

Burnaby Schools – Pandemic Response Update

Gina Niccoli-Moen, Superintendent
January 17, 2022

Overview

- **January 4 - 7, 2022**
 - Schools open for limited number of students
 - Some key planning and preparation
- **January 10, 2022 –**
 - All students return from Winter Break
 - What we can expect
 - Planning for the potential of *functional closures*

Background

On Wednesday, December 29, 2021, the Province announced enhanced safety measures and a delayed start to the return of school for K-12 students to Monday, January 10, 2022

- Schools remain open January 4 - 7, 2022 to limited number of students
- School and district staff in schools – preparing and planning for announced changes
 - implementation of enhanced health and safety guidelines
 - assessing and planning for potential workforce/staffing shortages

Guiding Principles – Ministry of Education

- Enhance health and safety
- Support for essential service workers
- Support for vulnerable students
- Provide continuity of learning

Health and Safety

- Facilities update – purchase of classroom air-scrubbers
- Burnaby School District Communicable Disease Prevention COVID-19 Staff Handbook updates
- While health and safety measures remained in the school district prior to the enhanced measures announced, the following provide a snapshot of measures reinforced/revisited given the Omicron variant:
 - Implementation of strategies that prevent crowding during class transition times
 - School gatherings and events (ie. assemblies) virtually
 - Staff-only gatherings (ie. meetings, professional development) virtually
 - Limit visitors to those supporting activities directly benefitting student learning and well-being (ie. teacher candidates, meal program volunteers)
 - Pause extracurricular sports tournaments (practices during the week of Jan 4 – 7)

Health and Safety

- Daily Health Check
- Stay home when sick
- Wear masks
- Practice proper hand washing
- Maintain physical distance

Some Preparation and Planning

- Updating resources
- Archiving lessons and materials online
- Professional development
- Outreach and connection
 - Cultural activities with Elders shifted to online
 - Recording cultural teachings
 - Online support for LGBTQ+ students
 - Planning for students with diverse abilities and disabilities

Some Preparation and Planning

- ELL assessments planning for online
- Establishing Ed Tech schedules of support
- Community and Continuing Education moved programs online and re-scheduling all in-person practicums
- Communication with childcare operators
- Needs assessments – meals, technology (device and network access)
- Communication plans

January 7, 2022

Dear school district superintendents and school administrators,

As schools are set to fully return to in-person instruction, I am providing the following messaging for you to share with your school communities.

1. Changes to contact tracing for COVID-19 in K-12 settings

The Omicron variant spreads rapidly and, as such, contact tracing is a less effective measure in the timely management of COVID-19. What this means is that Public Health is no longer able to contact everyone who tests positive. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should follow advice from the BC Centre for Disease Control, found here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19>, which includes:

- How long to self-isolate depending on vaccination status
- How to report a positive test result
- How to notify close contacts

As Public Health is not contacting every person who tests positive, school exposures will not be issued by Public Health for individual cases. In the event of a declared outbreak, Public Health will issue a public notification.

Public Health will continue to work with schools if, for example, there is a significant increase in absenteeism that is atypical for the time of year, and actions are to be taken, such as notification to the parents and guardians of the affected grade or school community.

2. Enhanced safety measures for schools

Enhanced measures have been added to school safety plans to prevent and limit COVID-19 transmission in school settings. The updated measures can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf>.

It remains important that staff and students continue following public health measures, such as good hand hygiene, staying home when sick, wearing a mask that fits well and covers both the nose and the mouth, and getting vaccinated.

3. Reminders to staff and students returning from international travel

On December 15, 2021, Canadians were advised to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada, regardless of vaccination status: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notices/226>. As of January 7, 2022, this advisory has remained in effect.

For those returning to Canada:

- Parents and guardians are reminded that, as of January 7th, 2022:
 - Unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children and youth up to and including 17 years of age are subject to the 14 day quarantine requirement.
 - During quarantine, these children are not to attend school in-person.
- Families planning to travel or have returned from international travel should check this website for the most up-to-date quarantine and testing requirements: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada>

4. Vaccination

Anyone five years of age and older is eligible for the vaccine. Parents can register their child in the Get Vaccinated provincial system to be notified of when their child can get vaccinated.

