



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Re-Entry into Schools August 2020

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We know that we will be starting back to school under Scenario 1 as the Chief Medical Officer and Minister of Education announced this week. We also know that we need to be prepared for movement in and out of each scenario as the school year develops. We will continue to follow the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer in any case. We emphasize that the safety and well-being of students and staff remain at the centre of all re-entry planning.

Possible Scenarios

Scenario 1 – In-school classes resume with health measures outlined by Alberta Health Services.	Scenario 2 – In-school classes partially resume with health measures outlined by Alberta Health Services.	Scenario 3 – At-home learning continues
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You can find a link to Back to School Information [HERE](#) as outlined by the Ministry of Education as well as a guide specifically for parents [HERE](#).

Registration information

Q: How do I register my child for school?

A; If they were in FMPSD last year-simply go into your Parent Portal to update. If you are new to FMPSD then you can do this online [HERE](#). If interested in E-cademy+ you can submit an expression of interest [HERE](#).

Q: Where do I find school supply information?

A: Each [school webpage](#) will have school supplies listed on it, with the exception of Beacon Hill who emailed their parents. Staples has lists in the store. E-cademy+ students will get lists via email from their Principal.

Reducing the Risk of Transmission

FMPSD re-entry plan will contain a lot of the details to the following questions and more. Watch for this on our Division website in the near future.

Q: Will there be a daily health check?

A: Before leaving home each day, staff, students and parents/guardians and permitted visitors who will access the school must be screened for symptoms using the [self-screening questionnaire](#). This questionnaire has been translated into [multiple languages](#). This will provide guidance around whether it is safe for an individual to enter a school or worksite. Should teachers notice any COVID symptoms in students, they will have students go to the office and notify office staff that students are on their way.

Q: How will staff and students who exhibit COVID symptoms during the school day be addressed?

A: The school will have a designated area for isolating students who become symptomatic. They will then be required to put on a facemask for as long as they are symptomatic even while waiting for pick up. Parents/guardians will be contacted and expected to pick up their child immediately.

Q: What happens if there is a COVID case at the school?

A: A public health team will investigate the case to find out when the symptoms developed and support the school to minimize the spread. It is likely that only the group of students and staff who came in close contact will be required to stay home for 14 days, and not the whole school. Parents will be notified if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed at school and public health officials will contact those who were in close contact with the case.

Q: What is the procedure for reporting sick students or staff to AHS?

A: Parents whose children test positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to contact the school. However, Alberta Health Services also will inform FMPSD schools of any identified cases.

Q: What if my child has pre-existing symptoms that may appear like COVID-19?

A: Individuals who have allergies or ongoing health issues should be tested at least once according to the Alberta Health Services Guidance document. This will establish a baseline for the individual. If symptoms change (worsen, additional symptom, change in baseline) the individual must stay at home and use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine whether your child needs to be tested for COVID-19.

Q: Are my children required to wear a face mask to school? If so, will schools provide the face masks?

A: Grade 4 to 12 students and staff must wear [masks](#) where physical distancing cannot be maintained, including on school buses and shared areas such as hallways.

- Masks are not required while students are seated in the classroom during instruction if following the physical distancing guidance for schools.
- Masks are required in the classroom when close contact between students, or students and staff, is occurring. Masks should be used for the duration of this activity.

- [Exemptions](#) will be made for students and staff who are unable to wear a mask due to medical or other needs.
- Mask use for kindergarten to grade 3 students is optional.
- All students and staff will get 2 reusable masks. Government will distribute more than 1.6 million masks to 740,000 students and 90,000 staff.

Q: Will there be ample hand sanitizing stations throughout schools?

A: Hand sanitizing stations containing at least sanitizer with at 60 per cent alcohol content (or a non-alcohol-based hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada) have been placed at entrances and classroom entrances. All persons entering an FMPSD facility will be required to make use of portable hand sanitizing stations before entering the building.

Q: What other environmental controls will FMPSD implement to reduce the risk and spread of COVID?

A: Whenever possible, doors will be propped open to reduce touch points. Schools also have been asked to identify separate entry and exit patterns for student cohorts and to maximize distancing of desks and/or their positioning, so students are not facing one another.

Q: Will enhanced cleaning be undertaken?

A: FMPSD will ensure enhanced cleaning of its school sites, including daily cleaning and disinfecting of washrooms and high touch surfaces several times a day. Regularly scheduled deep cleaning will take place when students are not present.

Q: Will water fountains be open?

A: Water fountains will remain closed. There are two touchless water filling stations in every school. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle school and refill it from the refilling stations.

Physical Distancing

Q: Will students have access to their lockers?

A: No. While AHS's distance requirements are in place, students will be asked to keep all of their possessions with them throughout the school day. This will be re-evaluated based on updates from Alberta Health Services.

Q: How will class transitions be handled in the hallways?

A: Students and staff will be asked to practice physical distancing to the best of their ability and to follow posted traffic flow protocols during class transitions. Each school will provide detailed information just before the school year begins with how they are working to address school entry, class transitions, school exit.

