

As we head into this school year, we want to ensure that all families are aware of some of the new processes in place for school districts, related to COVID-19.

In line with the provincial mandate, School District 85 has now transitioned from our previous COVID-19 Safety Plans, to school and district Communicable Disease Plans. Each school's Communicable Disease Plan should be available on their school website.

The Communicable Disease plans include many of the safety measures that were in place last school year, including such things as:

- Enhanced cleaning
- Masks worn as per the provincial guidelines
- Controlled entry and reduction of overcrowding in close spaces
- Continued messaging to stay home if you are sick
- Daily health checks
- Promotion of good hand hygiene

Thanks to the diligence of our families and staff, we did not experience any school exposures last school year.

However, this year is different. This year we have a highly vaccinated population and things around our communities are opening up. Due to this, I felt it was important that all families are aware there is a new provincial process in place for notification regarding school exposures of COVID-19. Under this new process, Public Health is taking the lead with any reported school exposures.

It is important for families to know that Public Health will continue to prioritize schools for contact tracing and will directly follow up with anyone identified as a COVID-19 case. Public Health will determine if other students or staff were close contacts and will then directly notify these close contacts if they need to take action, like self-monitoring or self-isolating.

In line with practices for other community settings and workplaces, school notifications to the broader school community, such as letters or exposure notices, will only be used when Public Health deems them necessary to support contact tracing or outbreak management.

Students and staff at schools who are not close contacts can continue to attend school. Only those who have been contacted by Public Health need to take the recommended additional measures.

We encourage you to be familiar with your school's Communicable Disease plan.

If you have questions about procedures in place at your child's school, please contact your school administrator.

We continue to follow all provincial guidelines for return to school, as the safety and well being of our students, families and staff remain our highest priority. I wish everyone a wonderful start to their school year!

Gilakas'la,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christina MacDonald".

Christina MacDonald  
Superintendent of Schools