



2021/2022 RE-ENTRY PLAN

MARCH 3, 2022



**Lethbridge
SCHOOL DIVISION**

LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DIVISION

433 – 15 STREET SOUTH
LETHBRIDGE ALBERTA
T1J 2Z4

PHONE: (403) 380-5300
FAX: (403) 327-4387
WWW.LETHSD.AB.CA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents.....	2
Lethbridge School Division Pandemic Planning – Re-entry 2021-22.....	3
Message from the Board.....	4
Guiding Principles for Planning	6
Provincial Background and Overview	7
Government of Alberta’s 2021-22 School Year Plan	7
Scenario 1: In-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)	
Scenario 2: At-home learning (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)	
Immunization Clinics	
Plan Subject to Change	
Guiding Documents.....	9
South Zone AHS Environmental Public Health Contacts	9
In-school Delivery of Learning.....	10
Environmental Measures	10
Screening for Illness and Staying Home When Sick	11
Management of Symptomatic Individuals and Individuals Tested for COVID-19	12
Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette.....	15
Responding to Illness at School.....	16
Transportation	16
Visitors to the School	16
Large Group Gatherings	17
Masks	17
Elementary and Middle School	
High School	
Visitors	
Physical Distancing.....	17
Cohorts.....	18
Elementary Schools.....	
Middle Schools.....	
High Schools.....	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities	18
Elementary	
Middle and High School	
Staying Updated with Health Protocols and Guidelines	19
Out-of-School Learning: Division E-Learning.....	19
Provincial Scenario 2 – At-home Learning	20
Provincial Assessment.....	21
Provincial Resources	
Wellness.....	21
Hazard Assessment and Control	23

2021/2022 School Year



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Welcome back to a new school year!

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to present to you the 2021/2022 Re-Entry Plan for Lethbridge School Division. This document is a collaborative effort that reflects both the Guiding Principles and Guiding Documents which serve as the cornerstone to the decisions made for our path forward. It also reflects and has taken into consideration the valuable insights and perspectives received from our community partners.

This school year has been anticipated with both expectation and hesitation. Expectation because we have longed to fill the hallways again with students and have yearned for the ability to have 'all the things' that make school an exciting place of learning and discovery. Hesitation because the past 17 months have taught us that the ground below our feet can shift, and time and time again we have been called to be malleable with our expectations, leaving us to grieve the pieces we have lost.

As a community, amid our creativity, drive forward and encouragement to each other to 'keep going,' we have become weary, frustrated and cautious. We have seen the mental wellness of our students, staff and families suffer through this difficult season.

COVID protocols - masking and cohorts in particular - have been a divisive force within our community. The Board has heard various perspectives on these matters throughout the pandemic, and as we near the start-up of this school year, advocacy for these varying perspectives has been communicated strongly. We thank each person who reached out to us to convey their concerns and ideas.

At the end of the day, no matter the dividing factor, there is one common link between each of us - we want what is best for kids. It is for each student that we are here - to support their intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs. We believe in growing learners to be innovative thinkers who are successful, confident, respectful and caring. As a Board, we believe the 2021/2022 Re-Entry Plan sets us on course to be able to do just this.

We encourage you to review this Re-Entry Plan and would appreciate hearing any feedback you may have. We believe each person has a voice and perspective that is valuable, and the mental wellness of our Division Family is paramount. As such, the Board will reach out to you, our community, in the coming weeks to hear your story and ensure we are doing all we can to support students, staff and families. We are proud of each of you for your tireless efforts to ensure that students not only endure but thrive.

**Thank you again for viewing
our plan and supporting
Lethbridge School Division**



Christine Light
Vice-Chair
Lethbridge School Division

LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DIVISION 2021/2022 RE-ENTRY PLAN

Summary of Updates for March 1, 2022

Page 8 - Added information concerning the government's March 1 update.

Page 11 - Wording change to the Screening for Illness and Staying Home When Sick section.

Pages 12-15 - Management of Individuals who are Symptomatic/Asymptomatic and/or Tested for COVID-19 chart replaced with new information

Page 16 - Changes were made to the COVID Symptom Check section.

Page 16 - The section on Transportation, masks on bus, has been updated, along with the section on Managing Visitor Contacts.

Page 17 - The section pertaining to Large Group Gatherings was removed and replaced with a section on Strategies for Reducing Crowding. The section regarding masks has also been updated.

