

# Lets' emó:t

*one heart one mind  
working together*

**Restart Plan  
September 2020**



# Chilliwack School District Restart Plan

## Lets' emó:t

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a rapidly evolving situation that has disrupted the lives of many and has significantly changed the way the Chilliwack School District operates. To guide us through these uncertain times, **Lets' emó:t** – *one heart one mind working together* – was developed to serve as a framework for September 2020 and beyond. This document establishes guidelines for addressing the health, safety, teaching and learning needs of our students and staff.

The province has decided that students will return to school in September 2020 under Stage 2 of the provincial K-12 Restart Plan.

- [B.C. K-12 Restart Plan](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)

The Chilliwack School District follows guidelines set by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Officer. These parameters guide the development of our educational programs and continuity of learning plans during COVID-19.

British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer and the Minister of Education will continue to monitor developments around the COVID-19 pandemic as they determine how to best keep students, staff and the broader community as safe as possible. This means that, at any point during the school year, the province could decide whether schools across British Columbia, schools in a particular region, or individual schools and classrooms need to move from one stage to another. This decision will always be made by the Provincial Health Officer, in collaboration with education officials.

### **Our School District's Strategy**

Each school has developed site-based plans aligned with the district strategy to give families a clear picture of school life under Stage 2. Our strategy is developed to address key concerns related to health, safety, teaching and learning. Updates with the most recent information and health advice from the province related to COVID-19 in schools will be posted on district and school websites.

## **Health & Safety**

Health and safety are important organizational priorities and represent a key component of our mental well-being and social-emotional learning (SEL) focus. These protocols are intended to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, but do not completely eliminate all risk. The provincial

restart plans focus on safety does not depend on one single strategy, but many strategies that work together to support the safest environment possible within the complex dynamics of a school community.

These strategies include:

- Cohorts (learning groups)
- Screening for illness
- Strict illness protocols
- Handwashing and sanitizing
- Cleaning standards
- Physical distancing
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), like non-medical masks

### **Cohorts (Learning Groups)**

In the Provincial Restart Plan, a cohort (also referred to as a learning group) is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school quarter, semester or year, and who primarily interact with each other. Cohorts decrease the number of close contacts staff and students will have in the school and will assist public health officials in their efforts to trace contacts and contain a potential COVID-19 outbreak.

Cohorts are smaller in elementary and middle schools due to the recognition that younger children are less able to consistently observe personal measures such as hand hygiene, reducing physical contact and recognizing and articulating symptoms of illness. Cohorts are larger in secondary schools due to the increased ability of children to consistently minimize physical contact, practice hand hygiene, ensure physical distance and recognize and articulate symptoms of illness.

Schools will make site-specific plans to minimize the number of staff/adults who interact with learning groups, while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment.

### **Screening for Illness**

Before coming to school each day, all staff and students must complete the B.C. Centre for Disease Control [Daily Health Self-Assessment](#) to determine whether they can attend or must stay home. Families will be expected to complete the assessment daily and follow all health instructions, which serve as a tool to assess their child's wellness before sending them to school. Students who have any symptoms noted on the questionnaire cannot attend school.

All visitors permitted entry to a school or district site must also complete the COVID-19 daily health assessment before entering the building. People with symptoms of COVID-19 or experiencing illness will not be permitted on school district property.

### **Showing Signs of Illness While at School**

When a student presents sick with symptoms similar to COVID-19, the student will be asked to wear a mask (if they can safely do so). Designated staff will also wear a mask and will:

- Isolate the child in a room;
- Contact the parents/guardians to take the child home;
- Clean and disinfect the exposure areas

### **Immunocompromised**

Most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction 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 and in consultation with a family physician.

Families with immunocompromised children are encouraged to consult with their medical health care provider to determine the level of risk regarding their child's return to in-class instruction.

### **If There is a COVID-19 Case at School**

Positive COVID-19 cases are only confirmed by official public health authorities, in our case, the Fraser Health Authority.

If a student shows any COVID-19 symptoms at school where confirmed case has been identified, there are safety protocols in place to protect students and staff:

- The child waits in an isolated room;
- The school contacts parents/guardians to take the child home;
- Staff clean and disinfect exposure areas; and
- School district notifies public health officials.

If a positive case occurs, our local public health authority will:

- Contact trace to identify potential COVID-19 exposures;
- May recommend testing;
- May recommend 14-day isolation if necessary;
- Get in touch with close contacts; and
- Provide follow-up recommendations as needed, which may include suspending in-class learning.

A positive COVID-19 case will not automatically lead to a school closure—it could be that only the group of students and staff who came in close contact will be required to stay home for 14 days. The school district will work with the health authority in making these decisions. The school will support students learning at home if they are required to self-isolate.

