



2021–2022
COVID-19 STRATEGY
BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN

October 5, 2021

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What to Expect in 2021–22

In August, 2021, the Government of Saskatchewan released its recommendations for returning to school in 2021–22. ([Living With COVID: Long-Term COVID-19 Precautions Updated](#))

Horizon School Division’s COVID-19 Strategy is based on these recommendations. Should circumstances and levels of concern increase, [Horizon will follow the Horizon School Division Levels of Concern Protocol](#).

The goal of these Provincial recommendations is to limit the spread of COVID-19 without imposing widespread public health orders and restrictions as was necessary before vaccines were widely available. Wherever possible, Horizon School Division will follow the recommendations of the Saskatchewan Medical Health Authority.

Guidance to School Divisions as children return to schools, vaccination of children turning 12:

Horizon School Division recognizes individual choice, but strongly supports the recommendation from Health that all residents 12 and older are vaccinated.

Contact tracing will continue to occur, and unvaccinated close contacts may be directed to self-isolate as deemed appropriate by public health. The Saskatchewan Health Authority will offer school-based vaccination clinics similar to those offered at the end of the last school year. These clinics will enhance vaccine accessibility for those students or staff who have not been vaccinated, or who have only been vaccinated with a single dose.

Guidance to School Divisions Around Masking:

Horizon School Division is Mask-Friendly. We support the use of masks at any time. Masks have been proven to prevent the transmission of the virus.

Once vaccines are approved and widely available to children under the age of 12, recommendations regarding masking and other measures in schools will be revisited to factor in increased immunity within the student population. At this time, masks will be required for all students and staff in common areas such as hallways, washrooms, lunch-rooms, and libraries in accordance with the level of concern as defined in Horizon’s COVID-19 Strategy.

Once students are seated in their classrooms, it is appropriate to remove masks. For outdoor activities such as recess or outdoor gym classes, there is no recommendation for students to mask.

These guidelines may be revisited within evolving contexts and varying levels of concern.

Safety and Well-Being

The safety and well-being of students, staff, and families continues to be our priority.

Protecting each other is a shared responsibility—we all have a role to play in following the safety protocols set out by the province and Horizon School Division. These protocols are intended to reduce the risk of COVID-19, but do not eliminate all risks.

This plan is intended to support teachers and administrators in the decisions around ensuring the safety and well-being of children while offering optimal instruction and programming. In addition, it will provide assurances to parents and caregivers that Horizon School Division (and its community of educators) hold the best interest of children's safety and education as its highest priority.

Given the dynamic nature of the pandemic during the 2020–2021 school year, this plan takes into consideration four alternate contingencies with respect to levels of concern and the appropriate response. These will be enacted upon the advice of the Chief Medical Health Officer and the directive of the Director of Education for Horizon School Division. Teachers are encouraged to prepare students for any level of concern or any contingency. This includes helping students to be familiar/comfortable with asynchronous tools and processes that may be utilized during a phase 4 classroom shutdown. A detailed description of these levels of concern are found here.

Horizon School Division's 2021–22 COVID-19 Strategy and Back to School Plan focuses on many safety strategies that work together to support the safest environment possible

within the complex dynamics of a school community.

These strategies include:

- mandatory wearing of masks when the level of concern dictates;
- cohorts where possible;
- physical distancing of 1-metre, where possible;
- staying home while sick;
- handwashing and sanitizing;
- cleaning guidelines;
- screening for illness;
- using personal protective equipment (PPE) where required; and
- working with the Saskatchewan Health Authority to host vaccination clinics in schools.

Schools will respond to the needs within their communities using these guidelines as the framework for key decisions. This document is responsive in nature and will be updated as new information or circumstances arise.

Physical Distancing

Horizon will continue to physically distance students wherever possible. Schools will promote physical distancing throughout their buildings, including in classrooms, hallways, washrooms and common areas.

This may include:

- 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; and
- managing hallways to promote the flow of foot traffic and physical distancing.

Cohorts

A cohort is a group of students who remain together for most of the day.

PreK to Grade 6

Schools will group PreKindergarten to Grade 6 students together in cohorts as a safety strategy, since children under 12 are currently not eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations. A student's assigned class will be considered their cohort.

Junior High/High School

Schedules may need to be adjusted to ensure that where students are transitioning, an appropriate number of students are in the hallways based on the amount of space available to ensure physical distancing guidelines are maintained. This may mean that some classes start/end at different times than others or some cohorts move at different times than others.