Page 18 - In the cohort and extra-curricular and co-curricular activities areas, information regarding has been updated to reflect the province's move to Step 2.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PLANNING

- The safety and well-being of students and staff is a priority.
- The School Division will attend to the protocols and recommendations established by Alberta Health Services.
- The Board believes that education is a shared responsibility and fully supports parents' role as outlined in Section 32 of the Education Act:

A parent has the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be provided to the parent's child, and as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- (a) act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
 - (b) take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31,
 - (c) ensure that the child attends school regularly,
 - (d) ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
 - (e) co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child,
 - (f) encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and
 - (g) engage in the child's school community.
- Children and staff who are vulnerable may require attention to accommodations.
 - Students will have quality learning opportunities that are guided by Alberta Education mandates and the provincial Programs of Study.
 - Staff will have access to the professional learning, collaboration and support they need to grow instructional practice in all potential methods of delivery.
 - Consistency of program delivery over time is important for sound allocation of staffing and resources.

PROVINCIAL BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

- March 15, 2020, Alberta's K-12 schools were closed for in-school classes due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The primary mode of delivery was online learning, although some students who did not have access to technology were accessing learning with hard-copy resources.
- The 2020-2021 school year started with in-school delivery of learning with a number of safety protocols in place (e.g. masks, cohorts, hygiene focus, sanitization, extra cleaning, restrictions on co-curricular and extra-curricular to maintain integrity of cohorts). Lethbridge School Division also provided the option of "at-home learning" for students with three pivot points (students could change from in-school to at-home learning and visa versa).
- On May 26, 2021, Alberta government announced an "Open for Summer Plan." This plan followed a year of varying restrictions across all sectors. The stages for the "Open for Summer Plan" are based on immunization percentages of eligible Albertans (age 12+) and hospitalization rates. Stage 1 of the reopening plan started June 1 (two weeks following 50% of eligible Albertans receiving one dose of a vaccine and less than 800 hospitalizations). Stage 2 started on June 10 (60% of eligible Albertans receiving one dose of a vaccine and less than 500 hospitalizations).

PROVINCIAL BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

- Stage 3 started July 1 (two weeks after 70% of eligible Albertans receiving at least one dose of a vaccination). All restrictions were lifted, including a ban on indoor social gatherings. Isolation requirements for confirmed cases of COVID-19 and some protective measures in continuing care settings remained. The general indoor provincial mask mandate was lifted with the statement that masking may still be required in limited and specific settings.

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA'S 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR PLAN

On August 13, 2021, Alberta Government released the "2021-2022 School Year Plan" [2021-2022 School Year Plan \(alberta.ca\)](#). This plan serves as the primary guide for Lethbridge School Division "2021-22 School Re-entry Plan."

The Government of Alberta has two contingency scenarios in case the COVID-19 pandemic impacts the education system:

Scenario 1: In-school classes (near normal with enhanced health measures)

- School authorities must implement routine measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses
- Additional public health recommendations for student learning and extracurricular activities for those unable to receive immunizations
- Outbreak management and interventions similar to influenza outbreak response

Scenario 2: At-home learning (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

- School authorities will offer at-home learning opportunities to students
- Schools will work with families to ensure student learning continues
- Teachers will continue to assess student progress
- Continue to follow the public health measures in place

Immunization Clinics

As part of the Re-entry Plan communication from Alberta Government, it was announced that COVID-19 immunization clinics are being planned for grades 7 through 12 schools across the province. AHS has indicated that students under 18 will not be vaccinated without parent or guardian consent. When available, consent forms will be accessible online or from the school.

September 3 Provincial Update

On Sept. 3, the Government of Alberta announced further actions to protect the health system from COVID-19. The province made masks mandatory for all indoor public spaces and workplaces starting Sept. 4. Schools were not required to implement masking but the government added school boards will continue to set COVID-19 management policies as they deem appropriate. More information can be found here: [COVID](#)

September 15 Provincial Update

On Sept. 15, the Government of Alberta announced new temporary health measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19. For schools, that included mandatory masking for students in grades 4 and up, plus staff and teachers in all grades.

September 20 Provincial Update

The province implemented a Restriction Exemption Program (REP) for businesses in the province. School jurisdictions can implement the REP for activities that are non-curricular.

October 5 Provincial Update

Minister of Health and Minister of Education wrote all school boards strongly encourage all school authorities to develop policies for vaccination of staff. Stated in press conference with Chief Medical Officer of Health.

October 12 Provincial Update

Alberta Health implemented new protocol for reporting COVID contacts. School jurisdictions work with Alberta Health Services to provide notification to parents if their child may have been exposed to a COVID-19 case who was infectious while at school. Alberta government to report alerts and outbreaks on the Alberta COVID website (map).

October 27 Provincial Update

Minister of Education announced that diploma examinations will be weighted at 10% of a student's final grade rather than 30%.

