

School re-entry plan

Pembina Hills School Division

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Version 1.1



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Implementation of this school re-entry plan is subject to change with direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is based on the best available information and conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan will be adjusted when information becomes available as the status of the COVID-19 pandemic changes.

The safety of children, students and staff is the foundation of all plans for re-entry.

Principles that Guide Strategies and Decisions

- A. Expedient testing is essential for the identification of cases
- B. Nimble responsiveness is possible through close-contact identification along with tracing and isolation
- C. Health Measures are designed to identify, minimize, and mitigate risk (See below)
- D. Students and staff can expect Mental Health / Psychosocial support
- E. Continuity of Learning is necessary for ALL students

Procedural guidance

Procedural guidance comes from the Ministry of Health and is informed by Alberta government guidance documents, directives from Alberta Education and Pembina Hills policies and administrative procedures.

- Key documents include:
 - [2020-21 School Re-Entry Plan](#)
 - [Guidance for School Re-Entry - Scenario 1](#)
 - [Guidance for School Re-Entry - Scenario 2](#)
 - [PHSD Policies and Procedures](#)
 - [PHSD Occupational Health and Safety Handbook](#)

Three scenarios

1. In-school classes resume (near normal with health measures)
2. In-school classes partially resume (with additional health measures)
3. At-home learning continues (in-school classes are suspended/cancelled)

The scenario applied to any division/school is determined by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Transition to any scenario may be necessary on short notice.

Guidance for parents

1. At the start of the school year:
 - a. Parents must provide a description of their children’s pre-existing conditions that match COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. allergies)
 - b. All parents must be provided with a copy of the screening tool.
2. Every day:
 - a. Parents must ensure that the screening tool is reviewed daily, before sending children to school
3. When absences are required:
 - a. Parents must inform the school when children are kept home for any reason (to differentiate staying at home because of symptoms vs other reasons)
4. In case of emergent conditions:
 - a. Parents must be able to retrieve students from school during the school day
5. If a school, the division or the province must move to Scenario 2 or 3:
 - a. Parents must ensure that students are able to remain at home and are supported to continue learning-at-home

School Re-Entry Considerations

The **Guidance for School Re-Entry Documents** ([Scenario 1](#) | [Scenario 2](#)) provide direction for the following categories of risk mitigation:

- General building safety
- Screening
- Cohorting
- Physical distancing
- Expectations for drop-off/pick-up and entry areas at school
- In-person learning
- Expectations for visitors and other service providers entering the school
- Risk mitigation for high traffic areas in school facilities
- Expectations for shared use of equipment
- Auxiliary spaces
- Food services
- Responding to illness
- Student transportation
- Work experience and other learning experiences
- International students/programs

How is the guidance in Scenario 2 different from guidance in Scenario 1?

- The guidance described for Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 is similar for many categories.
- Scenario 2 guidance tends to be more prescriptive.
- A key difference between the two is the implementation of defined cohorting with Scenario 2.

If the Ministry of Health instructs the division, or a school within the division, to transition to Scenario 2, students and staff will be required to quickly transition to a program that blends in-school classes with learning-at-home.

Health Measures

Pembina Hills School Division will implement Health Measures to identify, minimize, and mitigate the risk of spread of COVID-19. *(The following elements have expanded detail defined in a dynamic internal document.)*

1. Management of entry into schools
 - a. Routine screening of all staff and students
 - b. Clear expectations for service providers, visitors, deliveries and parents
 - c. Expectations / procedures for drop-off / pick-up of students
2. Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting (General Building Safety / School buses)
 - a. Daily cleaning and deep cleaning
 - b. High touch surfaces
 - c. Shared equipment (where sharing is required)
 - d. Computer use
 - e. Removal of soft furnishings and area rugs
3. Screening, identification, isolation and support for students and staff with symptoms
 - a. Maintenance of records of students with pre-existing conditions
 - b. Strict stay-at-home policy for students and staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19
 - c. An isolation room for students who become symptomatic at school
 - d. Procedures for staff who become symptomatic during the school day
 - e. Teachers will provide continuity of learning (learning-at-home)
4. Physical distancing
 - a. Adjust the physical environment where possible
 - i. Common areas and auxiliary spaces
 - ii. Cafeterias / food services
 - b. Establish physical distancing routines
 - c. Manage foot traffic flow
 - d. Limit large gatherings
 - e. Supply and use portable screens for necessary face-to-face interactions
5. Cohorting of students where possible (may include adjusted schedules)
 - a. For instruction
 - b. For movement in hallways during transitions
 - c. For breaks, recesses etc.
 - d. For food services
6. Enhanced hygiene expectations
 - a. Establish hand washing routines for entry and exit and before and after eating
 - b. Establish and supply disinfecting stations
 - c. Reinforce respiratory etiquette
 - d. Support the appropriate use of masks
 - e. Establish and reinforce a No-Sharing policy (supplies, utensils etc)

Additional Measures

Pembina Hills will implement measures to support the mental well-being of staff and students

1. The [PHSD Education Plan](#) identifies Student - Teacher Relationships as a priority: ***Positive relationships between students and teachers are the foundation upon which we build students' resilience, confidence and mental well-being.***
 - a. Key strategies and structures have been defined to address this priority.
2. Anxiety is caused in part by uncertainty and or fear about the present and future. Teachers will help students to know and understand the facts about the pandemic and to accept new social norms regarding:
 - a. Care for those who are ill or isolated
 - b. Physical distancing
 - c. Masks
 - d. Use of technology (for communication and learning)
3. Pembina Hills will ensure that staff have the opportunity and capacity to access external resources and support.

Pembina Hills will implement Communication systems and protocols

1. Messages that are important and relevant to all stakeholders will be communicated broadly through the use of the school division and school websites (including posts to division and school facebook pages)
 - a. COVID-19 Updates are posted and logged on this page:
<https://www.pembinahills.ca/schools-programs/covid-19-information/>
2. Pembina Hills will introduce and implement **School Messenger Communicate**, a mass-notification system, in all PHSD schools
 - a. School Messenger will be used to communicate emergent situations to staff and parents, and when required to a population of a specific class, group or school.
3. Communication with specific families will continue to occur through direct contact between the teacher or principal and parents.
4. The Pembina Hills Communication Protocol ([AP 20-03 School Dispute Resolution \(External Communication Protocol\)](#)) remains as the guide for working cooperatively and responsibly with students, parents and the public.

Pembina Hills will implement Student Transportation protocols

1. A seating plan will be established and kept for records of any student contact that may be necessary to track a case of COVID-19.
2. Schools will develop boarding and departing procedures at each site to maintain physical distancing.
3. Driver protective precautions may be implemented.
4. Procedures for responding when a child becomes symptomatic during a bus trip
5. Scenario 2 - Route and Cohort adjustments must be implemented