



# MESC 2021-2022 RE-ENTRY PLAN

OPEN FOR THE FALL - RETURN TO  
FULL TIME IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

(Revised August 16, 2021)

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# MESC 2021-22 Re-Entry Plan

## Section 1: BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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### MESC Global Ends Policy

Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission exists to:

Govern an outstanding Maskwacîs education system that ensures students attend respectful and inspiring schools and engages parents in the decision making process, that result in competent, confident and resilient Maskwacîs Cree speaking students for the optimization of resources used at a cost that can be justified by the results.

### Forward

The Board of Governors of Maskwacîs Education Schools Commission (MESC) is committed to ensuring that our Head Start Programs and Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools are safe and healthy learning and working environments for Otatoskewak (Staff), Kiskinwahamawâkanak (Students), and Ohpikinahawasowak (Parents).

The MESC 2021-2022 RE-ENTRY PLAN is founded on the MESC foundational values of Îyiniw Mâmitonehickan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin as defined in the Maskwacis Education Law and is guided by MESC Board policies EL-1: Treatment of Students and Parent, EL-2: Treatment of Staff and BMD-3: Delegation to the Superintendent

*On behalf of the Board of Governors, we are extremely thankful to all staff and families for their understanding and cooperation shown this last year. Our detailed re-entry plan is to ensure a return to school safely. We look forward to welcoming our staff and students back to in class learning in the fall. The plan may be adjusted with any new information on the status of the pandemic as it becomes available. I believe in our Wâhkôhtowin, resilience and coming together in the spirit of Ahkameyimowin in never giving up despite the challenges placed in our path. Collectively, we can lead MESC into a world class education system driven by our Cree values. Ay-hay.*

- Dr. Shauna Bruno, MESC Board Chair

This procedure balances the needs for Maskwacis direction and standardized approaches at a system level while also providing flexibility and respecting MESC autonomy at the school level.

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## **Purpose of the MESC Re-Entry Plan Handbook**

Maskwacis continues to be under a state of emergency and all COVID related restrictions remain in effect. In addition the current vaccination rate in Maskwacis is very low (31% as of June 23, 2021). These factors continue to guide this Re-Entry plan.

MESC will continue to encourage and promote vaccination of all MESC staff with a target of 80% of staff fully vaccinated by September 2, 2021. This is our commitment to providing students and staff a safe and healthy learning and working environment.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline control measures to minimize the risk for transmission of COVID-19 and keep students and staff safe. This Handbook is for the sole use of MESC employees to guide the re-entry processes in the 2021-2022 school year. The Handbook and relevant forms will be made available for all staff through Public School Works.

This Handbook will be reviewed by the Executive team and updated as necessary on a regular basis.

## **Board/Committee Meeting and Community Engagement**

### **Monthly Board and Committee Meetings**

The MESC Board of Governors will begin in-person Board and committee meetings once 80% of the board members are fully vaccinated. Below 80%, meetings will be held virtually.

### **Circle of Elders**

MESC is committed to seeking guidance from the Circle of Elders throughout the re-entry process. Circle of elders meeting will begin in-person meetings once 80% of the members are fully vaccinated . Below 80%, meetings will be held via teleconference.

### **Leadership Summit**

MESC is committed to engaging, informing and collaborating with the Chiefs and Councils of each Nation throughout the re-entry process. The Leadership summit can be held in person once 80% of the participants are fully vaccinated. If vaccination rates are between 60% - 79% then the summit will be a mix of in-person and virtual event and if vaccination rates are below 60% will be a virtual event only.

### **Parent Advisory Circle and Parent Conference**

As partners in education, MESC is committed to engaging parents in the re-entry process. The Parent Circle meetings and Parent Conference can be held in person once vaccinations in Maskwacis have reached 80% fully vaccinated. If vaccination rates are between 60% -

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79% then the conference will be a mix of in-person and virtual events. If vaccination rates are below 60% it will be a virtual event only.

### **Youth Day**

The Youth day can be held in person once vaccinations in Maskwacis have reached 80% fully vaccinated. If vaccination rates are between 60% - 79% then the conference will be a mix of in-person and virtual event and if vaccination rates are below 60% will be a virtual event only.

### **Elders Forum**

The Elders can be held in person once vaccinations in Maskwacis have reached 80% fully vaccinated. If vaccination rates are between 60% - 79% then the forum will be a mix of in-person and virtual events and if vaccination rates are below 60% this event will be postponed to a later date only.

### **Health & Safety Measures for All In-Person Gatherings Mentioned Above**

Masks must be worn when physical distancing is not possible for all in-person gatherings, unless 100% of the participants are fully vaccinated. If 100% of the participants are vaccinated all Maskwacis health and safety measures are lifted.

### **Disclaimer**

The Handbook is subject to change as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves and/or as new regulations or guidelines from [Maskwacis Health Services](#) (MHS), [Alberta Health Services](#) (AHS), [AB FNIHB OneHealth](#) are instituted. The measures identified in the Handbook are aimed at minimizing or eliminating the potential for transmission of COVID-19.

This handbook was prepared as a guideline for the exclusive use of MESC with specific regard to the particular needs, policies, and intended uses of sites within MESC. This handbook is not a legal document but it does include a Personal Risk Acknowledgment form and Personal Risk Severity Assessment that MESC employees can use to make informed choices about their own health and safety. MESC does not accept any liability or responsibility for any occurrence arising out of the use of the manual by staff or any other person, organization or agency and is not intended for any other purpose but to provide information and guidelines to the employees, students, volunteers and parents/guardians of MESC.