November 1 Provincial Update

Alberta Health and Alberta Education provided guidance for COVID-19 case notification. Following recommendations by the provincial government, the school division put in Vaccination Procedures for employees, substitute and casual personnel, independent contractors, tenants, practicum students and guests. These procedures can be found on the school division website under [Policy - Workplace Health and Safety Section. Policies | Lethbridge School Division \(lethsd.ab.ca\)](https://lethsd.ab.ca/Policy-Workplace-Health-and-Safety-Section-Policies).

February 8 Provincial Update

The Government of Alberta announced plans to gradually lift public health restrictions, in three steps. Starting Feb. 9, as part of Step 1, the Government of Alberta removed the Restrictions Exemption Program. Effective Feb. 14, the Province of Alberta has announced the removal of mandatory masks for children from ECS and Grade 12 while attending school.

March 1 Provincial Update

On March 1, The Government of Alberta entered Step 2 in the province's plan to gradually lift public health restrictions.



GUIDING DOCUMENTS

1	Parents' Guide 2021/2022 School Year	<u>Parent Guide 2021-2022 (alberta.ca)</u>
2	Parent Letter from Dr. Hinshaw	<u>ADMINSA3975 (alberta.ca)</u>
3	Guidance for Respiratory Illness Prevention and Management in Schools	<u>Guidance for Respiratory Illness Prevention and Management in Schools (alberta.ca)</u>
4	Public Health Management of Respiratory Illness in Schools: Q & A for school administrators	<u>Public Health Management of Respiratory Illness in Schools: QA for School Administrators (alberta.ca)</u>
5	2021-2022 School Year Plan	<u>2021-2022 School Year Plan</u>
6	Daily Health Checklist Children under 18 and Adults	<u>Alberta Health Daily Checklist</u>
7	Daily Health Checklist - Other Languages	<u>Daily Health Checklist</u>
8	Isolation and Quarantine Requirements	<u>Requirements</u>
9	Attending School Safely Alberta	<u>Preparing for a new school year Alberta.ca</u>
10	Provincial Assessment	<u>Preparing for a new school year Alberta.ca</u>
11	Alberta COVID Youth Mental Health Hub	<u>Jack.org - COVID-19 Hub</u>
12	Guidance for Schools (K-12) and School Buses - Scenario 1	<u>COVID-19 Guidance for Schools and School Buses - Scenario 1</u>
13	Alberta Restriction Exemption Program (NOW RESCINDED)	<u>COVID-19 public health actions</u>
14	Resource Guide for Managing COVID-19 Cases in School (K-12) Settings	<u>Resource Guide</u>
15	Online Self-Assessment Tool	<u>Self-Assessment</u>
16	Information for at-home rapid testing	<u>Rapid Testing</u>

The Lethbridge School Division “2021/2022 School Re-entry Plan” is subject to change. The Board of Trustees will continue to monitor local context as well as recommendations and protocol mandates from Alberta Education, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and municipal government.

SOUTH ZONE AHS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CONTACTS

she.southzoneeph@ahs.ca

Lethbridge 403-388-6689

IN-SCHOOL DELIVERY OF LEARNING

The Re-entry Plan for Lethbridge School Division is guided by the provincial “2021-2022 School Year Plan,” other provincial support documents, and consideration of local context. In circumstances where this plan exceeds provincial requirements, schools will adhere to this document understanding that School Boards have been given the authority to exceed provincial protocols where they feel it is important to keep students safe and healthy. In instances where this plan exceeds the minimum requirements, the trustees recognize this and assume accountability for the decision.

VACCINATION

- All Albertans aged 5 and older are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Vaccines provide a significant level of protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19. Two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine plus a booster, when appropriate, have been shown to be highly protective against infection, and most importantly against severe disease.
- While vaccine uptake in children aged 5 to 11 years old continues to grow, the subsequent protective effects of the vaccine may take time for this age group. It is important that those around them, including parents/guardians, older students and school staff, receive the vaccine in order to reduce community transmission and protect this age group.

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

HVAC Systems	HVAC systems maintained in accordance with manufacturer operational guidelines. Ongoing monitoring occurs and filters changed on a regular basis to ensure fresh air is brought into the buildings at prescribed rates.
Outdoor Activities	Outdoor activities are encouraged.
Enhanced Cleaning	Schools will continue to have the enhanced cleaning protocols put in place for the 2021-2022 school year. Lethbridge School Division works to sanitize, wash and provide clean conditions with floors, walls, doors, fixtures, cupboards, counters, desks and instructional resources every day. High-touch surfaces sanitized on a regular basis throughout the day.
Additional Details	Further information regarding the ventilation systems in Lethbridge School Division can be found at this link: VENTILATION

SCREENING FOR ILLNESS AND STAYING HOME WHEN SICK

Screening

Before leaving home, staff (including substitute teachers), children/students, visitors, and volunteers who will access the school for work or education, are encouraged to self-screen for symptoms each day that they enter the school using the applicable checklist for their age group COVID-19 information: daily checklists - [Open Government \(alberta.ca\)](https://open.alberta.ca/open-government-alberta-ca).

