



Hillview Elementary School.

Phone: (250 542 5465)

Principal: Angela Utley

Vice Principal: Karen Rogers



January 7, 2022

Dear Hillview Elementary Families,

Happy New Year! We hope our families had a wonderful winter break and we wish all of you continued health and well-being in the New year. We are ready to welcome our students back on Monday, January 10th. In preparation for the return, please read the information below.

Over this last week, our school staff have been working on systems to keep our school safe so that we can continue to engage our students in their learning. I would like to extend our appreciation for their commitment and dedication. Schools across the province were tasked this week with implementing enhanced safety measures and a renewed commitment to safety protocols already in place.

Our January re-start plan is designed to prioritize the health and safety of students and staff, while maximizing in-class instructional time for all students.

As you know, the Omicron Variant is highly contagious and transmissible, and it has a much lower incubation period. We will depend on the commitment and support of our entire school community to minimize the transmission in our school to ensure that our students and staff remain healthy, and our school can remain staffed for in-school learning. Keeping our students and staff healthy will be a team effort and we ask that all of our families review the district's [Communicable Disease Plan](#) and review the [district video](#) as well as the information below.

Our January re-start plan is designed to prioritize the health and safety of students and staff, while maximizing in-class instructional time for all students.

Please review the procedures below, as we continue to work together in a home/school partnership to ensure a healthy and safe school environment.

(Blue bullets are a continuation of current protocols, red bullets are new or re-implemented health and safety systems)

1. **Personal Health and Safety Measures: Family Responsibilities:**

- **Daily Health Check:** Prior to sending students to school each day, it is important that families complete a [Daily Health Check](#). With the Omicron Variant, symptoms may appear mild, but if your child has one symptom using the [K-12 Health Check App](#), they should not attend school on that day.
- **Reporting Student Illness:** As reported by the Ministry on Friday morning, the current contact tracing system is no longer sustainable or effective. The full details of the revised health authority tracing protocol for schools have not yet been communicated. However, one important factor that the health authority and our district will rely on, will be the daily attendance count of schools. Parents are reminded to **please ensure that you contact the school to report a student illness and absence.**

- **Masks:** As per the [Public Health Order dated December 3, 2021](#), students in K – 7, staff and visitors are required to wear 3 ply masks. Students, staff, and visitors with mask exemptions continue to follow any strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures. *Those with exemptions and who are unable to wear a mask all day continue to be encouraged to wear a mask **as much as they can**, due to the high transmission rates of the Omicron variant.*
- **Symptoms at School:** Students with symptoms of illness will be placed in the sickroom and the parent/caregiver will be contacted to pick-up the student immediately
- **Emergency Contact Information:** Please ensure that we have updated personal contact information and emergency contacts on file. There may be situations upon return to school, that we will need to contact all families, in the event of a functional school closure. Please see below for additional information regarding an **Emergent Functional School Closure**.
- **Carpooling:** Spread out in the vehicle as much as possible, and travel with the same people whenever possible. Practice hand hygiene and clean frequently touched surfaces. Set the vehicles' ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and open windows when the weather permits. Wear a mask.
- **Water Bottles:** All students are encouraged to have a personal water bottle, rather than drinking directly from the water fountains.
- **Visitor Access:** We will be limiting visitor to those that are supporting activities that benefit to student-to-student learning and wellbeing.

2. **Health and Safety Measures: School Responsibilities:**

- **Ventilation Systems:** are in good operating condition as designed and that preventative maintenance is conducted.
- **Enhanced Cleaners:** Cleaners are in place during the day to clean frequently touched surfaces in the school.
- **Continued focus on Hand Hygiene:** Hand sanitation stations continue to be located at all entry doors and students and staff are required to sanitize hands frequently throughout the day as per the direction in the PHO orders and District CDP.
- **Gathering and Events** – Rentals of school facilities have been cancelled at this time.
- **Sports** – All tournaments are cancelled. Inter-school sports may continue between two teams only. **No spectators permitted at this time.**
- **Return to a staggered entry and dismissal process:** We will not be returning to cohorts, however, to prevent crowding during transition times in the hallways following morning arrival, breaks and the end of the day dismissal, we will be implementing a staggered entry and exit system. Transition times in the hallways and movement throughout the school will follow a controlled and managed process. At the end of the day, students will be walked out and dismissed from their class line-up.



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3. *What is a Functional School Closure?*

The reason for a functional school closure would be dependent on a few factors, such as high rates of staff illness or due to a public health closure of the school. If there is high rate of staff absence, the school can no longer provide instruction or adequate student supervision.

At this time, we are hopeful that we will not experience a functional school closure, but given the high transmission rates of the variant, we need to proactively plan for a situation, in which the school could no longer fully operate for a short period of time (up to 7 days).

As a school, we have looked at ways in which teachers could quickly pivot to provide short-term remote learning communication and activities for students. As a proactive approach, teachers will communicate their plan to families soon, so that in the event of a short-term school closure, families would be familiar with the teacher's remote learning plan.

We ask that families also consider some **proactive planning** for a functional school closure. This pre-planning and preparation will alleviate angst for families in the event of receiving a call from the school to pick-up their child immediately. **Some pre-planning with friends, family or emergency contacts will help to support students while learning at home.**

Proactive Family Planning:

- ✓ Please ensure that the school office has **updated parent/guardian** contact information.
- ✓ Ensure that you have updated your **emergency contact information** and provided any changes to the office of who can pick-up your child from school.
- ✓ If you work full-time, consider **making a school closure plan** with friends and family so that you have childcare plans in place, should the school be required to close
- ✓ Does your child have ready access to a personal device so that they could access assignments, learning tasks or connect with their classroom teacher? If not, please communicate this to your child's classroom teacher.