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## Section 2: SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

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### Re-Entry Plan

This Handbook provides guidance on a range of operational issues to create a unified approach to the re-entry process that will be instituted across MESC sites.

MESC will continue to do everything we can to protect children and minimize the disruption of learning. A factor that has been taken into consideration is the low percentage of Maskwacîsak that are vaccinated to date, making our community vulnerable to extended public health restrictions and continued spread of COVID-19. This is why a high rate of vaccination among MESC staff is crucial.

*Our goal is to return to full time in-person instruction, following the updated 2021-2022 school calendar with regular hours. MESC looks forward to offering balanced education with a strong focus on our core values and student wellness support. District assessments will be conducted to determine individual student learning needs and strategies will be developed to address learning loss and help students catch up from missed instruction this year. Attendance will be a key factor for these learning strategies to work. Ay-hay, ekosi pitama,*

- *Brian Wildcat, MESC Superintendent of Schools*

### Guiding Principles for returning to full-time in-person instruction in the September 2021

- The continuation of student learning is essential to realizing MESC's Vision and Mission;
- Promote vaccination of all eligible MESC staff with a target of 80% of staff fully vaccinated by August 30, 2021;
- Encourage parents to have their children, who are eligible, to be vaccinated;
- Smaller class sizes where possible. Exceptions will be made;
- MESC will continue to model foundational values and norms to ensure we are flexible, patient and compassionate with staff and students;
- Prepared for rolling closures;
- Collaborate with all partners to build a shared commitment to the Re-Entry Plan;
- Attendance will be a key factor for a successful re-entry and for learning strategies to work.

### Commitment to Learning in a Safe and Healthy School

- MESC will arrange with [Maskwacîs Health Services](#) (MHS) to have all MESC staff tested for COVID-19 between August 16th - 19th, 2021;

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- COVID-19 testing procedures, protocols and schedules will follow recommendations from the Maskwacis Directors of Emergency Management (DEM's), MHS and Maskwacis Chiefs and Councils and will be updated from time to time. This will be communicated to employees via email.
- Mandatory testing after extended school breaks will apply to the following MESC staff:
  - Staff who have travelled outside of the country,
  - Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19,
  - Staff who have not been vaccinated.
- Staff that are not vaccinated will be required to take a COVID-19 test regularly throughout the school year.
- MESC will ensure business continuity, regardless of location;
- All employees and contractors must be involved in implementing and maintaining a safe work environment and must take reasonable care to protect themselves and others in the workplace;
- All employees are expected to cooperate with the employer to create a safe learning and working environment;
- MESC is committed to strict cleaning and sanitation protocols and practices;
- MESC is committed to reinforcing a stay at home policy for staff and students who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19;
- MESC is committed to mask wearing, physical distancing and hand washing protocols and practices where appropriate and/or designated;
- MESC will provide masks that meet [recommended standards](#) for students;
- MESC will amend and follow the “MESC Guidelines for Managing a Positive COVID-19 Case” document as required.

## Our Partners

MESC will continue to collaborate with MHS, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to ensure operations align with recommended practices. MESC will continue to support the directions of the Maskwacis Chiefs and Councils and each Nation's DEM's and their Committees.

## MESC Use Of School For Emergency Purposes

In the event that Maskwacis wished to appropriate any MESC buildings for emergency purposes MESC will follow the procedure outlined in the “MESC Guidelines for Managing a Positive COVID-19 Case” document.

## MESC Policies and Administrative Procedures and Regulations

All existing policies, administrative procedures and regulations will be in effect. In case of a discrepancy with existing procedures and regulations the handbook or most recent directive will take precedence.

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## Communication Plan

MESC is committed to communicating and seeking meaningful feedback throughout the year from staff, students and parents by:

- Providing regular communication to employees; (Public School Works)
- Utilizing the MESC website and Facebook and other communication tools to ensure accurate and timely updates regarding operations that impact teaching and learning;
- Ensuring that regulatory guidelines are updated.

## Cultural Practices and Ceremonies

The [Maskwacis Cree Declaration on Education](#) emphasizes that cultural practices and ceremonies embody the values of Îyiniw Mâmitonehickan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin as defined in the Maskwacis Education Law.

MESC will limit gatherings on its sites and prohibit schools and/or classes from attending any gatherings off site. MESC may incorporate modified cultural practices and ceremonies that follow strict safety guidelines under advice from the Circle of Elders and MHS. This will include but not be limited to:

- Feasts;
- Pipe ceremonies;
- Sweat Lodges;
- School round dances; and
- Pow-wows.

## Singing

[Singing indoors](#) is permitted, however because it is a higher risk activity, precautions must be taken to minimize the risk of transmission until the vaccination rate among the school's employees has reached 80%. If the 80% is not reached then the following guidelines must be observed for students or staff: These include but are not limited to:

- Singers are to be staggered so they are not directly behind one another
- Singers should not face each other
- Singing should occur in a room with a large room with a high ceiling and good ventilation
- Limit vocal activity to 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute break to allow for air exchange in the room.
- All instructors and singers must wear masks, both when singing and when not singing.

## Parents

**To ensure the health and safety of students, families and staff, MESC will:**

- Encourage students registration in a MESC school is completed by September 29th, 2021;

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- Require confirmation of changes to student personal information for the 2021-22 school year prior to September 1, 2021;
- Encourage registration to be completed online. Schools will avoid using hard copies of the registration form;
- Provide information on how to use the new online school registration form;
- Continue to enforce a strict stay at home policy for students exhibiting cold and flu like symptoms or symptoms of COVID-19;
- Provide a [self screening checklist](#) for students and parents to follow and practice every morning;
- Continue to require students to wear masks, physically distance and follow hand washing protocols and practices where appropriate.
- Inform parents of COVID-19 testing [criteria](#) and practices if/or when MESC makes the decision to test students;
- Draft COVID-19 communications tools for each school community;
- Encourage parents to have their children vaccinated when the opportunity becomes available;
- Work with MHS to host vaccination clinics in MESC schools and will provide assistance for collecting parent/guardian consent. These clinics will be held in September 2021.

