



August 20, 2021

Dear students and families,

These past 18 months have presented us with many challenges forcing us to adapt to new realities and routines. I know it has not always been easy and I want to thank you for your patience and collaboration.

Now that we have entered the Green phase, we'll be able to lift some health and safety measures from the 2020-21 school year. For instance, there will be no more classroom bubbles for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 classes; high-school students will return to full-time, in-person attendance; there will be no more restrictions on music classes, sports and extra-curriculars; cafeterias and meal programs will also return to normal operations; and school buses may transport students at full capacity.

While New Brunswick benefits from having relatively high vaccination rates, COVID-19 isn't going to disappear. Variants of the virus continue to emerge, and new research is available every day. Vaccines are still not approved for children under the age of 12. For all these reasons, we expect that there will continue to be COVID-19 cases in the province and in our schools.

To help protect the health and safety of students and school personnel, particularly vulnerable ones, some protective health layers will remain in place through the coming year. These will focus on promoting healthy behaviours, cleaning, wearing masks in common indoor areas, requiring all school and school district staff to be vaccinated with two doses or undergo regular testing, and limiting visitors to the school to minimize the possibility of exposures from the community. If you are sick, stay home.

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Minister / Ministre

Education and Early Childhood Development / Éducation et Développement de la petite enfance

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August 20, 2021
Page 2

We ask that K-8 students continue to bring a mask to school every day and leave one at school as well. Students in all grade levels are required to wear masks on school buses. When 90% of individuals aged 12 to 19 in their health zone become double vaccinated, students and school personnel in grades 9 to 12 will no longer be required to wear masks in common indoor areas.

Many of these measures have not only proven to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools, but also reducing colds and stomach flus.

Schools will continue to inform you when a confirmed case has an impact on a school or if there is in-school transmission. We will continue to work with Public Health, schools and school districts to follow outbreak management plans that allowed our students to learn throughout the year with minimal disruptions to learning, limited cases in schools and very few in-school transmissions.

As we did last year, our plans may change throughout the year, particularly once students under the age of 12 can be vaccinated. We will ask for your patience, kindness and flexibility through the coming year. For more information, we encourage you to visit [our website](#).

By working together, being respectful and attentive, New Brunswick will continue to demonstrate leadership and vigilance as we transition to this new phase of the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dominic Cardy". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dominic Cardy
Minister