
School District 75 – Mission 2020 Back to School Plan

September Parent Questions and Answers

SUP = Superintendent Angus Wilson

Board = School Board Trustee

Catchment/Schools of Choice:

Will children be able to return to their School of Choice/ French Immersion program if parents choose to keep them home in September? Will children be able to enter catchment school's midyear?

SUP-We cannot hold spaces. It is possible that there will be room, but we cannot promise/guarantee it. I totally understand what it is parents want, but we have neither the funding, nor the buildings, nor the responsive flexibility to shift resources in that way. This is even true to a lesser extent at a catchment area school at least in terms of mid-year returns. Even in a normal year a child who arrives mid-way through a year is not guaranteed a spot at the school across the street. This is especially true if a family arrives in February with three children in an area like Hatzic – some schools are just very full. That said, it is easier to get into a catchment school for September of any given year; this limitation is for midyear returns or arrivals.

As noted elsewhere, under the School Act we are responsible to provide a public education for everyone in Mission, but we are not able or required to provide it at place x at time y.

French Immersion is a very special challenge I am trying to work on right now. Traditionally, if you leave FI you cannot get back in. That is not a space issue, it is an educational one. A child that leaves during grade four will not have kept their language up, etc. if they return in grade six and would struggle to function. I am going to connect with our French Co-Ordinator about alternative possibilities for students that go that way, but to be clear we do not and cannot offer French Immersion DL. I will have more on this next week.

Homeschooling/Distance Learning:

Will there be options available to keep my child at home?

Distance learning is available through Summit Learning: <https://sd75.knowplace.ca/>

There is no Distance Learning available for French Immersion.

Has the board considered the possibility of a decline in enrolment as some parents feel forced to choose registered homeschooler or enroll in a distributed learning program? In light of this, will they be able to accommodate a large influx of student through Summit?

SUP-Yes. We will be able to expand Summit. However, there is a delay between seeing a drop off at schools and expanding Summit, so we will lose both enrollment \$ and educational time if we have a massive influx. Put another way, if an additional 30 kids sign up for Summit, it is no problem. If it is 300 it would take time to expand to that scale.

Learning Groups (Cohorts):

How will Learning Groups (LG) be determined? Will there be space for accommodating students who move into the district? How will this affect schools who have more capacity? Will the districts and schools be approaching cross boundary requests any differently than normally?

SUP-Learning groups will vary by school, but typically the group of 60(elementary) might be (say) the two grade five classes or a few primary classes together. Some of the smaller schools are simply one Learning Group. We are planning the LGs around potential maximums but leaving space for new arrivals. Cross boundary would be the same as always, just the added trick of space in LGs of course.

Teachers, EAs and other support staff will be included in LGs. Work will be done to minimize having EAs working with multiple LGs. Any staff or visitors that work outside of a LG (librarian, principal etc.) will be following safety protocols including the 2m distancing and wearing PPE wear necessary (mask, Face Shields).

Adequate support: Due to the request to minimize movement of EAs between cohorts, how will support for children that require it to access education be assigned? Is there any consideration for hiring more EAs to assist in minimizing exposure, especially when many children with special needs also have a higher comorbidity for medical conditions that can put them at greater risk?

AW -More EAs could in theory be hired (but remember we did not get additional money). The overall plan is that an EA is assigned to a student/Learning Group; if they need to work with another LG then we will endeavor that they are treated like itinerant folks (like PVP, district staff etc.) for purposes of distancing etc.

Children who require occupational therapist and/or physical therapist consultation: Will they still receive this support to adapt work spaces and functional areas (like hand washing sinks and bathroom) to ensure not only that the child can access education, but also for the health and safety of the students and staff? I ask this knowing that they contract the Fraser Valley Child Development Centre who have not been doing in person therapies or consults. Are they going to make an exception for the district, or will the school district be looking for an alternative?

SUP -There will continue to be supports. Some staff will have additional PPE, altered workspaces, etc. External supports will continue to exist as long as they comply with H&S guidelines etc. FVDCDC is doing much of its work virtually at this time.

Illness and Emergency Plans:

Emergency Plans for children who fall ill during school time. What measures will occur if any children begin to show symptoms of sickness during school hours? While the child is waiting for a parent or emergency contact to pick them up, where will they wait

SUP-Similar to the spring, a child that displays symptoms will be isolated and home contact will be made. Isolation rooms are limited, of course, so ideally parents simply keep them home in the first place.

If someone is sick or has any symptoms they must stay home. For how long? When is return allowed?

SUP-When symptoms have cleared and when it is clear it is not Covid they can return, and this is for staff too.

Is there a plan for if the schools must shut down again?

SUP- Yes, we could return to stages 3-5 at any time. It would be a little different but similar to the spring.

If there is a Covid-19 exposure at a school what happens? Are parents notified? Is there a Mission reporting protocol?

SUP -Yes. But notably Fraser Health tells us if/when to notify.

DPAC – per Deputy Minister’s Bulletin:

The BCCDC guidelines for schools are firm, in that if any student or staff member has even mild symptoms, the person(s) are not to attend school.

- If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, protocols are in place for the person to be isolated and returned home as soon as possible.
- Custodial staff would then clean and disinfect the area where the person had been isolated, and any areas used by them. Public health would be notified immediately of a potential case.
- If anyone at school contracts COVID-19, provincial measures are in place for public health to work with school administration on contact tracing.
- The use of learning groups supports rapid contact tracing by allowing public health to focus on a smaller group of people.
- Public health officials will also work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken and if suspending in-class learning is necessary.
- If any staff or student has been in contact with a COVID-positive person, they will be notified by public health officials and must self-isolate.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Will teachers be wearing masks? Will students be required to wear masks? EA's?

Masks will be required to be worn by students on the busses, as we do not have enough bussing capacity to keep students within their LGs.

Teachers are not required to wear PPE within their LGs, however anyone who feels more comfortable or would like to, is welcome to, including students. Any staff or visitors outside of a LG will be required to follow Safety Protocols including keeping 2m distancing and wearing appropriate PPE when distancing is not possible.

EAs will be following Health and Safety protocol and wearing appropriate PPE as required depending on the student and individual situations.