### **Handwashing & Sanitizing**

Everyone who enters a school or district site will be required to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately. Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands frequently throughout the day.

### **Cleaning Standards**

All of our custodial teams will follow infection control procedures provided by WorkSafeBC and the B.C. Centre for Disease Control to ensure our buildings are safe and sanitized.

### **Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing is a key component of the provincial restart plan. However, it is not always possible, particularly in the school setting. Schools and district sites will put controls in place to ensure physical distancing throughout their buildings, where possible, including in classrooms, hallways, washrooms and common areas.

In situations where physical distancing is not possible (e.g., buses, classrooms and some sporting activities), extra emphasis on hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, not participating when sick and cleaning and disinfecting on a regular basis before and after activities are strongly recommended.

### **Masks & Personal Protective Equipment**

Students in middle and secondary school are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas, like buses and hallways, or anytime they are outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.

At this time, masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).

All staff and middle/secondary students will be provided with a reusable non-medical mask during the first week of school in September. Additional masks will be available upon request.

### **Safety Training & Orientation for Staff**

All staff will be required to participate in orientation and training:

- Review the COVID-19 Safe Work Procedures
- Attend site-based orientation on how the updated guidelines will work in their school.

## School Expectations

### Arrival and Dismissal

Students will:

- follow signage to determine their school entry and exit points;
- follow physical distancing guidelines to stay at least two meters apart while they wait outside and to line up when it is time to enter the school

Adults dropping off or bringing students to school will be asked to stay in their vehicle or outside the school, and to maintain a safe physical distance between themselves and others.

Parents/Guardians of children who have complex needs and require support to enter the building should contact their school office. Staff will work with parents/guardians to develop a plan that is safe for both students and staff.

### Signs

Signs are posted throughout the school to indicate COVID-19 information including:

- entrance/exits protocols
- visual cues for traffic patterns and maintaining physical distancing
- hand washing/sanitizing stations

### Washroom Protocols

Washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout the day. Depending on the size of the school and the location of washrooms, schools may assign classrooms and students to specific washrooms.

### Water Fountains/Filling Stations

Access to water will not be restricted. Water fountains will be open and available for use. Students and staff are encouraged to use personal water bottles. When using water fountains, students and staff should practice hand hygiene before and after use and not place their mouths on the fountain.

### Common Areas

Schools will have measures to promote physical distancing in spaces where students often gather, such as foyers, multi-purpose areas or hallway intersections.

### Food in Schools

Students are expected to bring their own food and are not permitted to share with others. School meal programs will continue to be offered and will follow all COVID-19 guidelines.

### Recess and Playground Equipment

Students will remain in their assigned learning cohort for recess activities.

### **Open/Closed School Campuses**

Secondary Schools are all open campus. All students and staff leaving campus will be expected to follow physical distancing regulations and all COVID-19 protocols. Upon re-entry all students and staff will be expected to follow re-entry guidelines (e.g., hand washing). Middle and Elementary schools continue to be “closed campus” where students are expected to remain at school during lunch and breaks.

### **Volunteers and Visitors**

Visitors and volunteers supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. teacher candidates, public health nurses, meal program volunteers, PAC, Parent Volunteer etc). will be permitted in schools and will be expected to follow all Health & Safety protocols.

### **District Staff Entering School Buildings**

All school district staff are permitted to enter school buildings as required and will follow all Health & Safety protocols.

### **Communication with your school**

Families can stay in contact with their schools through their school website, email and phone. Families who need to go into the school must book an appointment in advance.

### **Transportation**

Transportation services will only be provided to students who are registered for transportation and have a valid bus pass.

For additional information regarding The BC Tripartite Transportation Agreement for on-reserve students please visit (<https://learningservices.sd33.bc.ca/welcome-aboriginal-education-department>)

### **Health & Safety Measures for School Buses**

Buses used for transporting students will be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in regulations. Masks are required for middle and secondary school students.

## **Educational Options**

The Chilliwack School District strongly supports In-class instruction as the preferred method for most students. The [BC Education Restart Plan](#), states that “having students in the classroom helps to minimize learning gaps, and provide the academic, social and emotional supports essential for learning”. Additionally, parents may choose:

- Hybrid learning offered at [Hybrid Learning on the district website](#).
- Distributed Learning offered outside the Chilliwack School District through an online learning center.

- Homeschooling offered outside the Chilliwack School District with a home facilitator (Example: family member) responsible for delivering the educational program to children at home.

Before selecting an alternative to in-class instruction, parents should carefully review options and speak to their school administration.