Anyone who reports symptoms should be directed to stay home, seek health care advice as appropriate (e.g., call Health Link 811, or their primary health care practitioner, or 911 for emergency response), and fill out the AHS Online Self-Assessment tool to determine if they should access a PCR test ([COVID-19 Self-Assessment \(alberta.ca\)](https://open.alberta.ca/open-government-alberta-ca)). If a PCR test is not recommended they may conduct an at-home rapid test. For more information refer to the rapid testing at home website ([Education At-Home Rapid Testing Program \(alberta.ca\)](https://open.alberta.ca/open-government-alberta-ca)).

Alberta Isolation Requirements

Students, staff or visitors who feel ill or have any symptoms of COVID-19 cannot enter the school. Anyone who tests positive or has symptoms of COVID-19 must follow Alberta's isolation requirements ([Isolation and quarantine requirements | Alberta.ca](https://open.alberta.ca/open-government-alberta-ca)).



MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS AND INDIVIDUALS TESTED FOR COVID-19

Current as of March 1, 2022

Symptoms	COVID-19 Test Result:	Management of Individual: Note – fully vaccinated means staff who have received the complete vaccine series for COVID-19 and it has been 14 days after the second dose in a two dose series, or one dose in a one dose series (i.e. Janssen vaccine) or student (2 doses of mRNA vaccine)
Symptomatic	Positive molecular (e.g. PCR) test or rapid antigen takehome test	<p>Isolate for 5 days from the start of symptoms or until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving, whichever is longer, if symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following their home isolation period, all fully vaccinated individuals must wear masks at all times when in a public place or otherwise in the company of other persons for up to 5 more days (10 days total). This means they must eat or drink alone, away from others. If it's not possible to give each individual on day 6-10 isolation a private space to eat in, they can cohort together with other COVID-19-infected individuals for meals in the same well ventilated room. Distancing is recommended and individuals should remain masked at all times when not actively consuming food and drink. If schools find this operationally challenging to accommodate, the consistent use of a 10 day absence prior to return, for both immunized and non-immunized cases, is an acceptable approach. <p>Not fully vaccinated: Isolate at home for 10 days from the start of symptoms or until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving, whichever is longer, if symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition.</p>

MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS AND INDIVIDUALS TESTED FOR COVID-19

Current as of February 14, 2022

Symptoms	COVID-19 Test Result:	Management of Individual: Note – fully vaccinated means staff who have received the complete vaccine series for COVID-19 and it has been 14 days after the second dose in a two dose series, or one dose in a one dose series (i.e. Janssen vaccine) or student (2 doses of mRNA vaccine)
Symptomatic	Negative molecular (e.g. PCR) test	Fully vaccinated staff (i.e. staff who have received the complete vaccine series for COVID-19 and it has been 14 days after the second dose in a two dose series or one dose in a one dose series [i.e. Janssen vaccine]) or student (2 doses mRNA vaccine): Stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving, before cautiously resuming normal activities. Not fully vaccinated: Stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving if symptoms are not related to a preexisting condition, before cautiously resuming normal activities.
	Negative rapid antigen take-home test	<p>NOTE: A negative test result does not rule out infection. Rapid tests can be falsely negative, early in COVID infections. Continue monitoring your symptoms and following public health guidelines.</p> <p>Isolate immediately for 24 hours.</p> <p>Take a second rapid antigen test not less than 24 hours from initial test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If negative, continue isolating until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving before cautiously resuming normal activities. - If positive, continue isolation: <p>Fully vaccinated: Isolate at home for 5 days or until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving, whichever is longer. For up to five days following their home-isolation period, they must wear masks at all times when in a public place or otherwise in the company of other persons for up to 5 more days (10 days total). This means they must eat or drink alone, away from others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If it's not possible to give each individual on day 6-10 isolation a private space to eat in, they can cohort together with other COVID-19-infected individuals for meals in the same well ventilated room. Distancing is recommended and individuals should remain masked at all times when not actively consuming food and drink. - If schools find this operationally challenging to accommodate, the consistent use of a 10 day absence prior to return, for both immunized and non-immunized cases, is an acceptable approach.

MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS AND INDIVIDUALS TESTED FOR COVID-19

Symptomatic

Not Tested

Student: If other symptoms (chills, sore throat/painful swallowing, runny nose/congestion, feeling unwell/fatigued, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, unexplained loss of appetite, muscle/joint aches, headache or conjunctivitis):

ONE symptom: stay home, monitor for 24 hours. If improves, return when well enough to go (testing not necessary).

TWO symptoms OR ONE symptom that persists or worsens: Stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, and other symptoms are improving.

Adult: If other symptoms, stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, and other symptoms are improving.

Asymptomatic

Positive
molecular
(e.g. PCR)
test

Fully vaccinated staff (i.e. staff who have received the complete vaccine series for COVID-19 and it has been 14 days after the second dose in a two dose series or one dose in a one dose series [i.e. Janssen vaccine]) or student (2 doses of mRNA vaccine): Isolate for 5 days from the collection date of the swab or from the date when the molecular test was completed.

- Following their home isolation period, all fully vaccinated individuals must wear masks at all times when in a public place or otherwise in the company of other persons for up to 5 more days (10 days total). This means they must eat or drink alone, away from others.

- If it's not possible to give each individual on day 6-10 isolation a private space to eat in, they can cohort together with other COVID-19-infected individuals for meals in the same well ventilated room. Distancing is recommended and individuals should remain masked at all times when not actively consuming food and drink.

- If schools find this operationally challenging to accommodate, the consistent use of a 10 day absence prior to return, for both immunized and non-immunized cases, is an acceptable approach.

Not fully vaccinated: Isolate at home for 10 days from the collection date of the swab or from the date when the molecular test was completed.

MANAGEMENT OF SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS AND INDIVIDUALS TESTED FOR COVID-19

Asymptomatic	Positive Rapid antigen takehome test	<p>Individuals can conduct a second test not less than 24 hours after the initial test, and if negative, and still no symptoms, they do not need to continue to isolate. If the result is positive on the repeat test, they should continue to isolate. If at any time, symptoms develop, they must follow isolation instructions for symptomatic individuals.</p> <p>Fully vaccinated staff (i.e. staff who have received the complete vaccine series for COVID-19 and it has been 14 days after the second dose in a two dose series or one dose in a one dose series [i.e. Janssen vaccine]) or student (2 doses of mRNA vaccine): Isolate at home for 5 days from the collection date of the swab or from the date when the rapid take-home test was completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following their home isolation period, all fully vaccinated individuals must wear masks at all times when in a public place or otherwise in the company of other persons for up to 5 more days (10 days total). This means they must eat or drink alone, away from others. - If it's not possible to give each staff on day 6-10 isolation a private space to eat in, they can cohort together with other COVID-infected individuals for meals in the same well-ventilated room. Distancing is recommended and individuals should remain masked at all times when not actively consuming food and drink. - If schools find this operationally challenging to accommodate, the consistent use of a 10 day absence prior to return, for both immunized and non-immunized cases, is an acceptable approach. <p>Not fully vaccinated: Isolate at home for 10 days from the collection date of the swab or from the date when the rapid take-home test was completed.</p>
	Negative	No isolation required.

HAND HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Hand Hygiene	<p>Hand sanitizer available in common areas and instructional spaces.</p> <p>Students encouraged to wash hands with soap and running water.</p> <p>Promotion of hand hygiene before and after activities (e.g., entering/leaving school or classroom, boarding/exiting the bus, changing activities, before and after using shared equipment, before and after eating or serving food, after using washrooms, before and after having physical contact with other staff or students, etc.).</p> <p>Giving verbal reminders for hand hygiene and posting signs as reminders.</p> <p>Schools can download posters at Preparing for a new school year Alberta.ca</p>
Respiratory Etiquette	<p>Encourage students, staff and visitors to use proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., sneezing into the elbow or a tissue, discarding tissues immediately into a lined bin, performing hand hygiene). Have information available (e.g., signs) for individuals on these practices, as needed.</p>

RESPONDING TO ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

COVID Symptom Check

Anyone with symptoms should isolate immediately, following AH isolation guidance and orders, and can determine if COVID -19 testing is necessary by accessing the AHS Online Self-Assessment Tool. COVID-19 testing by AHS is currently limited to individuals in high-risk settings or for those who are at high risk of severe outcomes.

See “Management of Individuals who are Symptomatic and/or Tested for COVID-19” chart on previous page for further details.

Proof of a negative COVID-19 test result is not necessary for a student, teacher or staff member to return to school.

- It is strongly recommended that household contacts who are NOT fully vaccinated, of COVID-19 cases, stay home for 10 days from the date of last household exposure. In addition, they should monitor for symptoms and if they develop any symptoms, should isolate and complete the AHS Self-Assessment tool to determine if they need to be tested for COVID-19.

