
Regional Executive Director of Education

April 23, 2021

Families:

With the sudden rise of COVID-19 cases in the Halifax area, it has been a challenging week for schools, staff and families in our region. I want to thank you all for rising to this challenge, for getting tested, for following public health protocols and, most importantly, for caring for one another.

What happened this week? Here's what you need to know:

Public Health identified cases of COVID-19 connected to a number of schools.

- In response, the Province [announced](#) that all schools in the Auburn Drive, Cole Harbour and Dartmouth High Families of Schools are pivoting to at-home learning for a period of two weeks to stop the spread of the virus. For a breakdown of schools by family, [click here](#) .
- The Dartmouth campus of the Bedford & Forsyth Education Centres and St. Joseph's – Alexander McKay Elementary will also pivot to at-home learning for the same two-week period.
- For a list of closures and scheduled re-openings, [click here](#) .
- When a school pivots to at-home learning, staff work from school to support students unless directed to self-isolate by Public Health.
- At-home learning is a combination of real-time instruction delivered by teachers and self-directed learning. Students have opportunities to engage virtually with their peers, their teachers, and all other supports. For more information about at-home learning, [click here](#) .
- If your family is in need of food as a result of a school closure, call 211. A navigator will arrange for a food box to be delivered to your home free of charge by Feed Nova Scotia.

Changes were announced for mask-wearing:

- Pre-Primary children and students in Grades Primary to 3 are now required to wear masks at school. (Students in Grades 4 to 12 have been wearing masks since the start of the school year).
- Students must wear a non-medical mask inside schools unless they are seated within their classroom if desks are physically distanced by 2m / 6ft and facing in the same direction, when eating or drinking, and during indoor physical activity.
- Anyone who rides the bus to school is required to wear a mask.
- Masks are not required during outside activities.
- Students are expected to wear a mask within common areas of the school.
- Schools are encouraged to build in opportunities for mask breaks during the day.

How can we stop the spread of COVID-19?

Continue to monitor yourself, and your child(ren) daily for signs or symptoms of COVID-19, using [Nova Scotia's daily checklist](#) .

Get tested. Public Health is encouraging everyone to get tested regularly for COVID-19, even if you have no symptoms or only mild symptoms. Visit the Nova Scotia Health Authority website for [more information about testing](#) .

Please be assured that we continue to work very closely with Public Health and experts at IWK Health Centre. School, where students can learn and socialize with their peers in a safe environment, is the best place for young people. I offer my sincere thanks to all of you for following the Public Health guidelines that have allowed students in Nova Scotia to be in school this year.

Together, we've got this.

Stay well and stay safe,



Elwin LeRoux,
Regional Executive Director of Education