



## **UPDATES TO SCHOOL DISTRICT #28 (QUESNEL) MASK POLICY PER PROVINCIAL COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR K-12 SETTINGS (MARCH 30, 2021)**

**EFFECTIVE TUESDAY APRIL 6, 2021**

### **K-12 STUDENTS:**

All students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses - both within and outside of their learning group.

Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses, but are not required to do so - mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.

### **K-12 STAFF:**

All K-12 staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses - both within and outside of their learning group.

### **EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS:**

The guidance outlined above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:

- to a person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- to a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- if the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- if the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- if a person is eating or drinking;
- if a person is behind a barrier; or
- while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

Schools must not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm if staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask. No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask.

### **Illness & Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols**

Daily health checks for staff and students continue to be required; parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.



If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school, please stay home.

**For Students the changes are:**

- Grade K-3 are encouraged to wear masks indoors in schools and on buses at all times per the guidelines above
- Grade 4-7 must wear masks indoors in schools and on buses at all times (which includes sitting at your work station) per the guidelines above
- Grade 8-12 must continue to wear a mask indoors in schools and on buses at all times (which now includes sitting at your work space) per the guidelines above
- For Music classes indoors, masks can be removed to play a wind instrument but must be worn at all other times including singing
- For Theatre classes indoors, masks must be worn at all times except if a barrier is present or during high-intensity physical activities where students are physically distanced
- For PE Classes indoors, masks must be worn at all times including low-intensity activities (e.g. yoga, walking) the only exceptions are if a barrier is present or during high-intensity physical activities where students are physically distanced.

**For Staff the changes are:**

- Staff and other adults should seek to reduce the number of close, face-to-face interactions with each other at all times, **even while wearing a non-medical mask**. This includes during break times and in meetings.
- Staff must wear masks indoors in schools and on buses at all times including at your work station
  - Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) on school buses **except while driving**.
- Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student.
  - When staff are working with a student indoors, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, staff are required to wear a non-medical mask.
  - When working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movement is important, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, options include having the staff member wear a mask with a transparent section to enable visualization of the mouth. (No “mingle” masks are permitted)
- Staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, and other staff-only gatherings should be held virtually wherever possible.
  - Staff should practice physical distancing (2m) for face-to-face interactions, whenever possible.
  - If barriers between participants are not present, participants are required to wear masks.
  - The number of participants gathered, and the length of the gathering should be minimized as much as possible.