Q: Will school cafeterias or lunch spaces be open for use?

A: Depends on the Scenario we are operating under. In Scenario 1, lunch spaces can be used

with physical distancing requirements in place and cleaned in between use. Under no Scenario will sharing of food occur.

Q: Will FMPSD still offer its breakfast programs?

A: AHS guidelines require that all food is pre-packaged and distributed by adults only. Schools will need to see if they are able to operate these programs under the requirements of AHS.

Q: Will students have recess and social time with friends?

A: Yes, recess breaks will be staggered through the day and taken by class groups to limit the number of students in hallways at any one time.

Q: Will students have access to outdoor playgrounds?

A: As playgrounds are considered high-touch surfaces, school playgrounds will only be open under Scenario 1 during regular school hours, following the guidelines from AHS.

Q: Will parents and volunteers be permitted in schools?

A: All visitors will be asked to wear a mask in the building, maintain safe physical distancing guidelines of two meters between people when entering and leaving the building. Main Entrances to schools and buildings will be designated for all Non-School based Staff & Visitors entering the building. Hand sanitizing stations will be provided in all Main office areas.

Gathering Requirements

Q: How many people will be permitted in a classroom at any given time?

A: Schools have been asked to develop procedures and plans for in-person learning that supports physical distancing where possible, and to separate cohorts to the greatest extent possible. In Scenario 1, class sizes will be similar to previous years in FMPSD. In Scenario 2, class sizes will reflect precautions outlined by Alberta Health Services.

Q: How will restrictions on group gatherings affect classroom instruction?

A: Student cohort groups will be developed where possible. These cohort groups will remain the same until schools fully open. Efforts will be made to limit student movement to entering and exiting the building and class transitions. Where practical, teachers will move to students instead of students moving to teachers.

Q: How will restrictions on group gatherings impact staff meetings?

A: School staff will be asked to follow physical distancing and wear masks during meetings where that is not possible.

Q: If schools re-open under Scenario 2, when and how would students attend classes?

A: No decision has been made regarding this.

Q: Will schools still hold assemblies?

A: Assemblies and other large group activities will be suspended while there continues to be gathering restrictions. On-line assemblies, performances and events may be offered as an alternative.

Q: What will be the impact on the use of instructional equipment, such as computers?

A: Schools are encouraged to divide devices into cohorts and/or grade levels and limit the number of people that contact the device. Devices and shared equipment are to be cleaned after each individual's use. The Division has purchased special technology to disinfect after use.

Q: How will FMPSD ensure that students are still engaging in physical education activities?

A: Students will move outdoors for physical education activities where possible or engage in no-contact physical education activities indoors.

Learning

Q: Will students still write PAT exams in 2020/21?

A: FMPSD has yet to determine if we will participate in Grade 6 and 9 Provincial Achievement Tests. Grade 3 Student Learning Assessments will be an option open to the teachers as it provides evidence of areas that are strengths and areas that need further work, which will guide their instruction.

Q: What about Grade 12 Diploma Exams? A. If operating under Scenario 1 or 2 then the Grade 12 diploma exams are required by the province and will continue to count as 30 percent of the student's final diploma course mark. If operating under Scenario 3 then the government will decide if the diploma exams will proceed or not.

Q: How will FMPSD support students with special learning needs?

A. FMPSD will maintain learning opportunities for students specific to their Individualized Program Plan (IPP) using a variety of approaches. Divisional supports, such as occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, psychologists and physical therapy will provide service following their professional association guidelines either face-to-face or online.

Q: Will FMPSD be running field trips and out-of-country school trips?

A: A decision has not yet been made. Current Alberta Health Services recommendations are to limit non-essential travel. This will be carefully monitored for changes on a regular basis.

Q: How will parent-teacher interviews be held?

A: All parent teacher interviews would be conducted on the phone or via online meetings.

Q: What about extra-curricular activities and school sports?

A: Right now, there remains much uncertainty about school sports and other extracurricular events. For now, they are cancelled but we will revisit that decision later, once additional information is available.

Q: How will FMPSD support my special needs student?

A: FMPSD are working with AHS on COVID-19 safety protocols to develop plans for the students who require complex medical supports and interventions. We will be adding specific strategies as needed to IPPS and medical support plans. We will work to consider full participation and inclusion of students with disabilities.

Transportation

Q: How will FMPSD ensure the safety of its bus riders and drivers?

A: As of July 28, 2020, The public health measures for school buses in Scenario 1 include increased cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces, maintaining a protective zone for the driver, assigning students to seats that are grouped with other household members, and using loading/unloading procedures that support physical distancing of 2 metres between students when possible.

Individuals must sit in the assigned seat and cannot move seats to sit with friends. Parents that would like their children to wear masks must provide them.

Health and Wellness

Q: Does FMPSD have any supports in place for students displaying signs of anxiety due to COVID-19?

A: Each school has a school counselor and access to mental health therapy as needed. If families are feeling anxious and needing extra support please reach out as we have Division Social Workers available [HERE](#).