



# 2021/22 Return to School Operational Plan

Last updated: Oct. 8, 2021

## Recent Updates of Note

- Positive COVID-19 case notifications
- Kindergarten – Grade 6 classes will need to shift to temporary at-home learning for 10 calendar days when there are three new positive cases in a class in the past five calendar days
- Aspects of our operations that will require proof of vaccination/proof of negative COVID-19 test
- Outbreak in schools classified as 10 or more cases

Rocky View Schools (RVS) continues to create safe, high-quality learning opportunities where all students learn, belong, and succeed. The purpose of this plan is to outline the protocols established for the 2021/22 school year. It is informed by the direction RVS receives from government and adjusted as direction and guidance evolves.

RVS thanks all families, students and staff for their understanding and cooperation with the health and safety measures in place to limit the spread of COVID-19. We are committed to measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses including promoting and facilitating hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, maintaining ventilation, and ensuring regular cleaning and disinfection of high traffic/touch areas, and other measures as necessary.

Implementation of our plan is subject to change as the pandemic evolves. We will continue to seek direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Alberta Health Services (AHS) and Alberta Education as an important part of this process.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of the pandemic, RVS has two contingency plans based on guidance in government's 2021-2022 School Year Plan. Contingency 1: In-School with Enhanced Health Measures Plan outlines the protocols RVS will follow if students remain learning in-class at school, but enhanced health measures are required. Contingency 2: At-Home Learning Plan will be put in place if students are required to move to at-home learning.

We appreciate your continued support as we work together to keep our schools safe and positive learning environments. Elements of the plan and requirements are categorized below.

## School Operations

### Health Measures

All students, staff, teachers and visitors are required to follow health measures mandated by RVS, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and/or measures implemented by an AHS Zone Medical Officer of Health.

### Daily Health Checklist Usage

RVS will continue to require all students, staff and visitors to use the [Alberta Daily Health Checklist](#) prior to coming to school. Parents/guardians play an essential role as they support actions in the home (such as keeping children/students home when sick and accessing testing if symptoms develop) that ultimately keep other children, students and staff safe.

### Hand Hygiene

Continue to promote routine washing of hands and/or use of sanitizer. Sanitizer will be available in schools with individuals encouraged to sanitize as they enter/exit the school or classroom, before eating or serving food, using shared equipment, etc.

### **Masking**

A non-medical face mask is required while inside RVS schools and sites for:

- All students (Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 12)
- All staff members
- All visitors/volunteers

Masks for students can be removed indoors while:

- Seated in the classroom and facing forward
- Consuming food or drink
- Participating in physical exercise, band, or arts performances

Teachers/staff may remove their mask if they are alone at their desk and/or separated by at least two metres from all other persons.

As per the provincial requirements, masks continue to be required for all individuals (students, drivers, volunteers, and staff) on a school bus.

Masks will not be required outdoors at RVS schools and sites. RVS will support individuals who choose to wear a mask when not required.

Information on the Government of Alberta's mask exception process requirements is provided later in this plan.

### **Physical Distancing**

RVS will work to maximize physical distance between students and staff. Given the number of students in the building, it will not be possible to maintain two metres of physical separation between students and staff at all times. Students are not expected to sit at their desks for the duration of the day. We recognize learning can occur during various activities. Additional measures can be implemented when students are not seated in the classroom:

- Consider activities that can take place outdoors or in areas that allow for increased physical distancing and/or increased ventilation; and
- Consider limiting the number of students moving within the classroom or throughout the school at one time to promote physical distancing.

### **Cohorting**

Cohorting to reduce the interactions that Kindergarten - Grade 6 students have with other students will be implemented.

### **Lunch Routines & School Cafeteria Program & Snack/Breakfast/Lunch Programs**

While addressing physical distancing to the best of the school's ability given their facilities and student population, lunch, school cafeteria programs and snack/breakfast/lunch programs can continue. Cohorts in Kindergarten - Grade 6 will be maintained in these settings. Schools are not to use buffet-style or self-serve. Instead, they are to use pre-packaged meals or meals served by staff/designated person.

### **Recess**

Recesses will be adjusted to maximize physical distancing for all grades and reduce cohort interactions in Kindergarten – Grade 6.

### Transportation

- Masks are to be worn by all students, drivers and volunteers/guests at all times while riding the bus.
- If a student needs a drink while on the bus, they can remove their mask long enough to take a drink and then replace their mask.
- Students should not eat on the bus.
- Once a student takes a seat on the bus they cannot move about the bus or change seats until unloading.
- Seating plans may be implemented if the need arises.
- Sanitizing of the bus will occur between each group of riders.
- Should a child become symptomatic during the bus trip, the driver should contact the school to make the appropriate arrangements to pick up the student.
- Some students may qualify for a mask exception. See below.