Schools will establish their schedules to comply with the levels of concern and shall ensure Cohorts are maintained:

- no more than three (3) student groupings for instruction will be allowed in a day; and
- staggered traffic flow in hallways.

All Grades

The following shall apply to all grades:

- staggered class breaks, including recess, within the cohorts;
- staggered lunch breaks. No congregated lunchrooms, this will be based on cohorts;
- designate specific entrances for cohorts or groups of students;
- scheduling of technology may be necessary to minimize contact points and ensure that students have equitable access for their learning needs. Sanitizing procedures will

follow the guidelines set out by Horizon School Division; and

- locker use such as staggered lockers, to minimize close proximity of students within cohorts.

Common areas, student lounges, libraries, and noon hour open gym may be used by a cohort under the supervision of their teacher following the guidelines for sanitization reflective of the level of concern.

Noon period clubs, intramural sports, etc. can continue within designated cohorts.

Medical agencies may work with students from up to 4 cohorts per day (not necessarily in the same school).

Visiting professionals will follow the direction of the principal with respect to the level of concern in the ability to work with multiple students, classrooms, and/or schools.

Educational Assistant scheduling shall continue to be planned in such a way to limit the number of multi-classroom contacts as much as possible.

Levels of Concern



These descriptors outline the processes that schools will follow should conditions deem a specific course of action is necessary. These levels may differ between communities and schools. All protocols will be reviewed on a community by community, and school by school basis.

Level 1

**Mild level of concern.
Low level of urgency.**

- Physical contact is minimized.
- Physical distance of 1-metre is maintained, where possible.
- Masking is encouraged at all times.
- Masking is required in common areas, when cohorts cannot be maintained.
- Masking is not required in classrooms or outdoors.
- Masking will occur on all buses and other modes of transportation, as per Horizon’s COVID-19 Strategy.
- Sanitization of surfaces and equipment will continue.
- Proper hand hygiene will be followed.

Level 2

**Moderate level of concern.
Moderate level of urgency.**

- Physical contact is discouraged.
- Masking is required in the school setting, except when eating or drinking.
- Masking is encouraged but not required for outdoor activities, recess breaks, or outdoor physical education classes.
- Masking will occur on all buses and other modes of transportation, as per Horizon’s COVID-19 Strategy.

Level 3

**High level of concern.
High level of urgency.**

- Physical contact is prevented, where possible.
- Masking required at all times, except when eating or drinking.
- Masking required for outdoor activities, recess breaks, or outdoor physical education classes.
- Masks will be required for all students on buses.
- Limited numbers of people in individual spaces.
- Individuals or cohorts may be learning from home.
- Limited visitors allowed to a school.

Level 4

**High level of concern.
High level of urgency.**

- Students will be learning from home.
- Students and staff will only return to school when cleared to do so by the Director of Education.
- Teachers and administrators will follow the guidelines recommended by the Horizon Learning From Home protocol and Administrative Procedure:
[TEACHING ONLINE](#)

Horizon School Division is a MASK-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT. We support the use of masks for all students, staff, and families at all times.

COVID–19 Protocols

Before coming to school each day, families should conduct a COVID– 19 [Self Monitoring Checklist](#) to determine whether they can attend or should stay home. By attending school, parents and emancipated youth are agreeing that they are symptom-free and have not received a positive COVID–19 test.

Staff must also complete a COVID–19 [Self Monitoring Checklist](#) before coming to work.

All visitors must also complete the [COVID–19 Access Screening tool](#) before entering the school.

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 [Saskatchewan’s Guidelines for self-isolation](#). Families are reminded to contact the school office if your child is staying home sick. Families should tell their school about any pre-existing conditions their child has and the related symptoms. This helps staff recognize the difference between these symptoms and symptoms that are a sign of illness.

Screening for illness is a key strategy to slow down or stop the spread of COVID-19.

Staying home when sick remains an important way to care for those around us.

Showing Signs of Illness While at School

If a student or staff member becomes ill during the school day, they will need to leave the school immediately or move to the school’s sickroom.

[AP 166.1 Illness in Care](#) will provide guidelines for any event where student physical health requires a school response and will be shared with parents prior to the start of classes in September of 2021.

When a student is sick, they will wear a mask if they can do so safely. School staff who supervise the student will also wear a mask and will:

- bring the student to the school sickroom;
- contact parents or guardians to pick up their child immediately; and
- follow Horizon’s safety strategies around personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning and disinfecting the area and school sickroom.

If a parent or guardian cannot pick up their child, the student will remain in the school sickroom until dismissal.

If there is a case of COVID–19 at school

If there is an outbreak of any respiratory illness, including COVID–19, at a school, Horizon School Division will work with the Saskatchewan Health Authority to share information with the school community and to determine a course of action with respect to level of concern.

Handwashing and Sanitizing

Everyone who enters a school will be required to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands. Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day, including:

- every time they enter or exit the school;
- before they enter classrooms;
- before and after they use shared equipment; and
- before eating.

Schools will provide hand sanitizer throughout the building to support these requirements. Families are also encouraged to send their children to school with personal hand sanitizer.

All staff shall have [online WHMIS Training](#) as a requirement of employment. Schools will determine how that training will be implemented prior to commencing classes.

Cleaning Guidelines

Caretakers will work regular daily cleaning schedules as outlined by their direct supervisor/principal. All schools will continue to follow COVID–19 cleaning guidelines. These guidelines include enhanced measures such as:

- purchasing recommended COVID–19 cleaning supplies;
- training for custodial staff;
- removing excess furniture or items that cannot be cleaned easily on a regular basis;
- frequently cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces such as water fountains and door handles;
- more frequent cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school, with specific attention to washrooms, high-traffic areas and classrooms; and
- necessary shared items used for small group instruction need to be sanitized, carefully handled and distributed.

Employees should continue to ensure proper sanitizing of surfaces in the workplace. Vanguard (or a comparable product) will be provided by Horizon School Division for sanitizing of surfaces.

Ventilation

All Horizon School Division buildings have mechanical systems that allow for fresh air intake.

When weather allows, we encourage schools to open classroom windows and use outdoor learning spaces.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Not all forms of PPE are required for all staff, but additional PPE is important when:

- it is part of plans to support students with special needs who require complex medical supports;
- custodial staff require PPE to support their work cleaning and disinfecting; and
- it is a necessary component when working with students who are ill or symptomatic. (see [AP 166.1 Illness in Care](#))

Masks

To begin the school year, all staff and students in PreK to Grade 12 will be required to wear a mask in accordance with the level of concern as defined in Horizon’s COVID–19 Strategy. Some important things to know about the use of masks are:

- individuals who are physically, psychologically, or developmentally unable to wear a mask, or for medical reasons cannot wear a mask, may be excused from this health protocol pending a signed exemption request from a health care professional (family doctor/mental health practitioner, or pediatrician). Families should work with their school principal if this applies to their child(ren) and provide the relevant documentation for these exemptions including:
 - the name of the individual (child/student) to whom the written confirmation of exemption applies;
 - the name, signature, and contact information of the issuing health professional;
 - the date the written confirmation was provided; and
 - the length of time or conditions for which the exemption is required (i.e. during Physical education classes, for the next *{specified period of time}*, etc.).

What to do if you think you may have symptoms:

I have symptoms and

a positive test result	<p>Isolate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for at least 10 days or until symptoms have improved; and • until you have no fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications <i>whichever is longer.</i>
a negative test result	Stay home until your symptoms are gone.
I am a student who has not been tested	<p>If you are a student and your symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath or loss of sense of taste/smell, isolate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for at least 10 days or until symptoms have improved; and • until you have no fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications <i>whichever is longer.</i> <hr/> <p>A student may have other symptoms (such as chills, sore throat/painful swallowing, runny nose/congestion, feeling unwell/fatigued, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, unexplained loss of appetite, muscle/joint aches, headache or conjunctivitis).</p> <p>If you have one of these other symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stay home and monitor for 24 hours. If your symptom improves, return to school when you feel well enough. (Testing is not necessary). <p>If you have two symptoms or one symptom that persists or worsens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stay home until symptom(s) are gone. (Testing is recommended but not required).
I am an adult who has not been tested	<p>If you are an adult and symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or runny nose, isolate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for at least 10 days or until symptoms have improved; and • until you have no fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medications <i>whichever is longer.</i> <p>Adults who have other symptoms should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stay home until symptoms are gone.

I do not have symptoms and

have a positive test result	Isolate for at least 10 days from the date that you were tested (when the sample was collected).
have a negative test result	You do not need to isolate.

What School Will Look Like

We look forward to welcoming students and staff back into our classrooms in 2021–22. The safety and well-being of our students, families and staff is a priority as we return to school.

We want to help students, families and staff understand how schools will operate and let them know what to expect for the 2021-22 school year.

The First Day of School

Each school will determine their schedule for the start of the school year.

Families who have chosen to learn from home for the start of the school year will hear from Horizon School Division about what the first few days of school will look like.

Arriving and Leaving school

All students will be assigned doors for entry and exit at the school.

When arriving at school all students will follow the school's protocol.

School staff will be outside to support students.

Schools may develop staggered schedules at the start and end of the school day to limit how many students enter or exit the school at once. This schedule may be slightly different from the regular bell schedule.

Lockers

Schools will provide locker use based on cohorts including staggered lockers to minimize close proximity to other students, where possible.

Schools choosing to use lockers will need to ensure proper cleaning protocols are in place.

Boot Racks and Coat Hooks

Schools can continue to use boot racks and coat hooks as long as staff are able to supervise student traffic flow in these areas.

Students should not gather in these high-traffic areas. Schools will follow the cleaning recommendations to support the use of boot racks.

Student Supplies and Learning Materials

Students will use and store their own personal supplies.

Elementary students shall have their personal items labeled and stored in designated spaces.

Teachers will plan learning activities to reduce or minimize the need to share equipment, textbooks, or materials. If items are shared, they must be cleaned and disinfected after use. Library books must sit for 24 hours upon their return.

Students will wash or sanitize their hands both before and after using shared items.

Necessary shared items used for small group instruction need to be sanitized, carefully handled, and distributed.

Wherever possible, paperless classrooms and assignments are encouraged. Teachers are asked to continue to support students in designing learning that may be easily transferred to a learning from home environment should that be necessary.

Washroom Protocols

Washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout the day. Depending on the size of the school and the location of washrooms, schools may assign students to specific washrooms.

Water Fountains

Students are encouraged to bring water bottles from home. Water fountains will be disabled for direct drinking but will be available as fill stations for water bottles. Stations will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout the day, with particular attention to the knob and push buttons.

Common Areas

All students and staff will wear masks in common areas such as hallways, washrooms, lunch-rooms, and libraries in accordance with the level of concern as defined in Horizon's COVID-19 Strategy.

Visitors will be required to mask while at the school.

For outdoor activities such as recess or outdoor gym classes, there is no recommendation for students to mask.

Common Areas/Student Lounges/Library

Facilities and noon hour open gym may be used by cohorts under the supervision of their teacher following the guidelines for sanitization reflective of the level of concern.

Schools will have measures in place to promote physical distancing in spaces where students often gather, such as foyers, learning commons, or T-intersections in hallways.

Measures may include:

- limiting the number of students allowed in specific areas at certain times;
- requiring students to walk straight through some areas so they don't crowd together in groups; and
- reminding students to follow physical distancing protocols.

Schools will also develop protocols to reduce risk in other spaces such as staff workrooms and utility spaces.

Recess and Playground Equipment

Students in PreKindergarten to Grade 6 will remain in their assigned learning cohort when going outside for recess activities.

Once outside, a cohort is able to mix with a second cohort. This is subject to change based on level of concern.

Elementary schools will ensure each cohort or cohort grouping shall have an area outside that supports physical distancing when necessary and promotes play and physical activity. Schools may stagger break times or assign student cohorts to specific areas of the schoolyard.

Students shall return to their individual cohort when returning to the school following recess.

Open or Closed-campus

Junior high and high schools will work with their school community to decide if students will be allowed to leave campus during lunch breaks or spare periods. If students are permitted to leave the school building, they must:

- exit through their assigned door, if appropriate;

- respect physical distancing and all other provincial COVID-19 health protocols when off campus;
- assess whether they have any symptoms of illness before they re-enter the school—students with newly developed symptoms will need to go home or remain in the school’s sickroom; and
- re-enter the school through their assigned door, if appropriate.

Schools will also need to identify a space or spaces in the school where students may be accommodated on campus during unassigned time (i.e. spares, noon hours, etc.)

Lunch

Elementary students will remain in their cohort to eat lunch. Where possible students will eat with their cohort in their classrooms - no congregated lunch-rooms.

