



Vancouver School District's Restart Plan

Approved August 26th, 2020

The following pages contain the Ministry of Education's requested information and the Vancouver School District's responses.

Click on the hyperlinks to access supporting documentation and videos.

Health and Safety

1. Provide a copy of your district's updated health and safety plan that implements the [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#) guidelines.
2. Indicate the date when your district's health and safety committee became/will be operational.
9/9/20
3. Provide a summary of the updates made to your district's plan in the following areas:

Link to Health and Safety Measures Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGnSgespRD4&feature=youtu.be>

Attached: [In-School Instruction Stage 2 Safe Work Protocols Covid](#)

August 20, 2020 Final Draft

Cleaning and disinfecting:

- Cleaning student desks 1x/day
- Combination of added custodial staff/time and reassignment of high-touch cleaning to non-custodial staff

Physical Distancing strategies:

- Comply with both updated Public Health guidelines and WorkSafeBC
- Reduced secondary class sizes
- Encouraging physical distancing at all grade all the time (not required).
- Required for people outside of cohorts
- Face shields for itinerant staff who work in close proximity to students (Speech & Language pathologists, behaviour consultants, etc.
- Additional signage available (as needed)
- Plexiglass barriers and/or face shields where physical distancing not feasible.

Hand hygiene:

- Comply with both Public Health guidelines and WorkSafeBC
- No changes, increased district supplies, including hand sanitizer
- Added foot controlled hand sanitizer stations at entrances
- Added portable hand washing stations at seismic swing site with single washroom portable.

PPE for students and staff:

- Comply with both Public Health guidelines and WorkSafeBC
- 2 reusable masks to staff and students at start up, tracking and limiting replacements
 - ordered disposable masks to cover gaps such as forgotten masks
- Disposable masks, safety eyewear, and shields for first aid as per WorkSafeBC
- Face shields for itinerant staff who work in close proximity to students (Speech & Language pathologists, behaviour consultants, etc.)

Symptom assessment and illness procedures:

- Using Public Health template for daily assessment
- Requiring staff and parents/guardians to complete, sign-off, and submit one Daily Health Assessment to their supervisor or principal to confirm understanding of processes.
- Updating staff, student, parent information to include all symptoms listed on BCCDC
- Adding a check box to itinerant district staff, visitor and contractor sign-in confirming completion of Daily Health Assessment and no health issues

Improved school ventilation systems, if required:

- In June increased percentage outside air and air exchanges/flow
- Further reducing air recirculation (as feasible)
- Inspection and maintenance of windows to ensure can open and recommending window open (at control of classroom staff)
- Recommending gym doors open when gym in use (weather dependent)
- Encouraging outdoor activities both physical and academic (local field trips outdoors)

Student transportation on buses:

- Complying with public health and K-12 operational guidelines
- Keeping learning groups and families together (as feasible)
- 2 students per seat, reinforcing not physical contact
- Leaving empty row between learning groups if required to travel on same bus
- Requiring masks on buses Gr 6-12

4. Outline the schedule for health and safety training and orientation of school district staff, including new employees and staff who work at multiple sites and/or across multiple cohorts in a school (e.g. counsellors, learning assistants, prep teachers, Education Assistants).

September 8 and 9: All Staff:

- Review District Health and Safety Plan
- Watch September Stage 2 Restart H&S orientation video:
 - group discussion among staff
 - Q&A facilitated by administrators and supervisors at sites

Method of delivery:

Teams and in-person, remote for on-call staff with Q&A via mix of school administrators/supervisors and Health and Safety department.

New employee sign-on:

every 2-3 weeks and include information on H&S guidelines and district Restart H&S Plan. Most recent: Teachers August 19 and Support staff August 21.

New teacher orientation:

August 25, September 1, 15, 22 (whole day, including Stage 2 Restart H&S content)

In person new hires training during sign-on by H&S department staff, followed up with delivery of all staff video September 8 and 9

Learning Groups

1. Provide examples of your district's approach to the implementation of learning groups in schools and during non-instructional time.
 - a. Include examples for elementary, middle, and secondary schools as well as small, medium and large schools where different approaches are required.
 - b. Outline any shifts in curriculum, course access, or course scheduling, as well as actions taken to mitigate the impacts to students of any changes and ensure equity.

