

# Prevention Measures 2021 - 2022

*Doing What's Best for Kids*

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## **BACKGROUND:**

*With current availability and uptake of COVID-19 vaccine, Alberta is shifting from an emergency response for the COVID-19 pandemic to the public health management we use for other viruses, such as influenza, including in schools. Shifting resources used to respond to COVID-19 in Alberta will allow us to respond to other illnesses as we approach fall and winter.*

*Students in Alberta will return to school for fall 2021, with in-person learning for the majority of students. In order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses, schools will incorporate recommendations that support good public health practices into their normal operations for the 2021-2022 school year. This includes supporting all staff and eligible students who choose to get vaccinated for COVID-19 and influenza, implementing environmental measures such as maintaining ventilation systems and routine cleaning standards, promoting hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and staying home when sick. Schools will not be expected to follow all the previous measures used during the 2020-2021 school year. (August 13, 2021. Preamble, Public Health Management of Respiratory Illness in Schools.)*

A summary of these measures are included below. For a detailed description of Guidance for Schools and School Buses please follow the [LINK](#).

**The Minister's document contains 5 core public health preventative measures for schools in the upcoming year:**

1. Vaccines
2. Environmental measures
3. Staying home when sick
4. Hand Hygiene
5. Respiratory Etiquette

## **Fort McMurray Public School Division Preventative Measures:**

### **1. Vaccines**

- a. FMPSD has participated in a long-standing partnership between Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services to provide access to public health prevention measures. This has included immunization programs, and in the past dental and vision screening.
- b. The Public Health Immunization program has previously offered vaccination including Measles, Mumps, Rubella, HPV, and Chickenpox. AHS is now indicating that the

# Prevention Measures 2021 - 2022

## *Doing What's Best for Kids*

- c. vaccination program will also make the *Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA COVID* vaccination available for eligible students and staff.
- d. Please note, this is a voluntary program.
- e. Parent/Guardian letters and consent forms will be sent home the first day of school by school messenger. All forms are to be collected within one week.
- f. Local public health services will coordinate immunization clinics at each eligible school with the Principal.

### **2. Environmental measures**

- a. Our O&M program continues to implement required HVAC programs in accordance with manufacturer operational guidelines.
- b. We are continuing with building closure at 8:30 p.m., and Sundays to all for enhanced cleaning and sterilization of rooms. Door stickers to indicate a sterilized room will remain in use.
- c. Pink cleaning solution and clothes will be available for classrooms and common areas. It is highly recommended that high touch areas and equipment are cleaned frequently.
- d. Plexiglass dividers will remain in place.
- e. Physical distancing and cohorting are not required, however, some people may prefer to keep more space during certain circumstances. Look for ways to support while we move towards getting back to normal.
- f. Soft surfaces (i.e: class carpets, chairs, cushions) are not banned, however, careful development of clearing and disinfecting of high touch surfaces should be developed.
- g. Lockers, food services, water fountains are permitted as per Alberta Health Services guidelines

### **3. Staying home when sick**

- a. Before leaving home, staff and students should self-screen for symptoms each day that they enter the school using the Alberta Daily Health Checklist.
- b. Parents/guardians, students and staff should be provided a copy of the appropriate daily health checklist.
- c. Office locations will have screening checklists and hand sanitation stations.
- d. Anyone that reports symptoms must be directed to stay home and fill out the AHS online self-assessment tool.



# Prevention Measures 2021 - 2022

*Doing What's Best for Kids*

## 4. Hand Hygiene

- a. Hand washing posters should be posted in washrooms and above sinks to encourage proper hand washing practice.
- b. We have purchased and have adequate hand sanitizer to maintain all schools up to and including December 2021. Over the fall, we will monitor our usage and make determinations for January - June as we monitor cases in the region.

## 5. Respiratory Etiquette

- a. We will continue to support and provide instruction on respiratory etiquette.
- b. Masking is required for all students and staff on school buses.
- c. Masking is highly recommended and may be introduced as a temporary enhanced measure to prevent an outbreak.
- d. Schools are to support students, staff, or parents who choose to wear a mask.

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## References

[July 2021 Guidance for Schools Scenario 1](#)

[Guidance for Respiratory Illness Prevention and Management in Schools](#)

[Public Health Management of Respiratory Illness in Schools: Questions and answers for school administrators](#)

[Alberta Health Services, Public Health Services, School Immunization Program](#)

[August 5, 2021 Information for Close Contacts](#)

[August 13, 2021 Alberta Education Letter to Parents](#)