Schools may provide staggered lunch breaks. Students will store lunches with their other personal belongings.

All students must wash/disinfect their hands before eating and eat only their own food. At this time, microwaves will be available to individual student cohorts and vending machines will be operational. Sanitization between uses must occur.

Junior high and high school students who stay on campus may be assigned to an area of the school for lunch.

Food in schools

Potluck events are all postponed at this time. At school events where food is being served, food must be prepared by individuals who have completed the Safe Food Handlers course. Food should not be served buffet style. Treats can be sent from home for birthdays or other special days as long as

they are individually wrapped and preparation follows the [Food Safe Guidelines](#). Horizon School Division will re-evaluate this on an ongoing basis.

Breakfast/lunch programs will continue in consideration of the level of concern as outlined by the Director of Education.

Nutrition programs or food preparation will be done individually. Students who are not part of a credited commercial food preparation program are not permitted to prepare food for public consumption.

Volunteers and Visitors

Anyone entering a Horizon School who is not a student or staff member must comply with school and school division health and safety measures.

All visitors must check in at the school office upon arrival and complete the school entry [COVID-19 Access Screening Tool](#).

Anyone accessing the school will follow all pandemic guidelines as directed by Horizon School Division.

Outside agencies may have access to the school based on the consent of the principal in consultation with the Director of Education or designate.

Visiting professionals will follow the direction of the principal with respect to the level of concern in the ability to work with multiple students, classrooms, and/or schools.

- All Itinerant/Student Services Staff must comply with Horizon’s health and safety measures and the guidelines for each school as outlined by their direct supervisor and the principal in consultation with the Director of Education or designate.

- The direction will be based on the level of concern in that school.

Family and School Communication

Families are encouraged to stay in contact with their schools through email and over the phone. Families who need to go into the school must book an appointment in advance.

Schools will communicate with families using SchoolMessenger.

Family members attending the school for any reason, including to pick up a sick child, will be asked to check in at the office and use the [COVID-19 Access Screening Tool](#).

Visiting family members are required to wear a mask in schools.

Community Use of Schools and Joint Use Agreements

Horizon School Division will work with joint use partners on an ongoing basis to work toward safely reopening school spaces for community use.

Community use of facilities will be permitted provided that all safety guidelines are adhered to and principal approval is attained. Please refer to [AP 545 – Community Use of Facilities](#).

Interns

Horizon will continue to work with Universities and post secondary institutions to support ongoing education of pre-service teachers and paraprofessionals. Interns will be expected to follow all safety and health protocols.

Substitute Teachers and Staff

Substitute teaching/staff will be expected to be informed and comply with the guidelines

provided by the principal in consultation with the Director of Education or designate.

Substitute staff (including teachers, EAs, librarians, caretakers, and others) will be briefed on procedures when they are requested to work.

Playschools/Preschools and After School Programs using space in Horizon schools:

Prior to opening, playschools, preschools, and after school programs will consult with the principal to determine the level of concern and will submit a re-entry plan to comply with Horizon School Division recommendations. These plans must comply with the school's plan and must be submitted for review to Horizon School Division prior to being allowed access to spaces within Horizon School Division facilities.

All plans will take into consideration the Government of [Saskatchewan Child Care Centre Pandemic Response Planning Checklist](#) and the local school's COVID-19 Strategy Plan.

Transportation

When transporting students, the driver and supervising staff shall wipe all contact surfaces between transports and exercise strict hand-washing. Permission to transport students with a division vehicle must follow Horizon's guidelines for transporting students.

- masks are required when transporting students, including buses; and
- anyone entering or boarding the bus (including adults who may be buckling or unbuckling their PreK children) must wear a mask. If they do not have one, the driver will provide one for them.

The following practices will be required for busing:

- assigned seating;
- families will be seated together;

- attendance shall be taken for all trips and provided upon request;
- a current seating plan will be maintained by the driver. A copy will be kept on the bus, provided to the school and Horizon School Division;
- one student per seat as much as possible, with the exception of siblings; and
- sanitization of buses after each run.
 - The service of providing guest riders transportation for "one off" type occasions (i.e. birthday parties, sleep overs, etc.) is disallowed at this time.

Carpooling

When possible, students and staff should only carpool with members of the same household. If you or your child must carpool with another family, please limit the number of people in the

vehicle, where possible, to maintain physical distance of one metre

- make sure all occupants wear masks and wash their hands before entering the vehicle; and
- clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, seatbelt buckles and arm rests after each trip.

