

School health and safety during COVID-19

This general guidance will help you answer family questions as we prepare for the upcoming 2022-23 school year. These are not mandatory requirements.

Staying safe and healthy

We all have a role to play in keeping our schools safe and healthy. The most important thing you can do is stay home when you are sick.

Other steps we can take to protect ourselves and others include:

- Getting vaccinated;
- Choosing to wear a mask; and
- Practicing good respiratory and hand hygiene.

Masks

The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for everyone. This choice should be supported and respected.

Ventilation

Ventilation helps keep indoor air fresh and healthy.

- All mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in schools are inspected and cleaned regularly.
- As an added measure, all schools have HEPA filters to use in shared learning spaces.
- School staff are encouraged to open windows and doors to improve natural ventilation if the weather permits.

Monitoring illness and testing

How are we monitoring illness at school?

We work with Yukon Communicable Disease Control to monitor the possible spread of communicable diseases in schools.

This process is known as school-based illness surveillance. It helps us identify and manage illness within schools. It is a successful tool used for many years before the pandemic.

In this process:

- principals notify YCDC when there are an above-average number of absences due to reported illness, and
- YCDC evaluates information provided by school principals on an ongoing basis.

When needed, YCDC investigates and works closely with the school administration to provide actionable public health advice.

Do I need to test for COVID-19?

Testing is a personal choice. If you choose not to test, follow the [stoplight guidance online](#).

What happens if I test positive?

If you or your child test positive for COVID-19, follow the [online guidance](#).

Do I need to tell my school about my positive test?

No. Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 are not required to notify the school about their positive result. To protect personal privacy, schools cannot use test result information about students or staff members to notify other people.

If you contact your school to notify them about your absence, you can let the school know it's due to illness and, if you choose, tell them it's because of a positive COVID-19 test.

When can students or staff return to school?

Follow the guidance online:

- If you haven't tested for COVID-19, or have a negative result [use the stoplight guidance](#).
- If you've received a positive test result, follow the [instructions online](#).

Can my child go to school if a family member tests positive for COVID-19?

Follow the [guidance for close contacts](#). If your child is feeling well, they can attend school.

Recovering from the pandemic

We've learned several lessons while navigating the pandemic. We need to use these lessons to help students readjust and catch up.

Over the past few years, we have heard the importance of looking at the whole student. To understand a student's needs, we need to look at them:

- academically,
- culturally,
- emotionally, and
- physically

By looking at the whole person, we can find the best way to support their learning and wellbeing. The next two years will be about addressing the impacts of the pandemic on our students. This includes continuing to work on RISE: Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education, decolonizing the Department of Education and implementing the Safer Schools Action Plan. The pandemic recovery plan has more information.

What does it mean to be focused on recovery?

This is a critical school year. We are focused on catching students up on learning they missed over the pandemic, and preventing any additional learning loss. To do this, non-enrolling teachers will be asked to support their schools in their work to determine the impact of the pandemic on students, and in addressing those impacts and supporting students.