

January 12, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to navigate the ever-evolving situation presented by the pandemic.

Over the coming days, we need to do all we can to maintain a healthy student population and workforce. This is critical as we anticipate staffing shortages and student absenteeism due to the highly contagious nature of the virus and we need to develop contingency plans to mitigate those disruptions.

**Based on government direction, all students will be returning to in-school learning on Jan. 17, 2022, under the updated [Restricted: Orange](#) measures.**

Schools may be reorganizing cohorts when required due to staff illness, isolation, and absenteeism. All efforts will be made to group students with their existing cohorts; however, if necessary, students may be reassigned to substitutes or specialist teachers or cohorts might be combined.

In the unfortunate event that staff coverage is unavailable, it is possible classes may need to be closed temporarily—the extent of time will depend on staff illness and availability of substitute staff. We will do our very best to communicate this to parents/guardians the day prior. Please note that this communication may come in the evening, so parents should watch their email as well as the school website and social media accounts for updates. We understand this is a tight timeline, however, the additional time after the end of the school day will allow us to attempt to fill the vacancies. Parents are also reminded that, depending on the extent of the illness in a school staff, it is possible the whole school could be impacted, resulting in a move to remote learning—this shift may be directed by Public Health or the school division.

In much the same way that our schools could be impacted by staffing shortages, our transportation department may also be affected. In the event that staffing shortages result in routes being cancelled, notices will be posted on the divisional website, social media accounts and an email notification will be sent to those affected.

Medical masks must be worn by all staff in RETSD sites during this period of high transmission. Students are allowed to wear a well-fitting mask with at least 3 layers. Additionally, medical masks will be provided for students if needed.

Please note that testing and the public health fundamentals (including not coming to school if you have [symptoms of COVID-19](#)) are part of an individual responsibility in the service of a collective effort to protect your child's health and the health of others. Let's all do our part to keep schools open.

Please contact your child's school with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Kelly Barkman  
Superintendent/CEO