### Before and After School Programs

Third-party providers will determine their own protocols and inform families using their services.

### Visitors/Parents/Volunteers

Any visitors/parents/volunteers are required to use the [Alberta Daily Health Checklist](#) prior to entering the school and must check-in with the office. Masking is required throughout the duration of the visit. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination or proof of negative PCR/rapid test will be required for all RVS indoor locations at a date yet to be determined. Further details will be provided when confirmed.

### Illness While at School

Students exhibiting signs of illness must be moved to the school's infirmary room and provided a mask to wear if they are not currently wearing a mask. Parents/guardians will be notified and advised to pick up their child within one hour of notification. If the parent is unable to pick up their child, they must designate an emergency contact for student pick up. It is the expectation that students are picked up by the family or emergency contact.

### Singing/Playing Instruments

Individuals must wear masks when singing indoors. Singers and wind instrument musicians should be two metres away from other performers and individuals at all times. Wind instruments should be equipped with a cover intended to prevent droplet transmission. In indoor settings, groups should not sing or play wind instruments for more than 30 minutes at a time, with a 10-minute break afterwards to allow for air exchange in the room.

### Work Experience and Dual Credit programs

Students participating in these programs will have to follow the specific institutions and/or employer's requirements related to participation in the provincial government's Restriction Exemption Program.

## School Facilities

### Enhanced High-Touch Cleaning

RVS will continue with regular cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces. Daily electrostatic spraying will occur at the end of each school day except in Kindergarten, where it will be performed between morning and afternoon cohorts. Shared spaces where lunches are consumed will be cleaned after eating is complete. Desks used by multiple people per day should be cleaned and disinfected by individuals as they leave the space.

### Ventilation

Ventilation systems are maintained as per the manufacturer's recommendation. Enhanced filters and replacement of filters will continue across RVS.

### School Arrival/Departure/In-Building Traffic Flow

Schools will implement measures to maximize physical distancing to the best of the school's ability given their facilities and student population. Schools will utilize multiple doors for entry and exit. Cohorting in Kindergarten - Grade 6 will be considered in when entering/exiting/moving about the school.

### Classroom Setup

Classrooms will maximize physical distancing within the classroom given their classroom space and class size. Desks should be arranged so they are not facing each other wherever possible. Furniture and equipment do not need to be removed. Staff need to be aware of [AP5305 Non-Standard Items in RVS Facilities](#).

### Specialty Spaces (e.g., Learning Commons, Gymnasiums, Shared Classrooms, Fitness Facilities)

Specialty spaces will maximize physical distancing within the setting given their space and number of students present. Furniture and equipment do not need to be removed. Desks used by multiple people per day should be cleaned and disinfected by individuals as they leave the space. Shared equipment should be cleaned in between uses where possible. Learning Commons books unable to be cleaned should be stored for 24 hours between different uses.

### Staffrooms

Staffrooms should be used for grab and go service only unless two meters physical distancing can be maintained.

### Water Fountains

May be used.

### Lockers

Locker use continues to be permitted but measures should be considered in schools to reduce congestion at the lockers.

### Community Use of RVS Facilities

Community use is available in our schools. Any users are required to use the [Alberta Daily Health Checklist](#) prior to entering the school. Users and events must follow all Government of Alberta guidelines. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination or proof of negative PCR/rapid test will be required for all RVS indoor locations at a date yet to be determined. Further details will be provided when confirmed.

### Community Use of RVS Grounds

Community use is available in our outdoor spaces.

<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Grade 12 Diploma Exams</b> The administration of Diploma Exams will resume and are mandatory in the 2021/22 school year, as required by government.</p> <p><b>Grade 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)</b> The administration of PATs will resume and are mandatory in the 2021/22 school year, as required by government.</p> <p><b>Grade 3 Student Learning Assessments (SLAs)</b> RVS is considering piloting select Grade 3 classrooms to engage in this new provincial assessment process. Details of which classrooms are participating will be communicated to selected classrooms.</p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Extra-Curricular Activities</b> These optional activities will be offered where teacher volunteers and community volunteers are available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For indoor events, all spectators must wear masks and be physically distanced. Spectator attendance restricted to 1/3 of typical spectator capacity. Any additional requirements will be communicated to participants and spectators directly.</li> <li>• Spectator attendance at outdoor events is not restricted but must remain physically distanced from one another at all times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Field Trips</b> Field trips within the province of Alberta can be considered under existing RVS procedures and government health measures. Field trips in facilities/sites requiring participation in the province's Restrictions Exemption Program are not permitted as this time. Cohorts should be maintained in Kindergarten – Grade 6 when on field trips. If two cohorts share a bus, the cohorts must be separated by at least two rows.</p> <p>There will be no out-of-province or out-of-country field trips in the 2021/22 school year. Cancellation provisions will be important to review carefully.</p> <p><b>School Events (e.g., Assemblies, Guest Speakers, Celebratory Events, Graduation)</b> Indoor school events can only proceed where physical distancing (Kindergarten – Grade 12) and cohorting (Kindergarten – Grade 6) can be maintained.</p> <p><b>School Councils</b> Can continue to meet in person with masking and physical distancing required at all times. Councils may want to consider online meetings if the council feels they were successful with that mode in 2020/21.</p>