Elementary Schools:

Link to video Description: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXwQ9jHw9dM&feature=youtu.be>

Elementary learning groups will be organized by administrators and teachers at each site on September 8 and 9. The learning groups will be communicated by schools to parents prior to September 10. In most school settings, a classroom division will be the learning group; however, there will be opportunities for schools to organize more than one classroom into a learning group. Larger learning groups may include a pair of classrooms at the same grade level; for example, two kindergarten classrooms; one intermediate class paired with a primary class or a combined grade 4/5 class paired with a grade 4 class. These learning groups will not only benefit from enhanced learning opportunities that meet curricular outcomes and teach core competencies in larger instructional spaces like libraries, gyms or outdoor play zones, but will also enhance peer interactions during non-instructional time at recess and lunch.

In order to mitigate impacts to students and ensure equity should any changes occur, teachers will make use of Microsoft TEAMS so that learning groups can easily move from in-person learning to hybrid and/or on-line learning.

Secondary Schools:

Link to video Description: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UW9GAj3n3ss>

Attached: [Secondary Schools 5 Stage plan and Block Rotation - Secondary 5 Stage and Rotation.pdf](#)

- Quarter model – two classes at once for a ten-week period
- The two classes will run over a two-week cycle with only one of the two blocks occurring face to face on any given day. The second class which occurs remotely for that two-week period will be supported remotely during Flex time.
- The face to face class will be split in half so that there are only 15 (or fewer) students in the room at a given time.
- Students will attend school five days per week for a session in the morning or the afternoon (with the opportunity to engage in additional scheduled face-to-face contact with teachers during Flex time).
- Students will be able to take the courses that they requested in the spring. This allows students to maintain choice over their academic program.
- Students are only scheduled in for half a day so most students will not be in the building for lunch.

- Students have time in either the morning or afternoon to work on their remote course.
- Staff will have Flex time to support the remote course. If they are teaching students face-to-face during Flex time, they will have the time outside of Flex to support their remote course.
- Larger schools can choose to vary the start and end times of the morning and afternoon sessions to allow for appropriate physical distancing on entry and exit.
- Equity is addressed through supervised, physically distanced space for students to work in for the entire school day if necessary
- Grade 8s will have increased face to face time with their teachers through scheduled time during Flex time

Flex time will be used to:

- accommodate courses that need to run in a linear or semester model (e.g. Skills, International Baccalaureate, Advance Placement, Yearbook, etc.)
- to support vulnerable learners
- provide time for courses that have very large class sizes (e.g. Band)

2. Describe how your district is organizing its workforce to balance the delivery of instruction for learning groups and physical distancing strategies for adults who are interacting with cohorts (e.g. staff who work at multiple sites, on call, itinerant) and across multiple cohorts in a school (e.g. counsellors, learning assistants, prep teachers, Education Assistants, teacher-librarians).

The District, in consultation with our union stakeholders, are reviewing how to best meet the health and safety protocols for each employee group. For our on call staff, depending on the role (teacher, Student Support Worker) we are assigning quadrants or Families of Schools. With 18 secondary schools and multiple feeder schools, by assigning a Family of Schools to our SSA's they will work exclusively in an area that might be 1 secondary school with two elementary feeder schools or our largest family would be 1 secondary with 7 feeder schools. Our quadrants might have up to 24 school sites and this may work best for our teachers as that would provide them with some choice and flexibility on which assignment to accept.

Our itinerant district staff will be assigned to quadrants by need. By reviewing historical needs, the district is able to determine where it is likely that our support services will be needed so that we are ensuring smooth transitions for our students with diverse abilities. In continuing to support our vulnerable learners, our Community School Teams itinerant staff will be full time at one or two schools at most – reducing their footprint in our district.

Itinerant staff will be able to physically distance in most cases. In instances where physical distancing is not possible, itinerant staff will have face shields available.