## **Education Service Agreements (ESAs)**

MESC is committed to ensuring ESAs are reviewed and addressed as required and will stay in close communication with our provincial school partners.

## Section 3: PEOPLE SERVICES MESC EMPLOYEES

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### Principles

The health and safety of staff and students are paramount. As such, MESC will continue to adhere to

- MESC Health and Safety Manual (found in Public School Works)
- [Alberta Employment Standards\(COVID-19 Leave\) Regulation](#)
- [Alberta Health \(AHS\) COVID-19 orders and legislation.](#)
- [COVID-19 and Human Rights](#)

### Employee Health and Safety Responsibilities

MESC values the commitment and health and safety of its employees, and will ensure that all staff are aware of the measures that have been instituted to reduce exposure to COVID-19 and their responsibilities within this response. It is the employee's responsibility to stay informed and comply with MESC's directions regarding reporting to work and workplace health procedures in the context of the COVID-19. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

- MESC will arrange with [Maskwacis Health Services](#) to have all MESC staff tested for COVID-19 between August 16th - 19th, 2021;
- COVID-19 testing procedures, protocols and schedules will follow recommendations from the Maskwacis Directors of Emergency Management (DEM's), MHS and Maskwacis Chiefs and Councils and will be updated from time to time. This will be communicated to employees via email.
- Mandatory testing after extended school breaks will apply to the following MESC staff:
  - Staff who have travelled outside of the country,
  - Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19,
  - Staff who have not been vaccinated.
- Staff that are not vaccinated will be required to take a COVID-19 test regularly
- Positive test results must be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor. Failure to get tested will result in the employee being placed on leave without pay until testing takes place;
- All employees must complete the [COVID-19 Declaration Form](#) prior to starting the 2021-22 school year and as otherwise directed from time to time. [\(See Appendix 7.5\)](#)
- All employees must use the Alberta Health [self-screen](#) for symptoms each day
  - COVID -19 illness pertains to employees who:
    - Have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
    - If not fully vaccinated, are in close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 (provides care, lives with or has close physical contact, or comes into direct contact with infectious body fluids);
    - Are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:

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- Fever
- Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- All employees must comply with the [Workplace Hygiene Best Practices](#) (appendix 6.1)
- Supervisors will communicate to staff that they must stay home if they exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19;
- Supervisors will have a procedure to address staff that become symptomatic during the work day. This plan will allow staff members to isolate/leave the work site immediately and remain at home for the time recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and MHS. If there is a discrepancy between AHS and MHS rules then MHS rules shall be followed.

## Absences

If employees are sick, in quarantine or isolation, or taking care of household members due to COVID-19 the employees are to use their regular leave entitlements. ( i.e. sick days, personal days, leave without pay, EI etc.) MESC has temporarily increased the sick leave entitlement from 14 to 20 days per year to account for this.

Employees experiencing COVID-19 symptoms are required to:

- Stay home and [isolate](#);
- Take the [AHS Online self-assessment](#);
- Get a COVID-19 test if the self-assessment indicates a COVID-19 test is required and
- Report the results to their supervisor.

Employees who experience symptoms while at work must:

- Notify their supervisor as soon as they develop one of the COVID symptoms.
- Immediately put on a mask;
- Isolate and then leave their worksite as soon as their supervisor has made arrangements for the employee to be relieved of duty;
- Take the [AHS Online self-assessment](#);
- Get a [COVID-19 test](#) if the self-assessment indicates a COVID-19 test is required;
- Report the results to their supervisor.

## Carpooling

Employees will:

- If possible, avoid carpooling with people from outside their household.

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- If carpooling is necessary, take steps to keep all occupants safe, such as: limiting the number of people in the vehicle where possible; ensuring all occupants wear masks and wash their hands before entering the vehicle; and clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, seatbelt buckles and armrests after each trip. [Government of Alberta COVID-19 Carpooling. Guidance for Taxis, Limos, Rideshares and Commuting](#)

## Travel

All employees:

- Will follow the [Government of Canada](#) advisory;
- Are advised to avoid all discretionary travel outside of Canada until further notice; Discretionary travel includes attending anything for tourism, recreation, and entertainment purposes. [Non-discretionary](#) travel means travelling for reasons that are essential or non-optional;
- Who take a discretionary trip, outside of Canada, and are subject to an [isolation period](#) that interferes with regular job duties, then that time must be taken as vacation days or leave without pay;
- Who must travel outside of Canada for non-discretionary reasons that results in isolation time that requires time away from work will be reviewed on an individual basis.

## Isolation and Quarantine

Employees:

- May be required to [isolate or quarantine](#) in accordance with Maskwacis Health Services and/or Alberta Health Requirements;
- Who are in mandatory isolation:
  - Must stay home;
  - Must avoid close contact with people in their household;
  - May get fresh air on their private property that is not accessible by others;
  - May not leave their property to go for a walk, attend work, go shopping, attend social events or any public gatherings;
  - Can leave their home if they or a minor child need COVID-19 testing or urgent medical care;
  - May be subject to a [\\$2000 fine](#), by AHS, if found to be in violation of [COVID-19 Orders or Legislation](#).

