



Yellowknife Catholic Schools

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May 15, 2021

To all YCS Parents/Guardians:

RE: Schools Reopening on Monday, May 17, 2021

We are happy to welcome students back to in-person learning again starting Monday, May 17, 2021. The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) has recommended that schools reopen based on encouraging vaccination figures and adherence to public health measures in Yellowknife over the past two weeks. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to keep Yellowknife safe.

Yellowknife Catholic Schools wants to reassure families that our schools are prepared for students to return to in-person learning. The district office and school staff have reviewed school reopening plans and exposure control plans and revised them according to the latest orders from the OCPHO. This is the information we have been provided.

How do we know that it is safe to return?

- The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer's best assessment is that there was no transmission to school staff within the classroom.
- The OCPHO has introduced new safety requirements for schools in Yellowknife, Dettah, Ndilo and Behchokò in addition to the safety measures that have been in place since the start of the school year.
- These measures include mandatory masking indoors at schools for students and staff, assigned seating and mandatory ventilation in busses, gym and fitness classes outdoors, no assemblies or singing indoors, increased ventilation in classrooms by opening windows when weather permits and any students who have any COVID symptoms MUST stay home.
- Anyone who was isolating due to the recent Yellowknife COVID-19 cluster must be retested and told by public health that it is safe to return to school.
- Anyone who had tested positive for COVID will receive advice directly from public health as to when their isolation may end.
- NTHSSA will continue to provide Pfizer vaccine clinics for 12-17-year-olds so we can get shots into the arms of our young people and protect them from this virus. We encourage our 12-17-year-old population to get vaccinated if they haven't already. Vaccines are safe, they work and they are available. It's the best way to protect yourself, your loved ones and your community.

Where Learning Lights the Spirit

Où l'apprentissage reflète l'Esprit

Yedàì Neziì T'á Hoghàgoetò

As always, the safety of our students and staff is paramount. Measures that have been in place all school year - including routine cleaning of high-touch areas, daily screening and maintaining classroom bubbles - will be strictly adhered to. In addition to these measures, schools will also implement additional safety requirements immediately. These include, but are not limited to, mandatory masking for everyone throughout the school day, reconfigured learning settings to reduce close contact, and stricter screening guidelines.

Under these new measures, students and staff presenting even one symptom are required to stay home. An updated screening tool is currently being developed and will be shared as soon as possible. Please note, parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child if they are presenting with one symptom.

YCS continues to work closely with the OCPHO, ECE, and Public Health to ensure all staff and students are able to return to school safely. Teachers are looking forward to welcoming students back to their classrooms. We strongly encourage our students to return to in-person learning. For students who are required to self-isolate, schools will continue to offer support to ensure continuity of learning.

As per the latest safety requirements issued by the OCPHO, students can expect to spend more time outdoors until the end of the current school year. All physical education classes will be moving outside indefinitely. Other classes are also encouraged to move outdoors as much as possible. Please ensure your child has dressed appropriately before school every day.

As always, please continue to screen your child before they come to school, too. Regular screening, sanitizing and hand hygiene plays a critical role in keeping our schools safe. Finally, parents are encouraged to look out for updates from the Yellowknife YWCA with regards to after-school care, and the OCPHO for any additional updates.

Please also check updates from First Transit in relation to busing. We can confirm that routes 2, 6, 8, 11, 12 will not be in service on Monday, May 17th.

In addition, parents of children aged 12-17 will be receiving information by Monday regarding vaccine clinics to be held at the school.

We highly encourage you to read the Frequently Asked Questions available online, which will be updated regularly: [Questions and Answers | GNWT's Response to COVID-19](#)

Thank you for your continued cooperation and understanding as we all work towards keeping our schools safe.

Sincerely,



Simone Gessler
Superintendent
Yellowknife Catholic Schools