3. Describe your district's plan to ensure continuity of learning in the event of a switch in stages as well as to ensure continuity of learning for any students who need to self-isolate or quarantine.

In order to be able to move quickly and readily through each of the 5 stages and ensure continuity of learning for students whether they are in attendance face-to-face or remotely, the District will move to a common on-line learning platform.

Feedback from over 6500 parents and 2300 students clearly indicated a desire to have courses be delivered through one platform. The Vancouver School Board will continue to use Microsoft Teams. Use of one platform within all classrooms will ensure that students have access to the course curriculum if they are unable to attend due to sickness. It will also ensure a smooth transition to Stage 3, 4, or 5, if needed.

Students with Diverse Abilities/Disabilities

1. In alignment with the [Equity and Inclusion Guiding Principles](#), describe how your district is planning for students with diverse abilities/disabilities ensuring students and communicating to parents on the following, to ensure students will:

- be able to attend school full time or have a plan to ensure supports and learning continue if a student needs to learn at home
- have access to the necessary health and safety supports
- continue to receive supports and services as identified in their IEP, including 1:1 supports
- not be grouped in segregated settings as a part of the establishment of cohorts

Students with Designations in Elementary Mainstream:

- Will be in cohorts in accordance with the class/Division that they are in; grouped with mainstream peers.

Students with Designations in Secondary Mainstream:

- Will be in cohorts in accordance with their school timetable; grouped with mainstream peers.
- Secondary Students in the 5 Learning Support Pilot Programs will be timetabled in accordance with their mainstream school Timetable. These schools are John Oliver, Prince of Wales, Churchill, Vancouver Technical, and King George.

Students in Elementary Special Education Programs:

- Will be grouped as a class/Division in the school to form a cohort with other classes/divisions.

Students in Secondary Special Education Programs (low incidence):

- Students will be grouped as a class cohort and will attend full time.

Transportation for Students in District Special Education Programs:

- Transportation for students in District Special Education programs will be provided as per usual practice and in compliance with COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Individualized Education Plans for Students with Special Education Designations:

- The IEP cycle, including drafting and parent consultation, will continue as typical for all students with IEP's.
- For students who are attending in-person on a full-time basis, the number and nature of IEP goals will be determined as per the usual process.
- For students who are attending school in-person on a part-time basis, the number and nature of IEP goals will be adjusted in accordance with the percentage of in-person instruction in which the student is participating.
- For students who are not attending school in-person, it is recommended that the IEP focus on one key goal.

Communication and Engagement

1. Provide a copy of, link to, or summary of, your district's overall communication plan

Attached: [VSB Communication and Engagement PDF](#)

Section 6: Engagement with Indigenous People

1. Describe your district's engagement process with Indigenous peoples in developing the Stage 2 plan and the plan for ongoing engagement.

The District has been in regular contact with the Education Manager of the Musqueam Nation since schools were closed to in-class instruction in March 2020. District staff have provided information about the Stage 2 proposal and provided information to share with members of the Musqueam community. An opportunity for feedback was also provided as part of ongoing consultation.

Information will also be provided to the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and to representatives of Urban Indigenous communities. Parents of Indigenous students will also be informed regarding plans for September.

2. Outline your district's consultation with local First Nations rights holders in developing the Stage 2 plan – particularly First Nations with whom the district has a Local Education Agreement and First Nations with students in the district.

Consultation with the Musqueam Nation has been ongoing since March 2020. All updates to the delivery of education for students have been shared.

3. What modifications to the plan, if any, did your district make based on feedback from Indigenous partners and/or local First Nations?

The District did not receive any feedback which required modifications to the plan.

Unions

1. Outline the collaboration process that occurred with local unions in developing the district's restart plan. What is the process for continued consultation and collaboration during the school year?

In District 39, with 14 stakeholder groups it has been critical to ensure open, transparent communication throughout the pandemic. With the June restart, the Superintendent, along with the Associate Superintendent, Employee Services had regular conference calls leading up to the restart. These calls were for the district to ensure concerns were heard by the various groups for review and to ameliorate as much as possible, ensuring we were following the PHO and VCH guidelines.