## Mental Health and Wellness Plan

To support staff, People Services, in collaboration with Learning and Student Services, will:

- Provide information and support for staff in the area of mental health and wellness;
- Determine alternate supports for increased need of mental wellness supports for staff and students; and

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- Survey employees to assess their mental wellness needs.

## Professional Development

MESC believes that comprehensive professional development focuses on enhancing professional practice and building leadership capacity at MESC and at the school level. Professional development is required as Îyiniw Mâmitonehikan is foundational for the Education of Maskwacisak, in accordance with the Maskwacis Declaration on Education and the Maskwacis Education Law. ([MESC AP-410](#))

MESC will:

- Cancel all travel for third party professional development (PD) until further notice. This includes both travel to an external PD event and having a facilitator delivering a PD within MESC;
- Limit external professional development to those PD's delivered online.
- Review all internal PD requests for approval; and
- Encourage PD through the use of Public School Works.

## Procedure for Approved Non MESC Employees entering MESC Buildings

The following procedure must be followed to accommodate non MESC employees visiting MESC buildings or MESC sites. It is essential that MESC employees at each building or site follow this procedure to ensure the safety of all.

### **MESC buildings or sites without a receptionist.**

Procedure for allowing any approved non MESC employee (Visitor) to enter a MESC building or worksite. All MESC employees must:

- Have arranged an appointment time and date with the visitor(s);
- Inform the visitor(s) that both parties will have to wear a mask;
- Meet the visitor(s) at the building or site at the arranged time and date;
- Have the approved visitor(s) sign-in and sign-out of the building. The sign-in/sign-out form must be initialed, confirming the self screening has been completed. These forms must be kept on-file and available for potential reference and/or contact tracing;
- Conduct the appointment in a safe manner following COVID-19 guidelines.

### **MESC buildings or sites with a receptionist.**

Procedure for allowing any non MESC employee (Visitor) to enter a MESC building or worksite. Each site must post signage that all visitors must have an appointment, must report to the receptionist upon arrival, and that all safety procedures must be followed.

All NON MESC employees must:

- Report to the receptionist;

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- Wear a mask (Available from receptionist if needed);
- Sign-in and sign-out of the building. The sign-in/sign-out form must be initialed, confirming the self screening has been completed. These forms must be kept on-file and available for potential reference and/or contact tracing;
- The receptionist will contact the appropriate MESC employee to confirm the appointment.

### **Supply Teachers/Casuals**

In order to protect the health and safety of MESC students and staff, substitute teachers and casual employees must sign the COVID-19 Declaration Form as part of the onboarding process.

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## Section 4: BUSINESS SERVICES - MESC

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### Principles

MESC will ensure business continuity, regardless of location:

- Finance: will continue as normal
- Contracts: procedures will continue as normal
- Payroll: process and procedures will continue as normal

### Nanâtohk Mîciwin (Universal School Food Strategy)

Nanâtohk Mîciwin (Universal School Food Strategy – USFS) provides healthy meals, snacks and beverages for all 11 MESC schools and 3 head start programs. Along with providing comprehensive food education, Nanâtohk Mîciwin includes students in growing and preparing meals.

- Ehpewapahk and Outreach schools:
  - Student meals will be prepared at the school.
  - Students will have a staggered lunch.
  - Students will assemble at the gathering area, pick up hot lunch and cooks will serve the salad bar options.
  - Students return to their classroom/sitting area to eat lunch.
- EJSH and NSS schools:
  - Student meals will be prepared at the school.
  - Students will have staggered lunch times.
  - Students will gather in the central area, pick up their hot lunches and cooks will serve salad bar options.
  - Classrooms will rotate through the gathering area with tables marked off for physical distancing to eat lunch.
- Ermineskin Elementary School:
  - Student meals will be prepared at EJSH and portioned at EES by cooks.
  - Students K-2, lunch will be served in the classrooms by EAs.
  - Lunch hours for students 3-6 will be staggered.
  - Students will assemble in the gathering area, pick up hot lunch and cooks will serve the salad bar options.
  - Students will return to their classroom to eat lunch.
- Grace Marie Primary school:
  - Student meals will be prepared at the school.
  - Students K-1, lunch will be served in the classrooms by EAs.

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- Lunch time will be staggered for Grade 2.
- Students will assemble in the gathering area, pick up hot lunch and cooks will serve the salad bar options.
- Students return to their classroom to eat lunch.
  
- Mimiw Sakahikan, Meskanahk Ka Nipa Wit and Kisipatinahk schools:
  - Student meals at Mimiw Sakahikan, Meskanahk Ka Nipa Wit and Kisipatinahk will be prepared at the school.
  - Meals will be delivered to the classrooms with the assistance of the EAs.
  
- Nipisihkopahk Elementary school:
  - Student meals at Nipisihkopahk Elementary School (NES) will be prepared at Nipisihkopahk Secondary School and delivered to NES.
  - Classroom portions will be distributed by the school cooks and delivered to classrooms by EAs and served on disposable containers.
  
- Food studies curriculum will be delivered in class focusing on theory and food safety training and will involve actual food preparation by students.
- Students and Cooks must maintain social distancing and safety protocol in all areas.
- Food classes and kitchen areas are open to approved personnel only.
- School staff are prohibited from sending students to the kitchen for any reason.
- The only students or employees in the kitchen will be the ones under the Nanâtohk Miciwin supervision.
- School concessions and vending machines will not operate for the 2021-22 school year.
- Parents providing lunch for their student must be sent with the student in the morning.
- No outside food will be delivered or dropped off at the school for students or staff.