## COVID-19 Cases and Outbreaks

### Isolations

Those who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate as determined by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

### Quarantining

Close contacts of a positive case are not required to quarantine if they do not have a symptom and/or have not tested positive. AHS strongly encourages household close contacts (for example, a sibling, parent, or grandparent who lives with the positive case) to stay home as per the current Alberta Daily Health Checklist.

### Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

When RVS is informed of a positive case that was at school while infectious, the school will send out a letter to their school community informing them of the possible exposure and provide AHS directions. These notifications will typically occur at the end of the day on school days only.

### Vaccinations

It is important for Albertans to get vaccinated to protect yourself and others. Everyone born in 2009 or earlier is eligible to get their first and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been shown to be very protective against infection.

As Alberta has no specific provincial legislation that requires Pre-K to Grade 12 students to have specific vaccinations to attend in school, school divisions cannot deny students access to education due to their immunization status.

All RVS staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors will be required to show proof of vaccination or of negative PCR/rapid test for all RVS indoor locations. Details, including effective date, will be communicated when finalized.

### Vaccination Clinics

RVS will support temporary vaccination clinics to be held this fall in schools for students born in 2009 or earlier and staff. Students must have returned the signed consent form by a parent/legal guardian to the school prior to the vaccination date to receive the vaccination. Further details were provided to families by the schools.

### Travel

Individuals must follow out-of-country travel direction established by government prior to returning to an RVS site.

### Temporary Shifts to At-Home Learning for Kindergarten – Grade 6 classes

As directed by government, any Kindergarten - Grade 6 classes with three or more AHS confirmed infectious cases of COVID-19 within the same class that occur within a five-day span must move to temporary at-home learning. Learning will continue at home for 10 calendar days from the decision being made by AHS. Letters will be sent to impacted classes and the entire school detailing the dates of the temporary at-home learning. Other students on the bus and/or extra-curricular activities with students in this class will NOT need to shift to temporary at-home learning (unless they are also in that specific class). Information about [Kindergarten – Grade 6 temporary at-home learning can be found in this guide](#).

	<p><b>Outbreaks</b>                  Schools with 10 or more AHS confirmed cases may be placed in outbreak status by AHS. RVS will follow any additional direction that may come from AHS. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, RVS may decide to shift full classes or grades to temporary at-home learning. Moving an entire school to temporary at-home learning remains an Alberta Education decision. Information about <a href="#">Grade 7-12 temporary at-home learning can be found in this guide</a>.</p> <p><b>Supporting Learning While Self-Isolating or Ill</b>                  Consistent with what happens during non-pandemic times, if a child needs to stay home due to illness, classroom teachers will provide key work for the student to work on while at home. Homework bundles or tasks will be provided to the student by the regular teacher, but they will not be engaging in at-home learning.</p>
<p><b>Mask Exceptions</b></p>	<p><b>Exception for a Medical Condition – New Government Requirements</b>                  As required by the Government of Alberta, school divisions and/or individual schools no longer have the authority to grant mask exceptions, and instead families must follow the government’s process (see <a href="#">COVID-19 Mask Exception Requirements</a> for more information).</p> <p>Mask exceptions can only be granted by a nurse practitioner, physician, or a psychologist using this provincial form: <a href="#">Medical Note for Mask Exception</a>. Medical conditions eligible for an exception are listed in the appendix of the Chief Medical Officer of Health’s Health Order: <a href="#">CMOH order 22-2021: 2021 COVID-19 response</a>.</p> <p>All students pre-K to Grade 12, must follow this process for mask exceptions.</p> <p><b>Previously granted mask exceptions using the RVS process and form no longer qualify (unless they were accompanied by the provincial exception medical note).</b> These families must provide their medical exception note to their school administration and Transportation department (if riding the bus).</p>