In-School Actions

Schools will have a plan in place if a student or staff member develops any symptoms of illness as described in the screening tool while at school including:

- Having a separate area for students and staff who are sick; staff to go home immediately and parents/guardians of sick children called to pick up the student.
- Any individual who is symptomatic and waiting for departure will be provided with a mask.
- Any staff caring for a symptomatic child will wear a mask.
- Sanitizing of area with symptomatic individual.

TRANSPORTATION

Masks on buses

As of March 1, 2022, the provincial masking mandate is removed as part of Step 2 of the province’s 3-step approach.

Additional School Bus Protocols

Drivers will assign seating by household. Drivers will take attendance.
Drivers will follow screening and COVID-19 Management protocols.
Southland (provider) will continue to implement the same cleaning protocols that were in place for the 2020/2021 school year, including increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces during the day and thorough cleaning each evening.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Managing Visitor Contacts

As was the case in 2020/2021, schools will be secure at the beginning of the school year. Visitors will be required to access schools using the outside bell (connected to the office), confirm they have reviewed the Alberta Health Daily Checklist (posted at sign-in), sign in and sanitize.

STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING CROWDING

Strategies for reducing crowding

Schools can consider implementing strategies to reduce crowding between all students/staff in areas inside and outside of the classroom, including hallways, washrooms and common areas. This could include:

- Staggering start and end times for classes to avoid crowded entrances or exits and hallways.
- Removing and restaging seating in public areas to reduce crowding.
- Consider spacing of desks to minimize risk of disease transmission.
- Consider removing additional items or pieces of equipment that are not in use from classrooms to allow more space to spread out.
- Considering utilizing virtual options instead of holding large in-person gatherings of students and staff

In situations where crowding or large gatherings are occurring, consider options to promote hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, not attending school when ill and cleaning and disinfecting on a regular basis before and after activities.

MASKS

Masking is no longer required for students in K-12 during curriculum related activities or when participating in extracurricular school activities. Masking during the school day remains a personal health choice for students, their parents/guardians and staff. As of March 1, 2022, the provincial masking mandate was removed as part of Step 2 of the province's 3-step approach. Staff and students can continue to wear masks if they choose to. Schools should support students and staff who choose to wear masks.

- Students at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19 are recommended to continue wearing a well-fitting three layer cloth mask or medical mask to reduce their risk of infection.
 - Students who become ill while at school should be provided with a medical mask that can be worn while waiting to go home
 - Fully vaccinated students or staff recovering from COVID-19 who are completing their day 6-10 mandatory masking period at school must wear a mask at all times and must not share breaks where masks must be removed to consume food or beverages with non-COVID-19 infected individuals. If more than one individual is isolating, it is possible to cohort people with COVID-19 for breaks and lunch.
- In situations where masks are worn, as described above:
- Masks should be well-constructed, well-fitted and properly worn.
 - If non-medical masks are worn, they should be constructed of at least three layers: two of breathable tightly woven fabric, such as cotton, and an additional effective middle filter layer, such as non-woven polypropylene.
 - Medical masks can also be worn to provide additional protection.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Schools will continue to physically distance students wherever possible. This may include strategies such as:

- removing and rearranging seating in common areas
- staggering the times that classes start and end to prevent crowded hallways
- assigning specific doors to students for entry and exit
- managing hallways to promote the flow of foot traffic and physical distancing

COHORTS

A cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together. As of March 1, 2022, cohorting is no longer a provincial requirement, as part of Step two of the province's 3-step approach to lifting restrictions. Our schools vary in size and configuration. Schools will begin to relax cohort structures, taking into consideration the "Strategies for reducing crowding," outlined on Page 17, as well as sound management strategies.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Off-site activities (e.g., field trips for group physical activity, performance activities and recreational activities that are part of the curriculum) are permitted, but will be carefully considered.

Elementary Schools

As of March 1, elementary schools can begin to introduce after-school activities. Decisions regarding the nature and extent of these voluntary activities will be site based.

Middle and High Schools

- Middle and high school activities will follow the "[Extra-curricular and Co-curricular Phase-in Plan](#)." The plan is fluid and responsive to provincial plans and local context. With the elimination of the provincial REP, spectators are no longer required to show proof of vaccination or negative PCR/ Rapid Test. As part of Step 2 of the province's move to lift public health restrictions, capacity on all large venues and entertainment venues has been lifted, and wearing of masks is an individual choice.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Middle and High Schools

- Decision-making regarding co-curricular and extra-curricular activities has been guided by the following priorities:
 - (1) Keeping schools open for learning, with attention to measures that mitigate the spread of COVID.
 - (2) Engagement of students in activity. Engagement in activity is part of overall well-being of students. Engagement of students in activity can move along a continuum of maintaining cohort integrity at the school level and then expanding it to external cohorts.
 - (3) Engagement of school community and broader community, as spectators is the ultimate goal but we will need to keep students in school to meet this goal.