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## Organization of Workspace (All Facilities)

MESC will:

- Follow the [Alberta General Building Safety Guidance p.3](#);
- Undertake a thorough cleaning of school facilities prior to re-entry;
- Maintain all HVAC systems to ensure good ventilation;
- Provide cleaning products so employees can keep their workspaces clean and disinfected. More information on cleaning and disinfection can be accessed [here](#);
- Place hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol content by:
  - entrances, exits, classroom entrances;
  - high-touch equipment such as microwave ovens, photocopiers and vending machines;
  - high traffic areas such as water fountains, washrooms;
  - shared equipment;
  - auxiliary spaces and common rooms; and
  - any others areas that may apply.
- Remove area rugs and soft furnishings that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected;
- Increase frequency of cleaning of permanent carpets
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize infirmary once it has been used
- Sneeze shields will remain at all locations where members of the public are received;
- Limit the use of common areas (i.e couches, waiting areas, lunch areas);
- Install signage to show physical distancing measures;
- Reduce the number of seats in the waiting area with chair spaces (two meters) apart;
- Provide directional floor markings;
- Limit number of users for restroom use and provide markings for physical distancing;
- Insist that only approved non-school staff may enter the school;
- Allow only approved visitors (emergency situations) onto MESC sites;
- Cancel gathering larger indoors gatherings (subject to AHS Guidelines);
- Provide additional Alberta Health Services resources:
  - Hand Washing Posters (AHS); [Poster](#); [Poster 2](#);
  - How to Hand Wash (AHS) [poster](#); and
  - How to use an alcohol-based hand rub/sanitizer (AHS) [poster](#).

## Cleanliness, Hygiene and PPE (All Facilities)

MESC will:

- Communicate the importance of physical distancing between staff and students, when possible;
- Provide hand sanitizers;
- Provide hygiene guidelines and processes;
- Ensure that all MESC buildings are cleaned once per day;

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- Ensure high traffic areas are sanitized according to a schedule following a checklist multiple times a day;
- Ensure personal protective equipment ([PPE](#)) is available at each site for;
  - Employees travelling between MESC sites.
  - Speech and Language Therapists, Consultants, and School Counsellors
  - Approved visitors
  - Students and staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms
- Provide training on PPE's through Public School Works and Maskwacis Health.
- Follow guidelines (pending) between ISC-FNIHB and [Alberta Health Services the use of PPE](#) with young children and students;
- Ensure each site has non-touch thermometers to check for fever in case an employee or student exhibits signs of illness; and
- Provide training and guidelines for use of thermometers.

## Staff Safety Training Prior to Re-Entry

MESC will:

- Utilize Public School WORKS courses to train employees on the MESC Re-Entry handbook and any safety requirements;
- Educate employees on physical distancing, proper hygiene, and correct PPE usage;
- Provide PPE (i.e. masks, gloves, hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol, masks and face shields when necessary);
- Provide information and support for staff in the area of mental health.

## Transportation

Students across Maskwacis and some off reserve travel to and from MESC schools through a combination of walking, being driven by their parents, child services and school bus services. Travel/transportation of students must follow the public health measures in place.

MESC Will:

- Inform parents and children/students that they are prohibited from being in the pick-up area or to enter the bus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Develop procedures for bussing, student pick-up and drop-off that support physical distancing between all persons (except household members or cohorted children/students and staff), support respiratory etiquette and access to hand hygiene.
- Ensure parents and children/students are not in the pick-up area or enter the bus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.

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## Busing Procedures and Regulations

- The driver should be provided with a protective zone, which may include.
  - 2 metre physical distance;
  - Physical barrier;
  - Non-medical mask; or
  - Other
- Students will be assigned seats and a record of this seating plan will be maintained in order to assist with contact tracing in the event of a student being a case of COVID-19.
- Children/students start loading from the back seats to the front of the bus based on the bus runs.
- Where feasible, students from the same family group will share seats.
- Students start unloading from the front seats to the back of the bus.
- Masks are required for students riding the bus. While not required, If possible masks should be worn for students in Head Start to Kindergarten. If a student who is not wearing a mask becomes ill during the ride a mask will be provided.
- Schools must develop procedures for student loading, unloading and transfers that support physical distancing of 2 metres between all persons (except household members)
- If a rider becomes ill during the ride the driver will notify the Dispatcher who will contact parents to pick up the rider on route or at the school. Drivers will ensure that the seating plan is accurate for that ride so that contract tracing is possible
- Bus cleaning and records.
  - All high touch surfaces including door handles, window areas, rails, steering wheel, the mobile device and GPS used by the driver, will be cleaned and sanitized prior to each run.
  - The insides of the bus will be cleaned and sanitized at the end of the day or when dirty according to bus cleaning protocol.
  - A log of all cleaning will be maintained.

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## Section 5: LEARNING AND STUDENT SERVICES

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### MESC School Guidelines

#### School Calendar, Schedule and Timetable

##### MESC will:

- Have students return to in-person instruction in the Fall of 2021;
- Follow updated 2021-2022 school calendar year with regular hours for MESC school programming;
- Ensure enrollment in each class is set at a target of 22 students where possible; Exemptions will be made on a school by school basis;
- Ensure safety procedures are in place for all scheduled classes; and
- Ensure school timetables adhere to the MESC designated bell schedules with required instructional hours for curriculum and programming.

#### Important Dates

- August 16-19 COVID-19 testing for all MESC staff
- August 23 School Admin and Admin assistants return
- Aug 24-25 Nehiyawewin Instructor PD
- August 27 All school staff return
- September 2 First day of Classes K5-Grade 12
- September 2-3 Head Start and K4 staggered entry

#### Continuation of Learning

- Continue to strengthen and support Nehiyawewin and Nehiyawatisiwin programming;
- Conduct district assessments to determine student learning needs and ensure that Continuum of Supports are provided; and
- Ensure that Intervention strategies for Literacy, Numeracy and core content are addressed.