With the Stage 2 announcement, the District connected in early August with all union stakeholders. Similar to our June restart, various conference calls and TEAMS meetings have been made as a large group with the all the presidents (VSTA, VESTA, CUPE 15, CUPE 407, Trades, IUOE 963, PASA, VASSA, VEPVPA) to go over ideas and our planning. This provided them all with an opportunity to hear from their unique areas and their members concerns.

Individual calls/meetings have also occurred with the various stakeholders (including vice presidents and shop stewards) as we worked on the restart plan. With our individual groups – the district requested feedback for specific employee groups (e.g. Office Support, Cafeteria Workers) and to hear if there were any flags that they could see as we shared in the development in the plan and tried to address any concerns they might bring forward. As we are moving towards school opening, calls/meetings are occurring daily with various members of the Senior and District Management Teams.

As we open up schools, we anticipate weekly meetings with our union stakeholders in the beginning. We continue to strive for open, transparent communication and know that our presidents and their executives will be regular contact with members of the Senior and District Management Teams.

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

1. Outline the engagement process that occurred with your District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) in the development of your Stage 2 Plan.

At the end of June, the Vancouver School District shared a survey with families and students to obtain feedback about their experiences while in-class instruction was suspended and students were learning from home as well as feedback about the part-time, voluntary in-class instruction in June.

Based on responses, several communication and process themes emerged to consider moving forward. These included feedback about the use of the TEAMS online platform by teachers and students, the need to streamline and coordinate information so families and students have a consistent channel to use and the importance of social connection for students with each other and their teachers. A further theme was the consideration of time management needed by students and their families – particularly at the elementary level – with families' wishes to have more details to support children's learning. Feedback also indicated that families wished there was more time and information provided to them when they were asked to make a decision about sending their child to school in June.

Ahead of any major announcements, members of the DPAC executive will be asked to review communications materials to ensure it is clear and relevant from a parent/family-audience perspective. In addition, to refine the selection of distribution channels, a short, online engagement with students' families will be done late August/early September.

Based on results, information sharing (format, content, platform) may be revised accordingly to ensure changes amidst the BC Government's Five-Stage Plans are shared in a timely manner.

Shortly after the July 29 announcement, the Chair and Vice-Chair of DPAC connected with the Superintendent via phone calls.

On Tuesday, August 18th, Members of the Senior Management Team virtually met with members of the DPAC Executive. Please see the attached file DPAC Executive Presentation for the content of that meeting. Given that the presentation was regarding the VSB's draft proposal, it was confidential and not for distribution. The content of the presentation was made public on August 19.

At the August 18 meeting, senior team committed to a virtual Town Hall Meeting and that will take place on September 2. At the Town Hall Meeting DPAC representatives from all schools will be invited to attend, ask questions and share feedback.

Attached [DPAC Meeting August 18, 2020 Powerpoint](#).

2. Describe any additional engagement directly with parents/guardians/caregivers and Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) at the school level that occurred in developing your Stage 2 Plan. Describe the summary of feedback received.

In June both the District and the DPAC conducted parent surveys. Feedback received (6500 parents for the District survey) directly helped inform the VSB's Stage 2 Proposal.

The emerging themes included:

- Health and Safety is a priority
- Have a common platform for all students
- Keep student choices
- Have students attend each day
- Safely maximize instructional time
- Keep students connect to their school
- Have a model that is fluid between stages

The District worked through the DPAC Executive with respect to feedback on the Stage 2 proposal.

The feedback from the Executive Meeting and their questions included:

- How any COVID 19 cases will be communicated to school communities
- Masks
 - Have stronger recommendations
 - Consider providing mask hygiene and usage instruction to students
- Contact tracing protocols
- Cleaning routines
- Mental Health of students and how to support them
- How to support the BIPOC community
- Daily health assessments/check ins
- Ventilation concerns
- Immune compromised students and how to support them
- Childcare considerations and learning cohorts
- Maintaining 'spots' in schools; a guarantee for spaces to be saved
- Timeline on more details
- Appreciation for the secondary model
- Appreciation for the work on the return for elementary students with questions about options for families that don't return to schools
- Itinerant staff schedules
- A request to keep learning cohorts smaller than the provincial limits

Staff have also received many emails from parents providing staff with feedback on the return to school plan.

