



SCHOOL DISTRICT No.69 (QUALICUM)

December 30, 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Staff,

I hope this message finds you safe and well, and enjoying a restful break with family. As the New Year draws closer, we are again facing challenges with some unusually vigorous winter weather, as well as the rapid spread of the new COVID variant.

In response to recent these health concerns, and as noted in the communications from PHO Bonnie Henry, the province will be delaying the full return of students to school until January 10th. This additional time will provide staff an opportunity to plan and implement new safety protocols, as well as increase system readiness for potential functional closures should classrooms or schools need to be excluded in the event of extensive staff illnesses.

Current data suggests that the Omicron variant has a number of different characteristics and a much higher rate of transmission; therefore, it requires different strategies in response than the more recent Delta variant. It also appears to cause much lower levels of negative health impact, especially in those who are fully vaccinated. You may expect to see a move away from contact tracing and positive case reporting that have been used previously, but additional guidelines in regard to self-isolation and a return to stronger restrictions for the time being.

For the coming week, please note the following:

- SD69 staff will be expected to report to their regular work sites on Tuesday and participate in planning meetings and to complete regular work assignments.
- School sites will be open for K-12 students whose parents are deemed to be essential workers (with those in health care being prioritized) and for students who have unique needs whose parents believe they require the support of school staff.
- Buses will be running until it is determined that they are not necessary.
- There will not be regular instruction in schools until January 10th.

If parents or guardians have questions regarding whether or not their child can access school this coming week, please contact your school principal via email prior to Tuesday morning. If you have other questions, you may add them to our form through this link so staff can address them in upcoming communications.

<https://forms.gle/UD51121UpE6u146VA>

As always, we wish you good health, and thank you for your patience and support.

Sincerely,

Peter Jory
Superintendent/CEO (He/Him/His)
School District No. 69 (Qualicum)