

## PARENT/GUARDIAN COVID-19 UPDATE: EFFECTIVE MARCH 15, 2022

Our ongoing priority is to support students, staff, and families as we turn our focus to planning a post-pandemic future. Please note the following changes to COVID-19 practices in schools:

### MASK WEARING

Effective March 15, 2022, Manitoba Public Health announced that masks will no longer be required indoors in schools and childcare facilities. While it is no longer mandated through public health orders, **SJASD strongly recommends that staff, students, and visitors continue to wear masks when indoors and while riding on a school bus.**

As mask requirements are removed, it is important to note that **students and staff can continue to choose to wear masks**, based on their individual risk and personal preference. We ask our community to be respectful and supportive of each other's decision.

### COHORTS

Upon the return of students **after Spring Break on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022**, Kindergarten – Grade 6 **cohorts will no longer remain in place**. Students and staff may interact as a school community, with a continued focus on practicing COVID-19 fundamentals such as good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

### PHYSICAL DISTANCING

**Physical Distancing requirements are no longer required**; however, all schools will *continue to minimize congestion* during common transition times. This may include a continuation to staggered entrances, exits, locker access times, and staggered lunches. Physical Distancing of students and staff are no longer required when eating or taking a mask break; it is expected that individuals are cautious and respectful of others when interacting without facemasks.

Permitted:

- Access to lockers/cubbies
- Barriers removed
- Eating within 2 metres of Physical Distance
- Assemblies: A mix of in-person and virtual events
- Water Fountains: Will remain as no touch refillable water bottle/cup stations. Only if good hand hygiene can be practiced before and after a single touch fountain is accessed, it may be reopened.
- Visitors: Permitted (with mask wearing strongly recommended)
- Volunteers: Permitted as required by schools. Current Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry checks are required
- Triad conferences: Remain virtual

- Parent Councils: Remain virtual. This will be revisited May 2, 2022.
- Community Permits: Remain on hold
- Field Trips: Permitted if coverage permits

**After May 2, 2022, we anticipate a return to in-person events as best as possible.**

## COVID-19 ILLNESS

- Schools will continue to have masks available for students who become ill while they are at school and are awaiting pick-up.
- Students/ Staff are not to attend school when sick.
- Rapid Antigen COVID-19 tests can be provided to families by schools upon request.
- Please refer to updated COVID-19 isolation guidance: [Gov of MB Current Isolation Requirements](#)
- Students/ Staff who have tested positive for COVID-19:
  - may return to school after five days, regardless of vaccination status, if symptoms are improving and the individual has not had a fever for 24 hours,
  - are strongly recommended to wear a mask for ten days from symptom onset,
  - are recommended to isolate for five days if asymptomatic.

We encourage all to continue to follow preventive measures as much as possible:

- Be sure to stay home if you're sick.
- Get tested if you have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette.
- SJASD staff will continue to take extra measures to clean and sanitize school spaces.

As the pandemic measures change, we need to be kind, compassionate, and understanding with ourselves, and with those around us. Individuals have differing levels of comfort with these shifts in practice as each family has varying experiences with the impact of COVID-19 in their lives. Schools will create welcoming environments for all throughout this transition time.

We will continue to keep the SJASD community updated on changes during the evolving pandemic response plan. Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we strive to maintain safe and caring schools for our students, staff, and families.