

January 7, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you are aware, on January 5, 2022, the Minister of Education confirmed that students are returning to in-class learning Monday, January 10th. We look forward to welcoming students back to classes and are working hard to keep our schools as safe as possible.

To maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff, we kindly ask that you refamiliarize yourself with the necessary protocols.

### **Student Illness**

- Daily Checklist - if your child is showing symptoms or not well, you must keep them home. Now, this is more important than ever. An updated Daily Screening Checklist from AHS will be shared with you when it becomes available and we ask that it be reviewed every morning before sending your child/ren to school.
- If your child has any of the [core symptoms](#), you are legally required to isolate. If they test negative on a rapid Covid test, they must still stay home and away from others until symptoms resolve.
- For fully vaccinated students (2 doses) who test positive on a rapid test for COVID-19:
  - Isolate for 5 days from the start of symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer.
- For students not fully vaccinated (1 dose or less) who test positive for covid on a rapid test:
  - Isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer.
- Additional isolation information can be found [here](#).

### **Preparing for Shifts to Online Learning**

In the event we must move a class or grade to temporary remote learning, parents will be immediately notified by the school regarding the next steps. Temporary online learning may occur when it is not possible to continue in-person learning due to operational viability.

### **Rapid Test Kits and Masks**

The Government of Alberta is providing rapid test kits and medical-grade masks for use by students and staff members. These are expected to start arriving at each of our schools next week. Mask use is required for all Grade 4-12 students and staff. Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3 is recommended but not mandatory. Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 students who ride buses are still required to wear masks.

The rapid tests will come in a box of five. Each Kindergarten to Grade 12 student and staff will be given one box at distribution that will provide them with enough tests for 2.5 weeks; a second shipment will follow. It is recommended by our Medical Health Officer that rapid tests be used twice per week, 72 hours apart (e.g, Sunday and Wednesday or Monday and Thursday). Information regarding Rapid Test Kits can be found in the following links:

[Education At-Home Rapid Testing Program](#)

[COVID-19 Rapid Testing Guidelines](#)

[Video Resource](#)

### **Reporting Positive Cases of COVID-19 and Student Illnesses**

To keep our schools as safe as possible, please continue to inform your school if your child has tested positive on COVID-19 test, is exhibiting symptoms, or will be staying home from school for any reason. Schools will continue to monitor school absenteeism due to illness.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has ended the COVID-19 positive case notification process. This means families no longer receive letters home regarding positive cases.

### **Additional Health Measures**

- Enhanced disinfecting and cleaning protocols continue.
- Hand sanitizer in every room and at multiple entrances
- Wearing masks from Grade 4 - 12 in schools and Prek - Grade 12 on the buses.
- Oxivir in all classrooms
- K-6 cohorting remains in place, 7-12 continue to be mindful of physical distancing.
- All outside speakers/presenters will need to be cancelled for the month of January.

### **Assessments**

Our ongoing focus is on quality teaching and student learning. We believe that a balanced assessment approach is essential to student learning and well-being. Alberta Education has shared that the January diploma examinations for senior high students have been cancelled. School staff and students have also expressed a desire to ensure that students gain the experience of writing cumulative final assessments, as both feel this is a potential lifelong skill, and delaying this experience is causing potential further anxiety regarding future exams. As a result, final exams for students will continue at the end of January.

Staff is working to develop a process to ensure students who are ill will not be negatively impacted. Your child's high school will provide more details on this. Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) will occur the



last week of January for our Grade 9 students at St Dominic High School as per direction from Alberta Education. Our teachers will work, as always, to ensure that balanced, broad-based assessment continues to take place until the end of the term and that the final mark results in a fair and accurate assessment of the student's knowledge of the learning outcomes for the given course.

Thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation. Please continue to watch for further school-specific information in your regular weekly communication and also on [rdcrs.ca](http://rdcrs.ca) divisional website.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Finnigan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'F'.

Kathleen Finnigan  
Superintendent  
Red Deer Catholic Regional Division