#### Curriculum, Programming and Assessments

##### MESC will:

- Include a strong foundation of MESC 4 Core values;
- To ensure the continuation of learning, students will all advance to the next grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 9 for the 2021-22 school year. High school students will continue to work on obtaining credits in their current course sequence;
- Committed to meeting the holistic needs of students through enriched learning environments
- Assessments will be used to inform teaching and the learning needs of students: and

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- Outcomes will be communicated with parents/guardians about differentiated instruction strategies that will address learning loss.

## Student Wellness supports

MESC is committed to supporting the health and wellness of all MESC students through:

- Individual one on one counselling and intervention counselling;
- Targeted small groups for identified social emotional needs within each school;
- Universal programming that supports classrooms; and
- Holistic support for families through the student and family wellness program.

## School Responsibilities

Each school will create and implement a student personal hygiene and safety plan which includes:

### Required:

- **Students and staff wear masks until further notice.**
- Continual reminders of the importance of respiratory etiquette (e.g. cover coughs and sneezes, avoid touching the face and disposal of used tissues promptly, followed by hand hygiene);
- Encourage students to practice physical distancing, as appropriate;
- Require students and staff to perform hand hygiene (washing hand or use hand sanitizer) when entering and exiting the school as well as before entering the classroom; and
- Ensure teachers are regularly providing lessons on hand washing, physical distancing and school routine throughout the school year.

### Recommended guidelines:

- Consider providing students with refillable water bottles and develop appropriate safety procedures and schedules for filling water bottles; and
- Develop and enforce a no sharing policy and monitor compliance, all students should have their own supplies.

## For Parents and Students

### Required:

- Ensure parents are aware of strict stay-at-home policy for any students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (even if symptoms resemble a mild cold).
  - Students showing symptoms while at school must stay home for the required amount of time prior to returning to school. Follow recommended procedures from MHS.

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- Daily screening for all students using the [AHS self screening tool](#).
  - While the first option is always to keep students home when they are sick, MESC understands that students may become sick at school.
  - Students exhibiting symptoms of illness will be taken to the designated school infirmary.
  - School will follow a designated school infirmary safety and cleaning procedures ([appendix 6.4](#))
  - Parents will be notified and required to pick up their child.
  - Parents must have their child assessed. AHS [self-Assessment Test](#)
- Redesign parent/teacher nights with a safety first approach

## Physical Space, Equipment and Supplies

### Required:

- Develop classroom layout to support physical distancing when possible and provide students in class with assigned seating when needed.
- Make use of separate doors for school entry and exit.

### Recommended guidelines:

- Ensure touch points are wiped down at a minimum at start of day, end of day:
- Where sharing of school equipment is required, ensure equipment will be cleaned between uses.
- Limit the number of students using the washroom, respecting physical distancing requirements

## Section 6: APPENDICES

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### 6.1- Workplace Hygiene Best Practices

- Wash your hands frequently. Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- Practice physical distancing. Physical distancing is maintaining at least 2 metre (6 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain viruses. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
- Avoid sharing water bottles, utensils, dishes and food.
- Practice good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately, and use hand sanitizer after disposing tissue.
- Avoid shaking hands, nod or wave instead.

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## 6.2- COVID-19 Declaration Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have taken the COVID-19 test as directed, prior to returning to work for the 2021-22 school year..

I further declare that I

1. Have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 during the last 14 days.
2. Understand that as per legal opinion, MESC can require employees to disclose their vaccination status;
3. Have (circle one):
  - a. Received one COVID-19 vaccination
  - b. Received both COVID-19 vaccinations
  - c. I have not been vaccinated but will book an appointment and get my first dose by Sept 3, 2021
  - d. Am choosing not to get vaccinated
4. If not fully vaccinated, have not been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 (provides care, lives with or has close physical contact, or come into direct contact with infectious body fluids).
5. Do not have any of the following symptoms that are not part of a pre-existing condition:
  - a. Cough (new or worsening chronic cough)
  - b. Fever
  - c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)
  - d. Runny nose
  - e. Sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition
  - f. Loss of sense of smell or taste
6. Will notify my supervisor immediately if I develop any of the above symptoms. If at home I will not come to work. If at work I will isolate and then go home as-soon-as-possible.
7. Will get tested again if I develop any of the above core symptoms.
8. Will notify my supervisor of my test results as soon as I receive them.
9. Will follow all of the guidelines put in place by MESC as outlined in the MESC ReEntry Plan.

False information or failure to comply with safety guidelines constitutes just cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment

-----  
Signature

-----  
Date

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### **6.3- Mental Health and Wellness Supports for Students and Staff**

During this difficult time, staff and students may require additional mental health and wellness supports. Below are resources for online/phone support. If you are unsure about if you should call any of the below numbers, please call and they will help direct you if needed.

- Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health crisis line 780-362-2150 (call or text)
- Maskwacis Health at 780-585-3830 or at Pigeon Lake 780-585-2003.
- Maskwacis Ambulance: 780-585-4000
- Maskwacis RCMP: [Phone: \(780\) 585-3767](tel:7805853767)
- Maskwacis Counselling: 780-585-2268 and through their [Facebook page](#)
- Suicide Prevention: text 45645 call 1-833-456-4566
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness: 1-855-242-3310
- ConnecTeen: text only 587-333-2724
- Youthspace: text only 778-783-0177
- Mental Health Helpline: Phone: 1-877-303-2642 .
- Health Link – phone 811
- Alberta Health Services [Help in Tough Times](#) and [Healthy Together](#)
- [Physical-Emotional Learning](#)
- [Trauma-informed practice](#)
- [Working Together to Support Mental Health in Alberta Schools](#)
- [MORE \(Mental Health Online Resources for Educators\)](#)

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## 6.4- Designated School Infirmary Safety Procedures

- School staff are to follow AHS information on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 so that appropriate action can be taken if symptoms are developed during the day;
- Students and staff who show symptoms are to be promptly separated from others in an infirmary until they can go home;
- School staff need to pay attention to students' feelings and reactions. The way the situation is handled strongly affects how students respond;
- Inform the student about the removal procedure and what to expect while in the infirmary;
- Anyone who is required to provide care to the student should try to maintain a two-metre distance in-between them and wear a mask;
- Appropriate signage is to be placed at the door of the infirmary that is occupied by the student who may be ill;
- A detailed record of students being admitted to the infirmary or supervised area is to be documented;
- Adequate resources and a replenishment process for the infirmary is to be in place to ensure supplies are available for use by others
- Notify Custodial staff to ensure appropriate environmental cleaning and sanitizing of the space the student occupied is done once student has departed;
- Have protocols in place to notify parents and guardians if a child shows symptoms of COVID-19 while at school or Headstart—including the need for immediate pickup;
- Ensure the appropriate mode of transportation is used and other precautions are followed during transit for students who begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 and have no other transportation options;
- Avoid putting students who may be ill back on a school bus, if possible;
- Ensure students, staff and families who may be affected are treated with respect, fairness and compassion;
- Focus protection of privacy by taking steps to reduce the potential for stigma and discrimination;
- School principals will notify Superintendent and their staff about any confirmed cases of COVID-19 impacting a school and will advise of the implemented precautions;
- Superintendent will contact Alberta Health Services

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## 6.5- Information Links

- [MESC Health and Safety Manual \(June 2020\)](#)
- [Novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates for Alberta](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and Indigenous communities](#)
- [Maskwacis Health](#)
- [Alberta Health Services: Home](#)
- [Testing in Alberta](#)
- [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#)
- [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [COVID-19 Symptoms in Comparison to Flu and Common Cold \(Poster\)](#)
- <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/>
- [novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- [onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19](https://onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19)

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## 6.6- Daily self screening checklist

### COVID-19 INFORMATION

## COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR ADULTS 18 YEARS AND OLDER)

#### Overview

This tool was developed to support schools, activity organizers, employers, businesses and facility operators in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among attendees/staff. The tool is meant to assist with assessing attendees who may be symptomatic, or who may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

Attendees should complete this checklist prior to participating in the activity or program. If an individual answers YES to any of the questions, they must not be allowed to attend or participate in the activity or program.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, this screening tool will be updated as required.

#### Screening Questions for Adults 18 Years and Older:

1.	<b>Have you traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days?</b>	YES	NO
<p>If you answered "YES":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are required to quarantine for 14 days from arrival in Canada.</li> <li>If you develop any symptoms, use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended.</li> </ul> <p>If you answered "NO", proceed to question 2.</p>			
2.	<b>Have you had close contact with a case<sup>1</sup> of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?</b> Face-to-face contact within 2 metres for 15 minutes or longer, or direct physical contact such as hugging <i>Note: A health care worker in an occupational setting wearing recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact</i>	YES	NO
<p>If you answered "YES":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are required to quarantine for 14 days from the last day of exposure, except:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previously tested positive for COVID-19 in last 90 days before exposure:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No quarantine required. Monitor for symptoms for 14 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Fully immunized<sup>2</sup> against COVID-19:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No quarantine required. Monitor for symptoms for 14 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Partially immunized<sup>3</sup> against COVID-19:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarantine for 10 days. If tested on day 7 or later after exposure, quarantine ends after receiving a negative test result.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>If you answered "NO" or if you have symptoms, proceed to question 3.</p>			

<sup>1</sup> A lab-confirmed case OR a probable case as defined in the [Alberta COVID-19 Notifiable Disease Guideline](#)

<sup>2</sup> Fully-immunized = 14 days after receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine series OR 14 days after receiving one dose of a one-dose vaccine series.

<sup>3</sup> Partially-immunized = 14 days after receiving the first dose of a two-dose vaccine series

**NOTE:** Individuals who are profoundly immunocompromised and fully immunized should follow quarantine protocol for partially-immunized individuals; those who are partially immunized should follow the protocol for those who have not been immunized. Profoundly immunocompromised persons should always consult with their primary care provider if exposed

3.	<b>Do you have any new onset (or worsening) of the following symptoms:</b>		
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	• Runny nose	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Nasal congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / vomiting / diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle / joint aches	YES	NO
• Headache	YES	NO	
• Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye)	YES	NO	
<b>If you answered "YES" to any symptom in question 3:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay home and do not attend or participate in the activity or program.</li> <li>Use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to arrange for testing and to receive additional information on isolation.</li> <li>Individuals with fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat, are required to isolate for 10 days as per <a href="#">CMQH Order 05-2020</a> OR receive a negative COVID-19 test and feel better before returning to activities, as long as they have no known exposure.</li> </ul>			
<b>If you answered "NO" to all questions:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may attend the activity or program</li> </ul>			

## COVID-19 INFORMATION

## COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18)

### Overview

This checklist applies for all children, as well as all students who attend kindergarten through Grade 12, including high school students over 18. Children should be screened every day by completing this checklist before going to school, childcare or other activities. Children may need a parent or guardian to assist them to complete this screening tool.

