

January 19, 2021

Dear ASD-S Families,

With the continued increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Brunswick, the Saint John Health Region (Zone 2), which covers all of ASD-S, is moving to the Red phase of recovery as of midnight tonight, January 19. We understand that this move to Red may raise questions and concerns for some families.

The province announced this week that during the Red phase, schools will remain open at grades K-12, under the recommendations of Public Health. Not only will this facilitate learning but when students are at school, they are in a supervised environment with strict health and safety protocols in place. Their social needs can be met, while physical distancing is maintained, masks are used, and proper hygiene is encouraged.

Our move to the Red phase requires enhanced safety measures for our staff and students. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) has created [this document](#), with Public Health, outlining the updated safety protocols,

- Students and staff must stay home if they have even one symptom of COVID-19
- School staff will be actively screened for COVID-19 when they report to work each day
- If a positive case of COVID-19 is confirmed at a school in the Red level, the school will be closed to students for a minimum of three days to allow for contact tracing. During this time teachers will be supporting students' learning at home.

During the Red phase, students from K-12 are still required to wear a mask on the bus. Students K-8 must wear masks at all times in school unless eating or sitting quietly at their desk. Students in grades 9-12 must wear a mask at all times in school except when eating. This includes outside and during physical education class, for all grades. All physical education and activities will be limited to low-to-moderate exertion activities and those conducive to physical distancing. Interscholastic, extra-curricular and intramural sport activities will not be permitted.

We understand that some families and students may feel anxious to return to school during the Red phase. In the event that a parent/guardian chooses not to send their child to school, the parent/guardian is responsible for their child's learning. At this time, teachers at K-8 are not required to provide home learning materials or meet on Teams with students who remain at home. At high school, teachers will continue to post learning materials on Teams, however, we encourage students to attend classes in person on their designated days to receive direct instruction from their teachers. Those who have been informed by Public Health that they must self-isolate will receive learning materials and instruction from their teachers.

Thank you for your understanding as we work together to follow the safety guidelines provided to us by Public Health and EECD. Please know that our staff and students have been doing an exceptional job adhering to safety procedures and we thank them, as well as you for your support, in maintaining protective measures in our schools and on our buses.

We ask all families to continue reminding students about the importance of hand washing/sanitizing; practicing good cough/sneeze etiquette; physical distancing; bringing 2 clean face masks each day; and monitoring for symptoms. If you have symptoms, you can visit [this site](#) to do a self-assessment and book a COVID-19 test.

We will continue to provide you updates as the situation in our province evolves.

Zoë Watson,

Superintendent