STAYING UPDATED WITH HEALTH PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES

Updated health protocols and guidelines can be found on Lethbridge School Division website at this link [COVID-19 Information](#) as well as Alberta government website at this link [Alberta COVID-19 Updates](#)

OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNING: DIVISION E-LEARNING

In the spring of 2021, the school division promoted an “E-learning” program as a program of choice for students from grades 1 to 12. Any student from within or external to the division had the opportunity to register for this program. Those interested in E-Learning through Lethbridge School Division are encouraged to contact Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School, Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School or Lethbridge Collegiate Institute for more information on the application process. Further details regarding the E-learning program can be found under Programs on the Division website: [E-Learning](#)

PROVINCIAL SCENARIO 2: AT-HOME LEARNING

The provincial “2021-2022 School Year Plan” outlines expected response to the potential of what is referred to as “Contingency Scenario 2: At-home learning (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled).”

Under this contingency, the school division will ensure the following is in place:

- The school will work with families to ensure that learning will continue, and that the needs of students are met.
- Schools will have structures in place to deliver at-home learning using the online platform of Teams (Office 365). Most students received portions of delivery last school year by accessing Teams during class quarantine or during periods of time when the province mandated that all students learn at home.
- High school students - should contingency Scenario 2 be in place, the ability for the principal to award unallocated credits to students in grades 10, 11 and 12 may be activated. The total maximum number of unallocated credits any one student can use to graduate will be limited to 20 credits.
- Teachers will continue to be responsible for instruction, assessment and reporting.
- Students continue to be responsible to actively engage in learning and diligently pursue their education.

SHIFTS TO AT-HOME LEARNING

School authorities continue to have the discretion to shift a class or individual grade to short-term at-home/online learning if needed to address operational challenges at a school.

Approval from the Minister of Education is required for a short-term shift of one or more schools or an entire school authority to at-home/online learning for operational reasons.

A decision for a school authority request will be based on student absentee rates, the ability of a school or school authority to have staff available to operate in-school classes, and other relevant information including local health data, if available.

PUBLIC REPORTING

The rapid rise of cases has required changes to case investigation protocols, where resources are being focused on the highest risk settings and individuals. Alberta Health and Alberta Education are working on strategies for reporting and more information will be posted when available.

PROVINCIAL RESOURCES

The province has produced a variety of resources that schools may access (posters, information). Link is as follows: [School Resources](#)

PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENT

At the start of the school year, Alberta Education's communication was that the provincial testing program will resume fully for the 2021/2022 school year, including the high school Diploma Examination programs and the Provincial Achievement Testing program for grade.

On October 27, Alberta Education communicated that the Diploma Examinations will count for 10% of a student's final grade rather than 30%.

With the announcement of an extended school winter break in January, 2022, the province announced that the January diploma exams have been cancelled.

A decision will be made later in 2022 regarding April, June and August diploma exams.

At this time, the province has indicated that diploma exams will be offered for every diploma exam course in April, June and August administrations. This is subject to change.

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (including Part A English Language Arts, Français/French Language Arts and K&E English Language Arts), will be delayed to the week of January 20, 2022.

WELLNESS

Provincial Resources:

- If a child needs someone to talk to, they can text CONNECT to the Kids' Help Phone at 686868 or call 1-800-668-6868. This 24/7, free service offers professional counselling, information and referrals. The Jack.org Alberta COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub also has great information for teens on mental health, self-care and supporting others.
- If a parent, school staff member or other adult needs someone to talk to, they are encouraged to call the confidential, toll-free, 24/7 mental health helpline at 1-877-303-2642. This helpline is attended by a team that includes nurses, psychologists and social workers.
- The Alberta Health Services website Help in Tough Times also has helpful information, including the Text4Hope resource, which you can subscribe to for free by texting COVID19HOPE to 393939. It offers 3 months of supportive text messages written by mental health therapists.

WELLNESS

Division Wellness Plan

Our Division Wellness Work Plan 2020-2023 is focused on building an inclusive, positive school culture that embraces diversity and facilitates access to learning for all. Lethbridge School Division recognizes returning to school post-COVID-19 will present with heightened levels of stress for staff, students and families. In recent conversations with parents we have heard common themes of concern. These themes involve the desire to receive communication around “what is certain” in the fall, what social emotional supports will be in place in the fall for their children, and how will our Division address curricular/learning gaps moving forward.