Emergency Procedures

School practice drills will continue as an effective proactive measure.

Schools will continue the practice of walkthroughs for Fire Drills, Lock Down Drills, and Bus Evacuation Drills and develop protocols for gathering cohorts on school grounds where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

It is the position of Horizon School Division that the focus of the 2021-2022 school year will be on learning. The assumption is that the pandemic conditions will have been alleviated to the degree that schools will be able to resume prior functioning with full implementation of learning structures including physical education, extracurricular programming, clubs and after school events, collaborative learning, arts and music education programs, and PAA programs as previously designed.

Anticipations

The following expectations will continue through the 2021-22 school year:

- full Saskatchewan curriculum will be delivered;
- differentiation in meeting diverse learning needs, meeting students from where they are at to the next stage in their learning will be prioritized;
- teachers will focus on high quality instruction and assessment practices with a continued focus on outcome attainment and evidence of learning;
- all health precautions will be followed according to the most recent direction provided from Health and Education;
- teachers will continue to support learning with the context they are given. In the event that teachers are in a position to offer virtual delivery or Learning From Home, they will follow the guidelines set out in the Horizon School Division Framework for Online Learning/Learning From Home;
- in the event that teachers are in a position to offer Online Teaching or Learning From Home, they will adhere to [AP 414 – Online Learning/Learning From Home](#); and

- Horizon will continue to offer the option for families who continue to choose to Learn From Home. Teachers who are teaching in the Learning From Home setting will follow the Horizon School Division Framework for Online Learning/Learning From Home and [AP 414 – Online Learning/Learning From Home](#).

Considerations

In order to address student learning and emotional needs moving forward, we need to acknowledge some important considerations or assumptions that will likely impact the work of teachers:

- students may not be entering the next grade level at the same entry point that we have come to expect under typical conditions;
- gaps in learning due to developmental or other reasons may be accentuated as time out of classes may have affected the retention or learning of outcomes. In addition, behaviors associated with the discipline of a teacher-directed environment may require a longer period of transition than teachers usually anticipate; and
- teacher and administrator experiences and expertise vary across schools, communities, and classrooms in reflecting on learning through the pandemic experience.

Assurances

- **Student and Staff Safety:** Student and staff safety are a priority for Horizon School Division. Measures will continue to be taken to ensure the safety of students, staff, schools, playgrounds, and classrooms. In addition, all action protocols, including health and safety recommendations will continue to be followed.
- **Assessment:** Formal assessment practices will be considered under the current context. Assessment and instruction will be of necessity tied closely together as responsive,

differentiated instruction takes priority. Teachers and administrators will be supported in high quality instruction and assessment practices. While division and provincial data will continue to be collected, the focus will be on responsive instruction and moving students forward on their learning journey - including filling learning gaps where they may arise.

- **Instruction:** Teachers will be supported in utilizing the highly effective, responsive instruction and assessment practices.
- **Planning:** The 2021-22 calendar makes provision for teachers to engage in collaboration and planning for instruction.

Engagement of Students, Families, and Staff

Communication is key to the success of re-entry. Schools will create a safety and instructional plan document that will be shared with parents/caregivers and students.

- The school's entry plan will provide guidelines as discussed above with respect to the specific aspects of re-entry in accordance with Horizon School Division's 2021-22 COVID-19 Strategy;
- Communication to families should also include clarity on the full implementation of curriculum, and providing high quality, responsive instruction and assessment in meeting the diverse needs of students; and
- Schools (principals) will reach out to students who were learning from home in 2020-21 and develop a transition plan with parents/caregivers.

will provide the direction for supporting educators, students, and families who are learning from home.

- Teachers and staff will comply with the Administrative Procedure: [ONLINE TEACHING/LEARNING FROM HOME](#)

Some families have expressed a need for choice in how their child learns because of the changing nature of the pandemic.

We understand this and want to make sure all students and families feel comfortable learning in person or online. Horizon will continue to respond to the needs of students and families.

Full Return to In-person Learning

PreK and Kindergarten programming

For half-day PreKindergarten and Kindergarten programming, classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected between morning and afternoon classes.