3. Describe the process for continued consultation and collaboration with the DPAC, PACs and parents during the school year.

- Staff have committed to holding a Town Hall meeting with DPAC on September 2nd.
- Principals and Vice-Principals will reach out to all families the week of August 24th.
- Principals and Vice-Principals have been asked to reach out to their PAC once the VSB's plan is approved in order to share information.
- Once approved, school communities will then work to operationalize the District plan at their site.

Transportation

1. Describe any transportation arrangements your district has in place to get students, including First Nations and students with diverse abilities/disabilities, to school.

The Vancouver School Board does not operate its own bus service. Many students will take public transportation and those in Grade 6 and higher grades have been advised to wear masks while on public transportation. The District does provide Compass Cards to approximately 500 students every year to take public transportation.

The District does contract bussing services for two specific purposes: (1) to transport students with diverse learning needs to and from school; (2) to transport students whose school is undergoing seismic upgrading to their swing space school. The former service is provided by First Student and the latter by Lynch Bus Lines. Both companies state they are following the BCCDC and WorkSafe BC guidelines for exposure control as well as the Government of BC - Response to COVID-19 documents.

The bus drivers for both companies are responsible for disinfecting their busses before and after each run and for cleaning seats and handrails during stops on each run. Drivers will not be wearing masks but will be physically separated from the students by plastic barriers. Both companies indicate it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to ensure physical distancing when students line up at the pickup spots.

Students with diverse needs will wear masks if appropriate and students from Grade 6 and higher being transported to swing sites will wear non-medical masks. Students will load the bus from back to front and exit the bus from front to back. Seating on the bus will be limited to one per seat row unless they are siblings or members of the same Learning group. Both companies will keep a seating plan for each run to facilitate contact tracing. Lynch Bus Lines will post the seating chart at the front of the bus and will label each row of seats to help students easily identify their assigned seat. Both companies indicate they will provide ventilation by opening windows and roof vents.

Some Indigenous students who live on the Musqueam First Nation reserve are bussed to District schools in a bus owned and operated by Musqueam. The District has been assured by Musqueam that the following appropriate health and safety protocols are in place for this bus service in accordance with the BCCDC guidelines:

- The bus is disinfected before and after each run by the driver who maintains physical distancing from the students while operating the bus
- A daily passenger list will be maintained, and students are assigned seating so that contact tracing can be facilitated if necessary
- Only students in the same family or learning group will be allowed to sit together
- Students will load the bus from back to front and exit front to back
- Students in Grade 6 and higher grades will be wearing non-medical masks

2. Describe the consultation process in developing the plan as well as how BC Tripartite Education Agreement obligations are being met.

Because the bus services provided by First Student and Lynch Bus lines are contracted, the District worked closely with them to ensure their exposure control plans were updated from the ones they used in June in order to reflect the current BCCDC and WorkSafe BC guidelines as well as the Government of BC - Response to COVID-19 documents. The District is satisfied that both companies have proper health and safety guidelines in place to transport students safely. For the Lynch Bus Lines service parents and guardians of students will be informed of the protocols by District staff when they request bus service. For the First Student service District staff will provide the company with a list of students requiring service and First Student will provide the parents and guardians with the safety protocols.

District staff have also worked closely with Musqueam First Nation staff to assure the District that appropriate health and safety practices are in place for the students and the bus operator. Vancouver's District Principal for Indigenous Education has consulted with the Education Director at Musqueam and has been assured appropriate health and safety protocols are in place for the bus service they provide.

The obligations under the BCTEA for the 2020-2021 school will initially be the same ones that were in place for 2019-2020, as the date for filing a plan for 2020-2021 has been delayed to October due to the pandemic. The 2019-2020 plan provided \$32,000 of funding for the "to and from" category of the plan and \$16,000 for the "extracurricular" category of the plan. A new plan for 2020-2021 is being worked on but may change due to the extent that extracurricular activities will be limited.