### **Strong Starts, Preschools and Daycares**

All Strong Start locations will open at the end of September. Locations and schedules will be available on the school district website by mid-September. Connect with specific school sites for information regarding daycare, preschool, and before and after school care programs.

### **Kindergarten**

Gradual entry for Kindergarten will begin on September 10<sup>th</sup> with full-day attendance by September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Elementary**

Elementary students will be in school full-time five days per week. Carefully constructed elementary learning groups of 60 (or fewer) will be established for the first term. Classroom teachers and educational assistants will be assigned to provide direct educational programming and wrap-around services to diverse children.

### **Middle**

Middle students will be in school full time five days per week. Middle school students will be assigned into learning groups of 60.

Classroom teachers and educational assistants will be assigned to provide direct educational programming and wrap-around services to diverse children.

A modified bell schedule may be implemented at each school to reflect staggered, breaks, and dismissal to reduced traffic flow within the building.

### **Secondary**

Secondary students will be in school full time five days per week. Secondary schools will be organized using an octet system initially for the 2020–2021 school year. This means the school year will be divided into eight time periods, or learning octets. Students will take one courses for 5 weeks, 22 consecutive days. Using this system allows for a move to a Copernican (2 classes per day) system or a semester system (4 classes per day) depending on stage designated by the Ministry of Education.

Please refer to each secondary school website for specific details about breaks, start and dismissal times.

Secondary Schedule Example: [Sardis Secondary School](#)

### **Assessment**

Teachers will continue to assess students throughout the school year. We will continue to support the implementation of assessment for learning strategies by providing teachers with professional learning opportunities.

### **Communicating Student Learning**

Student learning will be communicated in formal and informal ways to students and families throughout the year following usual processes with the exception of large gatherings.

### **Equitable Support for Diverse Learners**

To ensure equitable access to learning, we will pay specific attention to the diverse needs of our students. School-based teams will prepare for differentiated supports for vulnerable students. These students will be prioritized for higher access to daily interventions and they will also have access to enhanced transition support to start the school year. This includes connecting with families of students who are medically fragile and ensuring that case managers collaborate closely with classroom teachers on student plans.

### **ELL Learners**

To support new families and/or students who are English language learners (ELL), teachers and the English Language Learning Department will provide resources and supports to ensure the success of each student.

### **Aboriginal Learners**

Aboriginal Education Assistants and Aboriginal Enhancement Teachers will provide a range of supports for Aboriginal students and families. Cultural activities will be provided in partnership with key Aboriginal stakeholders (First Nations, Metis Association, Sto:lo Nation).

### **International Students**

Only international students already in Canada and who have pre-registered for the 2020–2021 school year will be accommodated at this time. The province has indicated that after Canada lifts current travel restrictions and non-essential travel resumes, international education programs can resume. International students would need to follow quarantine requirements and any relevant public health orders.

### **Work Experience and Apprenticeship Programs**

Schools will continue to offer work experience and apprenticeship programs and will work with the district's Occupational Health and Safety team to make sure all placements have appropriate COVID-19 safety protocols in place.

## **Special Events**

Assemblies and Special Events: Gatherings that bring multiple cohorts/learning groups of students together in person are not permitted at this time. Virtual events and assemblies may be held within the school community.

Extracurricular Activities (including Athletics): Schools will evaluate whether they can offer extracurricular activities that follow COVID-19 protocols, and let families know which activities are available.

Graduation Ceremonies: At this time, the district has not made a decision about traditional graduation ceremonies for the class of 2021. Any decision must include a COVID-19 contingency plan.

## **Mental Health & Well-Being**

Our focus will be on connecting students back to school using a trauma informed approach to support safety, belonging, and inclusion. Every student will continue to have access to supports and services to address mental health concerns through our existing referral process. School Counsellors will provide support and facilitate referrals to community mental health services for students.

To support students and families, our school district will continue to provide mental health resources that will be released in the coming days and available on our school district website.

## **Supports for Staff**

Staff mental health and wellness will play a vital role in supporting students through this pandemic and beyond.

Professional development opportunities for staff to increase knowledge and skills will be provided. Examples include:

- Health and well-being sessions hosted by Student Services and Human Resources
- Trauma Informed practice
- Mental Health First Aid
- Mental Health Literacy Training
- Cultural Sensitivity Training
- Mental Health First Aid training; and
- Sessions on SEL for educators

Professional and Personal Learning and supports are also available. Examples include:

- Communities of practice and collaboration with others in specific areas of wellness;
- Personal strategies for self-care and stress management;
- Interpersonal and team strategies to build relationships and connection amongst adults;
- Employee and family assistance program.