Each cohort of students will have their own set of toys, manipulatives and resources to support learning. These materials will also be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Learning From Home

- In the event that schools or classrooms move to level 4, the

[Horizon Framework for Learning From Home](#)

Elementary

Students in Grades 1–6 will be organized into learning cohorts. Students will remain in their cohort for all instruction and for non-instructional times such as lunch and recess.

Other adults who enter the classroom to interact with a cohort of students (e.g., school administrators, the music teacher, a lunch supervisor) will follow Horizon’s safety protocols.

Junior High

Junior high schools will consider a variety of factors to decide how to best organize their students into cohort groups and provide programming with minimal disruption to these groups.

High School

High schools will begin with a compacted, tumbling, or alternate schedule that limits the number of student groupings during

instruction for the first half of the year. Learning for students will be organized into the first and second halves of the school year. This will be re-evaluated for the second semester.

Supporting Students with Intensive Needs

Student Services supports will continue to respond appropriately to the needs and context for students with intensive needs.

Supports for students with disruptions in learning (i.e. learning from home) will continue but may take a different delivery format.

Use of Technology

Teachers are encouraged to utilize technology to facilitate learning and prepare students for any Learning From Home Scenario that may potentially arise.

Subject Specific Information

Music

Music instruction and extracurricular activities will continue with some health measures in place.

Singing, wind instruments, and band classes will be permitted when:

- elementary students remain in their assigned cohort and do not combine cohorts;
- students singing or playing instruments indoors are front facing and physically distanced (1-metre); and
- students do not share instruments or sheet music.

The music room must be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort of students. Schools will determine appropriate processes to support health and safety based on their own spaces and circumstances.

Should levels of concern change, the school will follow the [Horizon School Division Band COVID-19 Strategy](#).

Physical Education

Schools will continue to provide physical education instruction. If the weather permits, we encourage schools to hold physical education classes outdoors. Physical Education will follow the [Horizon School Division Physical Education COVID-19 Strategy](#), which outlines the appropriate protocol based on the level of concern.

All schools will be at Level 1 in this protocol to begin the year.

Sharing equipment is discouraged, at this time.

Equipment must be cleaned and disinfected after use.

Students must wash or sanitize their hands before and after using equipment.

Schools will have the ability to make change room lockers available, but the lockers must be cleaned and emptied between cohorts.

Art Education

Students will have their own personal materials.

If different cohorts use the art classroom, it must be cleaned and disinfected between each cohort.

Science

Schools will determine how best to deliver lab-based learning opportunities in science following Horizon's safety protocols.

PAA Courses

Schools will determine how best to deliver PAA learning opportunities following Horizon's safety protocols.

Sharing equipment is discouraged, at this time.

Equipment must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.

Students must wash or sanitize their hands before and after using equipment.

PAA - Food Studies

- Students will continue to learn about safety and sanitation in the preparation and storage of food;
- Students will not be involved in the preparation of foods for public consumption; and
- Teachers will dispense communal items (such as flour, etc.) to be used in the classroom.

Students who participate in commercial cooking programs as part of their coursework may do so in compliance with the [Food Safety Guidelines](#).

Work Experience

- Teachers with responsibility for establishing learning experiences within the community must conduct a pre-placement visit to inspect each workplace or training centre and obtain their safety plan in regard to the level of concern.
- Students will be required to follow the highest safety protocol in place. If the school division expectations are higher than the workplace, they should be following Horizon School Division guidelines.
- Principals must submit their work experience plans to the Superintendent of Indigenous Education Services for approval before any off-site learning can begin.

School-based Activities

Educational Trips

As we start the school year, schools are encouraged to have students participate in virtual field trips.

Educational Trips within Horizon School Division will be considered based on the current level of concern and approved by the principal in consultation with the Director of Education.

Out of Division Educational Trips will be determined based on the level of concern and will be approved by the Director of Education for Horizon School Division.

National field trips are suspended at this time. However, we will continue to review the feasibility of these field trips.

Extracurricular Activities

At this time Extracurricular activities are approved. They will continue to be evaluated based on current levels of concern.

Extracurricular activity guidelines are contained in [Horizon's Return to Sport Protocol](#).

Assemblies and Special Events

In elementary schools, because cohorts are an important safety strategy, school-wide events such as assemblies and performances

will not be held at this time. This will be reassessed based on the current level of concern.

Junior high and high schools have the flexibility to begin examining the reintroduction of school events. This will be done in consultation with the Director of Education or designate. Schools will assess each event based on Horizon School Division guidelines and let families know which events will take place.