Please visit <https://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/s/> for information on registering for the vaccine and how to book an appointment.

Thank you for your continued partnership with Public Health in ensuring a safe return to in-person schooling.

Sincerely,

Ariella Zbar MD, CCFP, MPH, MBA, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer, Fraser Health Authority

Population & Public Health
Fraser Health

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www.fraserhealth.ca

Four Important Messages from Fraser Health Authority

- Changes to Contact Tracing for COVID-19 in K-12 settings
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19>
- Enhanced Safety Measures for Schools
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf>
- Reminders to Staff and Students returning from International Travel
<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/226>
<https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada>
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Changes to Contact Tracing for COVID-19 in K-12 Settings

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If You Have COVID-19

If you tested positive for COVID-19 or have been told you have COVID-19, learn how to take care of yourself, self-isolate and notify your close contacts.

Last updated: January 11, 2022

If you test positive for COVID-19, you need to:

1. [Complete an online form to report your test result](#)
2. [Self-isolate and manage your symptoms](#)
3. [Let your close contacts know](#)

On this page you will also find information about:

- [Vaccination after infection](#)
- [Caring for someone with COVID-19](#)

Complete an online form to report your test result

Fill out an online form to report a new positive test result to public health. You will be asked about your health history and where you have been before you got sick with COVID-19. The information you provide will help public health prioritize people who may benefit from public health follow up.

[Report your positive result >](#)

Your participation is voluntary. The information you provide is kept secure and is for public health assessment only. Public health may contact you to follow-up.

You can fill out this form for yourself or on behalf of someone else like a child or someone you are caring for. If you need help, you can ask someone like a family member or friend to help you.

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Self-Isolation

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Social Interactions

Self-isolation and ending isolation

Self-isolation essentially means keeping away from others to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Learn how to self-isolate >

If you are managing your illness at home you can end isolation when all three of these conditions are met:

1. **Fully vaccinated:** At least **5 days** have passed since your symptoms started, or from test date if you did not have symptoms. You should wear a mask even in settings where a mask isn't required and avoid higher risk settings, such as long term care facilities and gatherings, for another 5 days after ending isolation. Fully vaccinated means you received both doses of a 2-dose series (e.g. AstraZeneca, Pfizer, or Moderna vaccine) or it has been more than 14 days since you received a single dose of a 1-dose series (e.g. Janssen/Johnson and Johnson).

Not fully vaccinated: At least **10 days** have passed since your symptoms started, or from the day you tested positive if you did not have symptoms.

2. Fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
3. Symptoms have improved.

Continue to isolate for longer if you have a fever or are not feeling better.

Presence of mild symptoms does not necessarily mean that you are contagious after 5 days. It can take longer to completely recover from the illness. Most people recover within two weeks. Some people with more severe symptoms can take up to twelve weeks or more to feel entirely better. If you are unsure or concerned, connect with your health care provider, call 8-1-1, or go to an Urgent and Primary Care Centre to be assessed.

If you are a traveler returning from outside Canada and test positive for COVID-19, you need to follow the quarantine requirements set by the Federal government. Visit the Government of Canada website for more information: travel.gc.ca/travel-covid

Managing your symptoms

Most people can safely manage their symptoms with home treatment, such as drinking plenty of fluids, rest, and using a humidifier or hot shower to ease a cough or sore throat. If you have a fever, you can use non-prescription medicine like acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen (such as Advil) to help with some of the symptoms of COVID-19.

You can call 8-1-1 anytime to talk to a nurse at HealthLinkBC. This service is available in 130 languages. If your symptoms worsen, or if you do not improve after five or six days, call 8-1-1, your family doctor or an Urgent and Primary Care Centre (UPCC), so they can determine if you need to be assessed again.

Go to an emergency department or call 911 if you:

- find it hard to breathe
- have chest pain
- can't drink anything
- feel very sick
- feel confused

Post COVID-19 Care



Let your close contacts know

Contact tracing is important to help identify people who may have COVID-19 sooner and prevent the virus from spreading in your community. By notifying your close contacts, you are helping to protect your friends and loved ones and their friends and loved ones.

[Send a notification to your close contacts](#)

Consider who you were with and where you've been in the two days before you started having symptoms up until you started to self-isolate. If you have not had any symptoms and tested positive, consider who you were with and where you've been in the two days before your positive test.

Generally, you should notify:

1. People you live with
2. People you had intimate contact with.

Close contacts will need to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and avoid non-essential high-risk settings for 10 days. Those who are not fully vaccinated will need to self-isolate for 10 days. Fully vaccinated means you received both doses of a 2-dose series (e.g. AstraZeneca, Pfizer or Moderna vaccine) or it has been more than 14 days since you received a single dose of a 1-dose series (e.g. Janssen/ Johnson and Johnson).

You can provide your close contacts with the handout: [Instructions for close contacts](#) or direct them to:

Close contacts and contact tracing >

Enhanced Safety Measures in Schools

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<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf>.

It remains important that staff and students continue following public health measures, such as good hand hygiene, staying home when sick, wearing a mask that fits well and covers both the nose and the mouth, and getting vaccinated.

Reminders to Staff and Students Returning from International Travel

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For those returning to Canada:

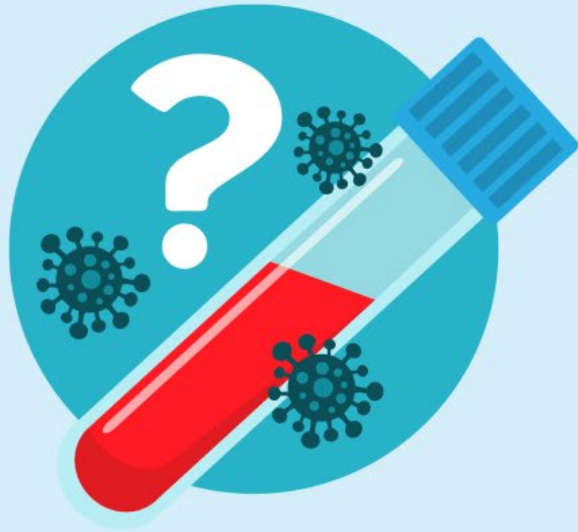
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Vaccination

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Please visit <https://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/s/> for information on registering for the vaccine and how to book an appointment.

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19



Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should follow advice from the BC Centre for Disease Control, which includes:

- How long to self-isolate depending on vaccination status
- How to report a positive test result
- How to notify close contacts

More information can be found here: www.bccdc.ca

As public health is not contacting every person who tests positive, they will no longer be issuing school exposure letters for individual cases for principals to distribute.

How travel quarantine periods impact children returning to school in-person

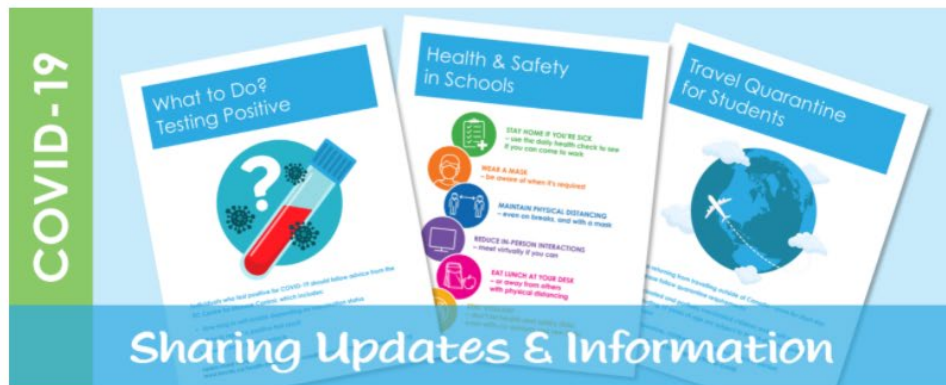


For those returning from travelling outside of Canada – even for short day trips – please follow quarantine requirements:

- Unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children and youth up to and including 17 years of age are subject to the 14-day quarantine requirement
- During quarantine, children cannot attend school in-person.

