**Milo Community School COVID-19 School Re-entry Plan**

**August 2021**



Please note that this plan has been prepared based on the current direction from Palliser School Division, Alberta Education, and Alberta Health Services, and these plans are flexible and subject to change as we respond to any new directives from experts, Palliser Schools, and the province. For more information, please review the Palliser COVID School Guidance document found at <https://www.pallisersd.ab.ca/>

**Introduction**

We are planning events for our school year with the hope that we will be able to proceed with them “normally”, but please consider that things may have to be rescheduled or in some cases cancelled as we continue to work through the ever changing situation that COVID has brought to us. Thank you so much to those families who took the time to respond to the Covid re-entry survey we sent out in August, this information was used to help guide us in the preparation of this document.

**Follow Expert Advice**

It is an expectation that we all become knowledgeable about the protocols, guidelines, recommendations and directives for school re-entry from Alberta Education and Alberta Health Services.

**Links to Alberta COVID Guidance Documents:**

[COVID-19: Education and child care | Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-education-and-child-care.aspx)

includes a main page for parents, students, and school staff on essential health measures to reduce transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.

[Guidance for respiratory illness prevention and management in schools - Open Government](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/guidance-for-respiratory-illness-prevention-and-management-in-schools)

[2021-2022 school year plan - Open Government](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/2021-2022-school-year-plan)

[Parents' guide 2021-22 school year - Open Government](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/parents-guide-2021-22-school-year)

**Keep the Virus Out**

The first and most important action that we can take is to prevent anyone that is ill or has COVID-19 symptoms from entering schools, division owned facilities or getting on our division buses.

**Staying Home When Sick**

Students, staff, and anyone else entering Milo Community School must continue to screen for symptoms using the [COVID-19 information : daily checklists - Open Government](https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-alberta-health-daily-checklist). (Please note that there is a checklist for children under 18 and a checklist for adults 18 and older.) Anyone that has COVID-19 symptoms MUST stay home. We believe that if the division, schools, individual employees, individual students, parents and school communities work together we can minimize the possibility of exposure, and continue to ensure our schools and facilities are safe for everyone. Specific information on isolation requirements for symptoms can be found at the Alberta webpage for [Isolation and quarantine requirements | Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx).

**Responding to Illness**

If a student becomes ill while at school, we will follow the same protocols as last year where we will have the student wear a mask and isolate in the book nook until parents are able to come and take them home.

**Prevent the Spread**

We must take steps to reduce the possibility of transmission from someone who is ill, has COVID-19 symptoms or is asymptomatic but able to spread the virus.

**Cleaning**

Milo Community School will continue to ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces within the school. All soft surfaces that are difficult to sanitize (such as classroom carpets and plush furniture) have been removed from the classrooms.

**Hygiene and respiratory etiquette**

We will continue measures to promote frequent hand washing/sanitizing and good respiratory etiquette, this includes covering our mouths with our arm when sneezing, coughing, or yawning. Students will be sanitizing/washing hands upon entering classrooms and other common spaces such as the gymnasium and library.

**Physical distancing**

We will reduce crowding and support physical distancing between all students/staff within the school. This includes staggering our students coming in and out of the school so that there is not crowding in the boot rooms/entrances /hallways. Students will be outside at the same time for recess, so staff will ensure that there are not large gatherings; this is also supported naturally by our small student population.

**Cohorting**

This year, we are able to increase the size of our cohorts beyond just the single classroom. Our cohorts will be based on grade groupings. Our Grade 1-3 students will continue to be a cohort group, while our students in Grades 4-9 will also be a cohort group. School-wide assemblies may occur but students will be seated with their class group and there will be at least 6 feet between groups.

**Face Masks**

Masking will not be mandatory and it will be up to the discretion of parents to decide if they would like their child to wear a mask or not; we will absolutely support parents in reinforcing their wishes at school. Please note that this is subject to change based on district and provincial guidelines. Please note that for right now, all students (K-12) riding a school bus must wear a mask while on the bus as per provincial guidelines.

**School Activities**

Since there are no restrictions on curricular and extracurricular activities, we will be able to go ahead and run our programs much as we have in the past. This means that for now, extracurricular activities such as after school sports, lunchtime intramurals, etc. will be able to occur. Field trips will also be able to occur. These activities also are subject to change based on current restrictions and guidelines. We will also be able to have visitors and volunteers come in to the school but these are by appointment only, and they will continue to be required to complete the Alberta Health Daily Checklist and sign in.

**Food Services**

We will continue to operate our Milo School Nutrition Program this year. A breakfast or healthy snack will be provided each day. We have purchased some stainless steel bento boxes with compartments to help keep warm items and cool items separate, and these will be brought to the classes by our nutrition worker. We will continue to offer lunch to students at least once a month (prepared at the school), as well as our monthly Subway lunches. Microwaves will not be available for student use at this time, so please ensure that students are sent with lunches that can be eaten cold, or hot food can certainly be sent from home in insulated thermoses or containers.

**Conclusion**

We understand these guidelines may be too strict for some and not strict enough for others. Please know that we have kept the best interests of our students in our hearts and minds as we created these plans. We carefully considered the feedback we received from parents as well as district and provincial guidance. We tried to balance the risks along with the benefits of keeping and removing some of the restrictions. These plans will be a working document should things change locally and provincially. We are so excited to see our students again and look forward to an incredible year!