

October 1, 2021

Dear students, parents and caregivers,

Today the Provincial Health Officer announced a change to the mask and facial covering requirements that BC schools are working under, extending the previous orders to now include students in kindergarten through grade 3.

**Effective starting Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup> all kindergarten to grade 12 students, staff and visitors must\* wear a mask when inside a school.**

*\*Exemptions remain in place for students or staff who cannot wear masks or for times when masks may temporarily need to be removed. This includes when consuming food and drink, when actively engaging in an activity that requires temporary removal of the mask (e.g. when playing a wind instrument), when communicating with or providing a service to a person with diverse needs who may depend on visual cues or facial expressions, when a person can not put on or remove their own mask without assistance, when needing to quickly identify a person, when speaking through a barrier, or when a person can not tolerate a mask.*

Our staff are ready to create a supportive, educational and inclusive introduction for those students in kindergarten to grade 3 who will be adjusting to this new requirement ... with built-in breaks through scheduled outside play and learning opportunities. Additionally, as has been the case for the last year, all our schools have disposable masks that students can use if they forget to bring theirs.

There are many layers of protections in place that are keeping New Westminister schools as safe as possible. If you would like to read more about what's being done or read the most recent version of our COVID-19 updated Communicable Disease Plan (which will again be updated next week when we layer in today's updates), you can find that information here:

<https://newwestschools.ca/daily-health-checks-and-safety-plans-for-2021-22/>

And, as always, we need to thank all of you as we wrap up a successful first month of the school year.

In appreciation of the continued efforts,



Karim Hachlaf  
Superintendent of Schools / CEO