Families planning to travel or who have returned from international travel are encouraged to check the Government of Canada's website for the most up-to-date quarantine and testing requirements here: [**www.travel.gc.ca**](http://www.travel.gc.ca)

COVID-19: Sharing Clear and Current Information



You can find current information from the Burnaby School District as well as curated resources on our website using the links below. In this ever-changing situation, we are committed to providing you with as much clarity as we can.

Health and Safety in Burnaby Schools

- [Burnaby School District Communicable Disease Prevention COVID-19 Staff Handbook](#)
- [Daily Health Check For Students \(Including App\) – Updated October 2021](#)
- [What to do if You Test Positive for COVID-19](#)
- [Travel Quarantine Periods and Students' Return to School](#)
- [Masks in Burnaby Schools – Updated October 2021](#)
- [Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities](#)
- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [COVID-19 Fieldtrip Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- [Ventilation in Burnaby Schools](#)

 **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**
Study in Burnaby


 **ADULT EDUCATION**
Burnaby CCE

 **BURNABY ONLINE**
Online Learning Community

 **SETTLEMENT WORKERS**
In Schools

 **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**
Great Place to Work & Learn

registration
 [click here](#)

 **TWITTER: @BURNABYSCHOOLS**

Tweets by @burnabyschools 

 **Burnaby Schools** 
@burnabyschools

Tonight at 7pm (Jan 17) is an opportunity to learn about the Media Arts programs offered to high school students in #BurnabySchools. Families: Check your

Health Closure vs. Functional Closure

Health Closure

A public health closure is the temporary closing of a school by order of a Medical Health Officer when they determine it is necessary to prevent the excessive transmission of a communicable disease (e.g., COVID-19)

Functional Closure

A functional closure of a school is a temporary closure determined by a school district due to a lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial to ensure the health and safety of students. This would likely be due to a high number of staff or certain employees away who are required for a school to function, and the inability to temporarily replace them.

School-Associated COVID-19 Activity

Some Key Action for Staff, Students, Parents

- Completing a daily health check, regularly monitor for symptoms of illness and stay home when sick.
- Completing any reporting tool provided by public health if they test positive for COVID-19.
- Specifying that the absence is illness-related when notifying their school of an absence.
 - As supported by public health, students and staff do not need to disclose if their absence is specific to COVID-19, however those who test positive for COVID-19 should be diligent in ensuring their school is aware that their absence is illness-related.
- Continuing to follow public health guidance and recommendations.

School-Associated COVID-19 Activity

Some Key Actions for School District

- Track and report daily attendance rates (staff and students away)
- Identify illness-related absenteeism
- Compare current attendance rates to previous year(s)
- Watch for current public health potential activity signals related to attendance
 - School attendance is 10% below historical normal
 - If fewer than 75% of students in a grade in attendance
 - A functional closure is being considered or implemented

Planning for Possible

Functional Closure

Ministry of Education Definition

Functional closure of a school, which is determined by the school or school district due to a lack of staff to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, support, and/or custodial to ensure the health and safety of students. This would likely be due to a high absenteeism of all staff or certain employees required for a school to function and the inability to replace those absences.

