

# 2021-22 Safe Schools Plan

The Response Planning Team wishes to thank all education sector staff for their efforts during the pandemic. The safety of our students and staff continues to be our top priority. Premier Scott Moe and Chief Medical Health Officer (CMHO) Dr. Shahab have instructed that Saskatchewan will enter the last phase of the Re-Opening Roadmap effective July 11, 2021. All public health orders will be lifted at this time.

COVID-19 restrictions will no longer be in place and the 2021-22 school year will proceed as during pre-pandemic years. Much like other businesses and sectors throughout the province, public health officials have determined that it is safe for schools to resume traditional in-class learning. Schools will not be required to have masking, physical distancing or other COVID-19 restrictions used in the 2020-21 school year.

High community vaccine uptake is key to protecting children ineligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. According to Dr. Shahab, children ages 11 and under are not independently mobile, so if the vaccination rate is high in parents, families, friends and educators, that indirectly protects children ages 11 and under. Schools have not been a major source of direct COVID-19 infection and the transmission rate is lower in schools than it is in the community.

The Ministry of Health will continue to offer best practice advice on how to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. This includes getting vaccinated as soon as you are eligible, staying home when you are sick, and ensuring hand hygiene and environmental cleaning protocols are consistently used (see Appendix A).

All schools will continue to have the support and engagement of local Medical Health Officers (MHOs) in responding to any public health risks in school settings, including COVID-19. These MHOs can provide locally-tailored approaches to respond to the presence of COVID-19 in school settings, should that occur, and put in place mitigation and response protocols that align with provincial standards. Local MHOs are also closely engaged with the Office of the CMHO.

Per Dr. Shahab,

“Public health—at both local and provincial levels—has a long history and well-established model for working with the education sector. As always, the Office of the CMHO will continue to work with local Medical Health Officers across the province, and collaborate with schools, divisions and the Ministry of Education, to continuously offer advice on the mitigation and management of COVID-19 in the school setting. Our longstanding track record of successfully working together has been further enhanced by our collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we remain committed to collaboration as we focus on a return to normal.”

**The current approach is subject to change if there is change in risk or epidemiology.**

To assist school divisions in planning for fall 2021, the following elements for consideration have been prepared. Unlike last year, there is no need to submit your plans to the Ministry of Education this year.

## Appendix A

Quick Reference Guidelines	
<b>Safe Attendance</b>	<p><i>Illness in Care</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students, staff, families who are ill should stay home.</li> </ul> <p><i>Communications</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple modes of ongoing communication should occur.</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Transportation</b>	<p><i>Transportation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning and disinfection should remain in place and be a standard practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Access</b>	<p><i>School-day Structure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No prescribed school-day structure is required.</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Facilities</b>	<p><i>Facilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-wide plan for enhanced cleaning and disinfection should continue to be in place.</li> <li>• Ensure hand washing facilities are operational (hot and cold running water) and stocked (soap and paper towel).</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Classrooms</b>	<p><i>Hygiene</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote appropriate hand hygiene.</li> </ul> <p><i>Physical Contact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no guidelines for physical distancing for students or staff.</li> </ul> <p><i>Instruction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Saskatchewan curriculum will be taught by teachers.</li> <li>• The Provincial Education Interim Plan provides guidance for this area.</li> </ul> <p><i>Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial exams are optional for the 2021-22 school year.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Safe Activities</b></p>	<p><i>Sports and Fitness Activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume regular activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Dance, Drama, Band, Choir</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume regular activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Extra-Curricular Activities and Field Trips</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume regular activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Nutrition Programs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume regular activities.</li> <li>• Continue good practice of controlling areas where children are preparing food and/or eating (seated, hand hygiene, cleaning and sanitation of food surfaces, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Items</b></p>	<p><i>Vaccinations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff assume the shared responsibility of assisting one another in maintaining healthy and safe workplaces.</li> <li>• Staff are encouraged to avail themselves of all Ministry of Health recommended vaccinations.</li> <li>• Staff are encouraged to discuss the efficacy of recommended vaccinations with their personal health care providers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Rapid Testing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to follow current practice.</li> </ul> <p><i>Contact Tracing and Quarantining</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The collaboration between the Saskatchewan Health Authority and schools will continue and will reflect the needs of the school as required.</li> </ul>