



# January 2022 Back To School Plan: Summary of Public Health Guidelines

The following chart provides a general overview of the public health guidelines based on low and elevated COVID-19 risks in our school community.

Enhanced Measures	
<b>Vaccination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All eligible individuals are recommended get vaccinated with a complete series of Health Canada-approved COVID-19 vaccines.</li> <li>- Vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19 and its variants. Evidence on vaccine effectiveness against the Omicron variant continues to be gathered. Although breakthrough infections among vaccinated individuals occur, current vaccines approved for use in Canada appear to provide good protection against serious outcomes and hospitalization from this variant.</li> </ul>
<b>Screening &amp; Management of Symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All students, staff, and visitors must complete daily home screening for symptoms of COVID-19 using the COVID-19 symptom screening tool. Parents and caregivers are responsible for assessing their children daily before sending them to school.</li> <li>- If you are feeling unwell or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, stay home. Access testing at a drop-in testing clinic at the earliest opportunity and self-isolate until the results are back.</li> <li>- Staff, students, or visitors will be sent home if symptoms arise during the school day.</li> </ul>
<b>Hand Hygiene</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequent hand washing or using hand sanitizer is encouraged throughout the day.</li> <li>- Hand sanitizing stations will be present in each classroom and throughout the school building.</li> <li>- Respiratory etiquette will be taught and reviewed using age-appropriate interventions.</li> <li>- Signage on personal hygiene will be posted.</li> </ul>
<b>Cleaning &amp; Disinfection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The frequency of cleaning and disinfection will be increased, with additional focus on frequently touched surfaces, objects, and shared supplies/equipment.</li> </ul>
<b>Ventilation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ventilation systems will be maintained to appropriate standards.</li> <li>- It is recommended to open windows when possible and when weather permits.</li> </ul>
<b>Masking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All K-12 students, staff, and visitors are required to wear masks in all indoor areas of school facilities, including in classrooms, while transitioning between classrooms and other school areas, staff areas, and while on school buses. Masks are not required outdoors.</li> <li>- Exemptions to mask requirements include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o A person who cannot wear a mask for health or behavioural reasons</li> <li>o A person unable to put on or take off a mask without the assistance of another person</li> <li>o If the mask is removed temporarily in order to identify the person wearing it</li> <li>o If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that would otherwise be inhibited by the mask (i.e. engaging in physical activity, playing a wind instrument, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	Enhanced Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructional staff may remove their mask if it inhibits instruction, while maintaining physical distancing</li> <li>○ While actively eating or drinking</li> <li>○ While providing a service to a person where visual cues, facial expression, lip reading, etc. are required</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All students and staff should have access to good quality 3-layer masks. Schools will provide a 3-layer mask or equivalent as recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada for community use.</li> </ul>
<b>Cohorting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cohorting is a measure intended to limit the impact of outbreaks within schools by keeping potential outbreaks contained to a smaller group of students and staff. Where possible, GCS will implement cohorting of students and staff.</li> <li>- Student cohorts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ JK &amp; K</li> <li>○ Primary: (Grades 1-3)</li> <li>○ Upper Elementary (Grade 4-6)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Due to class scheduling and the structure of our Junior High &amp; High School cohorting is not required.</li> <li>- Students and staff are encouraged to select a small, consistent group of friends and colleagues to associate with in the school setting.</li> <li>- Visitors should be limited to essential activities that support learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Distancing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical distancing recommended in Grades K-12, including, but not limited to, classroom desk configuration, locker/cubby access, cafeterias, and flow control in hallways and stairwells.</li> <li>- GCS will utilize additional open spaces throughout the building to promote social distancing of staff and students</li> </ul>
<b>Gatherings &amp; Special Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In-school assemblies and activities for students in Grades K to 6 will be held virtually or within classrooms.</li> <li>- School gatherings and school athletic programs will follow current CPHO measures regarding gathering limits.</li> </ul>
<b>Cases, Contact Tracing, &amp; Outbreak Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public health will continue to manage cases of COVID-19 through isolation and contact tracing in the event there is a positive case associated with GCS. This may change at which time parents will be notified of the new protocols.</li> <li>- Accurate attendance records, class lists, and consistent seating plans will assist with contract tracing if required.</li> <li>- All visitors must sign-in to the school office.</li> </ul>

If you require additional information or clarification regarding these public health measures, please contact Mrs. Natalie MacNeill at [nmacneill@gcspei.ca](mailto:nmacneill@gcspei.ca).