How it Works: Functional Closure of Burnaby School

EARLY CONSIDERATIONS

- Daily staff attendance reports are assessed to identify schools with unusually high staff absenteeism
- District works with affected schools to determine impact
- District consults with the Fraser Health Authority to obtain any additional community information and context they may have

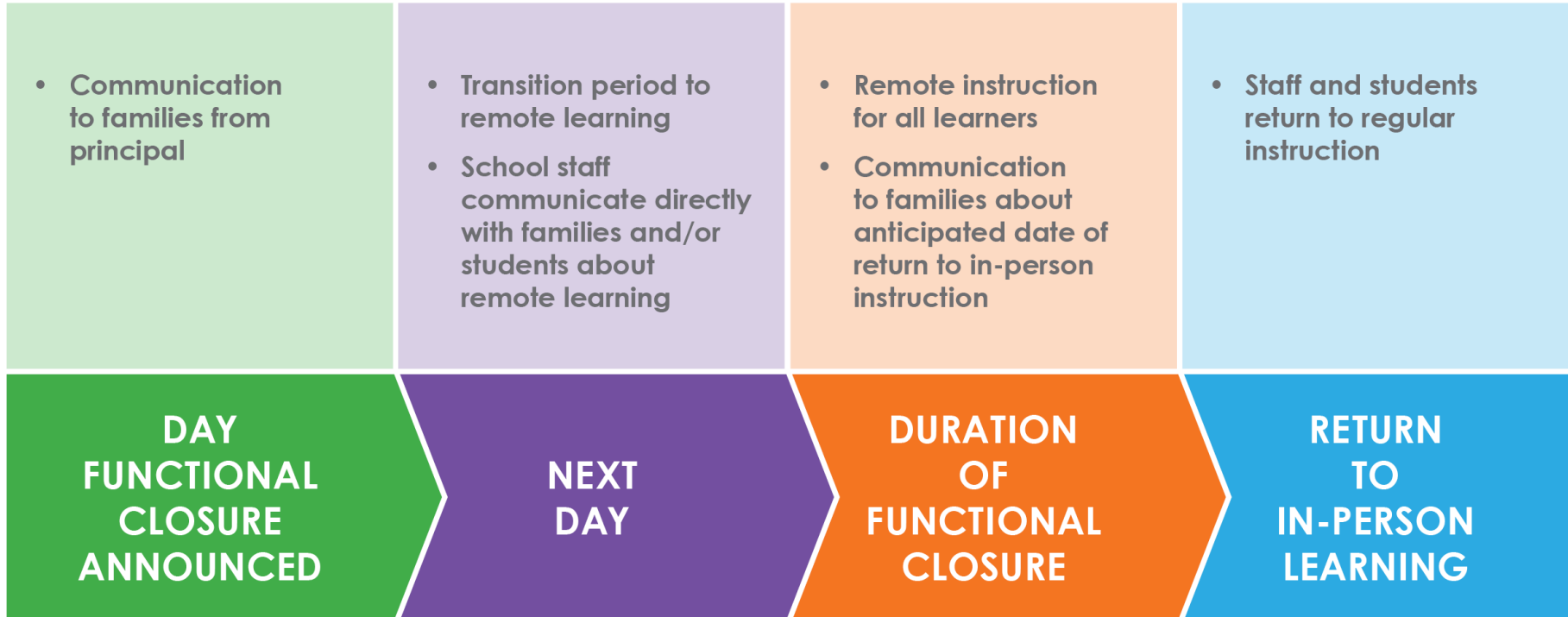
FUNCTIONAL CLOSURE DECLARED

- If the District is unable to fill the positions of staff who are absent, a functional closure of the school may be declared
- Principal of any impacted school notifies families by email of the functional closure
- Closure posted on school website

TIMELINE OF CLOSURE

- The timeline to move to remote learning and the anticipated number of days until a return to in-person learning is shared with parents and guardians

Functional Closure Timeline



Role of Rapid Antigen Tests

- Public Health continues to direct how rapid antigen tests are best utilized as part of the Provincial Pandemic Response, including when and how they are deployed for school specific use.
- To date, rapid antigen tests have been utilized in K-12 schools when determined necessary by the responsible Medical Health Officer as part of Public Health response to clusters and outbreaks.
- As more supply becomes available, school districts have been advised that rapid antigen tests will increasingly be available for use in k-12 schools to support continuity of learning and keeping schools open, under continued direction of Medical Health Officers.

COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test Deployment – Information for the K-12 Sector

- The province has provided an initial allocation of self-administered COVID-19 rapid antigen tests for immediate use in the K-12 sector.
- These tests are being provided to support at home testing of symptomatic employees and are an additional tool to support continuity of learning in our schools.
- Testing continues to be available for individuals when recommended by public health and for use by Medical Health Officers.
- It is expected more tests will arrive from the Government of Canada later in January that will support the expanded use of rapid tests within the sector.

January 14, 2022

Dear parents and guardians,

Last Monday, schools in the Fraser Health region returned for another term of in-person schooling. While some schools had higher than historical levels of attendance this past week, others have not.

Based on experience from previous waves of COVID-19, and through regular discussions with school leadership, we believe that the two main reasons behind low attendance in some schools this first week back have likely been due to the following:

1. Staff and students had COVID-19 prior to school starting and are isolating or are close household contacts to cases and needing to isolate.
2. Parents and guardians have kept their children home due to concerns about an increased risk of COVID-19 in schools.

With respect to the first reason above, COVID-19 case rates continue to be higher than they have ever been during this pandemic. It is no surprise that there are a number of individuals needing to stay home right now because they have COVID-19 or are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19. This does not represent an increased risk of COVID-19 in schools as these individuals would not be attending while infectious. For information on what cases and close contacts are instructed to do, please refer to the BCCDC [website](#).

With respect to the second reason above, I want to reassure you that school is safe and there are layers of protection in place to protect staff, students and families. In our region, we began implementing a set of enhanced health and safety measures in October 2021, aimed at increasing distancing between staff and students and limiting mixing between different grades. These measures are now part of the updated K-12 guidelines being used by schools.

In addition to these school safety measures, schools continue to remind staff and students of the importance of daily health checks, hand hygiene, and consistent use of well-fitting masks. Public Health continues to work with schools to monitor the level of COVID-19 in schools. We receive regular reports of school attendance levels that we analyze against reported cases of COVID-19 among staff and students to see if additional steps need to be taken to address increases in COVID-19 activity. It is important that anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 report their result online so that we can better monitor what is happening at schools. To report your results online, visit: <https://reportcovidresults.bccdc.ca/>

Nearly 60 per cent of children ages 5 to 11 in the Fraser Health region have yet to receive their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. If you are a parent or guardian of a child between the ages of 5 to 11 who has not received their first dose of vaccine, please get your child registered and booked for their first dose. This is the most important step that you can take to protect your child from severe health outcomes of COVID-19. Vaccination has been proven safe and effective for children ages 5 to 11. It is true that children have continued to have the lowest rates of hospitalizations due to COVID-19, but they can and do occur.

For more information about the vaccine for 5 to 11 year olds, I encourage you to read the [Summary of National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\) statement: Recommendation on the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine \(10 mcg\) in children 5 to 11 years of age](#).

An extensive FAQ is also available on Immunize BC at <https://immunizebc.ca/COVID-19-vaccines-FAQ-5-to-11>

If you would like to speak to someone about the COVID-19 vaccine for children, please reach out to our COVID-19 Call Centre at 778-368-0123 or your family doctor/nurse practitioner.

You can register and book your child's vaccine here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>.

K-12 schools continue to be safe places for children to learn in-person during the pandemic. For parents and guardians, we look forward to your children returning to school to learn, be with their friends and peers and be part of a safe school environment.

Sincerely,

Ariella Zbar MD, CCFP, MPH, MBA, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer, Fraser Health Authority

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Ongoing Preparation and Planning

District Pandemic Response Team

- CUPE Local 379
- Burnaby Teachers' Association
- Burnaby Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association
- District Parent Advisory Council
- Superintendent
- Secretary-Treasurer
- Manager Health and Safety
- Managing Director, Communications and Community Engagement

thank you!