Graduations

Horizon School Division is hopeful that traditional graduation ceremonies will return in 2022. We are encouraging schools to book venues and plan for in-person celebrations with contingency plans in place if tight restrictions are put in place due to a surge in COVID-19 cases.

School Community Council Meetings

School Community Council meetings for the 2021-22 school year will continue to be held.

Schools will work with their school councils and the Director of Education or designate to determine whether to hold in-person or online meetings. In-person meetings will follow safety protocols.

Supporting Mental Health and Well-Being

The pandemic has caused a lot of uncertainty for families and our communities.

Schools play an important role in promoting healthy development and recognizing early signs of mental-health challenges.

Horizon School Division is taking a number of steps to support student mental health and well-being.

Staff Wellness

- Horizon School Division will prioritize trauma-informed practice for staff;
- Staff are encouraged to communicate their social-emotional needs with qualified professionals available through their respective collective agreements or other supportive agencies; and
- Below is a list of employee support numbers. All employees are encouraged to take care of their physical and mental health.
 - CUPE 4799 and Out of Scope – Employee Family Assistance Plan – 1-800-644-0326
 - STF Members – Members Family Assistance Plan offered by ComPsych 1-833-485-4245 or 1-800-667-7762.
 - Mental Health – 1-306-786-0558
 - Canada Crisis Line: 1-800-668-6868
 - SaskHealth Hotline: 811
- Employees should continue to use all provided safety supplies and equipment. Employees that require additional supplies or equipment, are to make said requests to their principal or direct supervisor.
- Employees should continue to discuss any concerns with regards to duties or responsibilities with their principal/supervisor or Human Resource Services, including situations where their health may be potentially at risk/immune-compromised.

Leaves

The normal request process is still in place for such things as medical leave, vacation time, special leave, personal leave, or public health emergency leaves, other collective agreement related absences are to be entered via 'AESOP'.

- [Provincial Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)
- [Local Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)
- [Public Health Emergency Leave](#)

Accommodation Requests

Employees who request not to return to work due to family needs or health-related concerns (including compromised immune systems) are required to communicate with their direct supervisor and to make their request to Human Resource Services for approval.

Student Wellness

In recognition of the unique and potentially difficult experiences over the past year, Horizon School Division will offer responsive support for students in consideration of their social-emotional needs.

- School division and school leaders are encouraged to implement trauma-informed practice to support students, staff, and families. Trauma-informed practice includes: providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments; understanding coping strategies; supporting independence; helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual student needs. (See [Cameron, 2020](#)) Horizon School Division will provide social-

emotional support for students as well as a safe and caring environment that recognizes the need to meet students where they are at and move them forward on their learning journey.

- The Ministry of Education will continue to offer supports for mental wellness, including but not limited to:
 - a resource posted on saskatchewan.ca to assist parents and caregivers;
 - working with Kids Help Phone to promote their professional counselling services, which are available 24 hours a day via phone, online chat or text, as well as their database of local community resources;
 - working with SaskTel to prevent and respond to bullying, cyberbullying and promote healthy relationships through the [Be Kind Online website](#), which includes a number of resources and tools;
 - providing a provincial license for Respect in Schools training for all staff; and,
 - offering grants to school divisions to support mental health and student safety training initiatives.
- Saskatchewan's provincial curricula provide opportunities for students to learn about health, well-being and student safety.
- Parents or guardians who are concerned for their child's well-being should reach out to their child's school or may wish to access community resources.

Mental and Emotional Health Support for Saskatchewan Residents

- **[Jordan's Principle](#)**:
Supports First Nations children's access to mental health and other supports and services.
- First Nations and Inuit **[Hope for Wellness Help Line](#)**: 1-855-242-3310
This federal resource is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Access the online chat at [Hope for Wellness](#)
- **[Mental Health Helpline](#)**: 1-877-303-2642
This toll-free helpline provides confidential and anonymous services, crisis intervention, information about mental-health services and referrals to other agencies.
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868, text CONNECT to 686868 or
- visit kidshelpphone.ca, jeunessejecoute.ca
- Health Link: 811
- **[Crisis Services Canada Suicide Prevention Service](#)**: 1-833-456-4566
- Government of Saskatchewan **[COVID-19 Resources and information](#)**
- Government of Saskatchewan **[Mental Health and COVID-19 Resource and Support Information](#)**

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