### Screening Questions for Children under 18:

<b>1.</b>	<b>Has the child traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If the child answered "YES":</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child is required to quarantine for 14 days from the last day of exposure.</li> <li>If the child develops any symptoms, use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended.</li> </ul> <b>If the child answered "NO", proceed to question 2.</b>			
<b>2.</b>	<b>Has the child had close contact with a case<sup>1</sup> of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?</b> Face-to-face contact within 2 metres for 15 minutes or longer or direct physical contact such as hugging	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If the child answered "YES":</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child is required to quarantine for 14 days from the last day of exposure, except:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previously tested positive for COVID-19 in last 90 days before exposure:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No quarantine required. Monitor for symptoms for 14 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Fully immunized<sup>2</sup> against COVID-19:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No quarantine required. Monitor for symptoms for 14 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Partially immunized<sup>3</sup> against COVID-19:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarantine for 10 days. If tested on day 7 or later after exposure, quarantine ends after receiving a negative test result.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>If the child answered "NO" or if they have symptoms, proceed to question 3.</b>			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following core symptoms:</b>		
	<b>Fever</b> Temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
	<b>Cough</b> Continuous, more than usual, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
	<b>Shortness of breath</b> Continuous, out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, not related to other known causes or conditions such as asthma	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
	<b>Loss of sense of smell or taste</b> Not related to other known causes or conditions like allergies or neurological disorders	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If the child answered "YES" to any symptom in question 3:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child is to isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms OR receive a negative COVID-19 test and feel better before returning to activities</li> <li>Use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to arrange for testing and to receive additional information on isolation.</li> </ul> <b>If the child answered "NO" to all of the symptoms in question 3, proceed to question 4.</b>			

4.	<b>Does the child have any new onset (or worsening) of the following other symptoms:</b>			
	<b>Chills</b> Without fever, not related to being outside in cold weather	YES	NO	
	<b>Sore throat/painful swallowing</b> Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or reflux	YES	NO	
	<b>Runny nose/congestion</b> Not related to other known causes/conditions, such as seasonal allergies or being outside in cold weather	YES	NO	
	<b>Feeling unwell/fatigued</b> Lack of energy, poor feeding in infants, not related to other known causes or conditions, such as depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction or sudden injury	YES	NO	
	<b>Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea</b> Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety, medication or irritable bowel syndrome	YES	NO	
	<b>Unexplained loss of appetite</b> Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as anxiety or medication	YES	NO	
	<b>Muscle/joint aches</b> Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as arthritis or injury	YES	NO	
	<b>Headache</b> Not related to other known causes or conditions, such as tension-type headaches or chronic migraines	YES	NO	
	<b>Conjunctivitis (commonly known as pink eye)</b>	YES	NO	
<p><b>If the child answered "YES" to ONE symptom in question 4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep your child home and monitor for 24 hours.</li> <li>If their symptom is <b>improving</b> after 24 hours, they can return to school and activities when they feel well enough to go. Testing is not necessary.</li> <li>If the symptom <b>does not improve or worsens</b> after 24 hours (or if additional symptoms emerge), use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to check if testing is recommended.</li> </ul> <p><b>If the child answered "YES" to TWO OR MORE symptoms in question 4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep your child home.</li> <li>Use the <a href="#">AHS Online Assessment Tool</a> or call Health Link 811 to determine if testing is recommended.</li> <li>Your child can return to school and activities once their symptoms go away as long as it has been at least 24 hours since their symptoms started.</li> </ul> <p><b>If the child answered "NO" to all questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child may attend school, childcare and/or other activities.</li> </ul>				

**Please note:** If your child is experiencing any symptoms from the lists above, do not bring them to visit a continuing care or acute care facility for 10 days from when symptoms started or until symptoms resolve (whichever is longer), unless they receive a negative COVID-19 test result and feel better.

<sup>1</sup> A lab-confirmed case OR a probable case as defined in the [Alberta COVID-19 Notifiable Disease Guideline](#)

<sup>2</sup> Fully-immunized = 14 days after receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine series OR 14 days after receiving one dose of a one-dose vaccine series.

<sup>3</sup> Partially-immunized = 14 days after having received one dose of vaccine in a 2 dose vaccine series

**NOTE:** Individuals who are profoundly immunocompromised and fully immunized should follow quarantine protocol for partially-immunized individuals; those who are partially immunized should follow the protocol for those who have not been immunized. Profoundly immunocompromised persons should always consult with their primary care provider if exposed

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## 6.7- COVID-19 Personal Risk Acknowledgement

Maskwacis Education Schools Commission adheres to the guidelines and recommendations set out by Alberta Health Services (AHS).

AHS has identified people who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19. This includes individuals who have the following underlying medical conditions: Chronic Liver disease, Diabetes, Cardio-vascular disease, COPD, Immuno-deficiency disease, Renal disease, Malignant cancer, Dementia, and older adults.

I acknowledge that:

- I have taken the AHS [COVID-19 Personal Risk Severity Assessment](#)
- I have one or more of the identified underlying conditions and am at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- I am aware of the risk to my physical health if I contract COVID-19 including mild to severe illness that may result in death.
- I recognize that I may be at risk of contracting COVID-19 during the course of my work-related activities.
- I am fully and personally responsible for my own safety and actions while performing my job
- Of my own free will, I wish to continue with my regular job duties
- I understand that I can request workplace accommodations or job protected leave.

By signing below I acknowledge that I have been sufficiently informed of the risks involved in returning to work.

Print Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_