As per Policy 504.2- Wellness In Schools, we aim to support social (connection), physical (activity), emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs in our schools. We will continue to frame success through a trauma-informed lens when we return to learning in September.

Alberta Health Services has worked diligently to provide our community with several resources supporting Wellness that can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>. We will continue to follow Alberta Health Services Guidelines and Recommendations to best serve and support our schools in keeping students and staff safe. At this AHS site, you will find helpful tips and guidance/documents that provide supports in response to COVID-19.

Wellness grants in schools for the 2021-2022 school year will support enhancing physical activity and outdoor learning. Through current research we know that mental health is positively impacted by being physically active and being in nature ([The Impact of COVID-19 on Physical Activity Behavior and Well-Being of Canadians \(nih.gov\)](#), [Nature and mental health: An ecosystem service perspective | Science Advances \(sciencemag.org\)](#)). Students will benefit from movement opportunities and being outside regularly as we recalibrate from the difficult year we have had.

In order to best serve and support Wellness in our Division, we know that a coordinated multi-agency and multi-tiered approach supporting all individuals in our system is paramount. While ensuring community is part of our return, we also recognize the classroom is the first line of universal support provided to students. Relationships are the foundation of robust instruction. The School Division works closely with various agencies within the Lethbridge community, recognizing that we cannot “do it all” for staff and students.

Returning to school in September will bring many Wellness challenges to the surface that students, staff and families experienced during the height of the pandemic. It is also understood that a focus on Wellness is at the foundation of a healthy learner and staff member. Endorsing a system that “takes care of each other” ensures that we all are responsible and are accountable for the positive and healthy culture that we co-create.

Our Wellness Teams work closely with Administrators, Learning Support teachers, family members and classroom teachers to best support students who are struggling to function within the educational context. Teachers understand the importance of universal teaching strategies such as self-regulation opportunities in the classroom, assessment to guide instruction, accommodations/adaptations and visuals (i.e. schedules, if then statements), behaviour plans, ISP/IPPs, classroom expectations, peer mentoring/support) that help all learners to be successful. If students continue to present with social emotional concerns that impact learning, referrals are made to the school Wellness Team.

HAZARD ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL

- Hazard assessments and controls help build safe and healthy workplaces.
- They are at the core of Lethbridge School Division's occupational health and safety management system.
- COVID-19 is a biological hazard. There are four factors that will contribute to how this hazard impacts schools:
 - o People
 - o Equipment
 - o Materials
 - o Environment
- When hazards related to COVID-19 cannot be completely eliminated, the following hierarchy of controls are required:
 - o Engineering controls - These control the hazard at the source. Examples include:
 - Placing barriers or partitions between staff, removing seats from lunchrooms and dining areas, rearranging classroom desks, reassigning lockers, isolating staff from virus via clear plastic barrier, increasing ventilation rates where possible, isolation rooms for sick.
 - o Administrative controls - These controls change the way workers, volunteers and patrons interact. Examples include:
 - Policies for physical distancing, limiting hours of operations, providing adequate supplies, requiring hand and respiratory hygiene, visual reminders for hand hygiene, visual reminders of social distancing, increased frequency of cleaning, practices and procedures such as staying home if sick, minimize non-essential travel and travel between schools, training and supervision.
 - o PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
 - PPE may be needed depending on the context of the worker. Face masks are not required in the provincial re-entry plan. There may be some situations where a worker is at higher risk and chooses to use PPE.
 - For example, if an employee is working with a student with exceptionalities and has specific health or safety concerns, the employee would speak directly with the school supervisor regarding equipment concerns. The supervisor, in turn, will work with Inclusive Education if specific equipment is deemed necessary.
 - Examples of PPE include gloves, face protections and includes training.
 - o When a hazard cannot be controlled by a single control method, a combination of these controls should be implemented to provide an acceptable level of safety.
 - If following a hazard assessment, it is determined that the risk of transmission cannot be reasonably controlled, employers should be prepared to suspend specific work tasks.
 - Employers and employees have a responsibility to undertake a risk assessment as part of OH&S requirements to see if any risk mitigation strategies need to be undertaken. The school division has the responsibility to ensure the "measures to reduce risk" outlined in the provincial re-entry plan are implemented.
 - Staff have a right to:
 - o Know about safety hazards to which they may be exposed.
 - o Know about reasonably anticipated contact.
 - o Respect for privacy concerns (e.g. medical info); confidentiality must be maintained when working with a staff member who may require accommodations.