



EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

LUMEN CHRISTI CATHOLIC EDUCATION CENTRE

9807-106 Street NW | Edmonton, AB T5K 1C2 | T: 780-441-6000

[Click here](#) to translate this document.

January 7, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Minister Adriana LaGrange has confirmed students will return to in-person learning on Monday, January 10, 2022. We look forward to welcoming your children back to in-person learning. I understand that the return to school is very concerning for parents and families. We have been working to ensure we are doing everything possible to maintain safe and healthy learning environments for our students and staff. I want to provide you with some important updates on changes and happenings that will occur over the next several weeks. **This information is reflected in our updated [Back to School Plan](#).**

Strengthening Ventilation

As of January 2022, and in response to the recent ASHRAE recommendations, ECSD is strengthening ventilation in schools. We are installing MERV 13 rated filters at all Division sites. The filters will allow our HVAC systems to operate as intended and designed. More information can be found on [our website](#).

Distributing Rapid Test Kits and Masks

The Government of Alberta is providing at-home Rapid Tests and medical-grade masks to students and staff. Our Division will work to distribute the kits and masks as soon as possible.

The medical-grade masks provided by the Government of Alberta offer improved protection when compared to many other types of masks. We strongly encourage families to use this better-quality mask for their children while at school. When selecting a mask for your child, it is important it fits well and be of high quality.

Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health recommends asymptomatic students use a Rapid Test a couple of times a week to detect the COVID-19 virus. The Government of Alberta has developed a [how-to video for parents](#) and a [rapid test program fact sheet](#) to offer tips on using the kits. The fact sheet is translated into multiple languages.

Staying Home When Feeling Unwell

One of the most effective ways of reducing transmission of the COVID-19 virus is to stay home when you are feeling unwell. Students and staff must continue to use the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#) before attending school.



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Case Notification

Alberta Health Services will no longer be notifying us of confirmed COVID-19 cases. We ask that families notify us when their children test positive for COVID-19 using a PCR or Rapid Test so that we can share case numbers with the school community while keeping personal details confidential. We will rely on families' self-reporting to have an accurate picture of the impact of COVID-19 in classrooms.

Preparing for Temporary Shifts to Online Learning

We believe the best learning and teaching happens inside our classrooms. Safeguarding in-person learning is a priority, but we anticipate with the rapid spread of the Omicron variant. We may have to pivot individual classes, grades, or entire schools to online learning should the need arise. Situations such as high student absentee rates and staffing shortages will lead to temporary shifts. The decision to move to online learning is not made lightly and unfortunately, will more than likely occur on short notice.

ECSD Administration has the flexibility and authority to shift individual classes or grades within a school to online learning. All moves involving entire schools require approval from the Minister of Education.

Mental Health Supports

We recognize there may be mixed emotions about a return to in-person learning. The continued uncertainty of the pandemic has had a tremendous impact on children, youth, and families. We have resources on [our website](#) to support you through these challenging times, and please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher if you are concerned about their well-being.

In the weeks ahead, we will continue to review and refine our [Back to School Plan](#), particularly in response to any updated direction from the Government of Alberta. Thank you for your continued support in an incredibly difficult situation for families and staff alike.

Yours in Christ,

Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent