



KTCEA 2021-2022 School Safety Measures

January 2022

Due to the vulnerabilities of our students, staff and families and low COVID vaccination rates, KTCEA is outlining school safety measures which are similar to those that were in place last school year. In some cases, these are stronger than those in provincial schools. Safety measures are based on two key principles:

- **The safety of children, students and staff comes first**
- **Student learning will continue**

As before, all First Nations protocols and directives will be closely adhered to and communicated with staff who live and/or work in those Nations.

The measures outlined below have been updated and are intended to be in place for the second half of the school year (January-June) but are subject to change at any point. They can change or become more restrictive depending on direction from the Nations, what is happening locally in the community, or based on changes to provincial measures.

This school year, all grades are returning to classes at the same time unless a First Nation requests a gradual/phased return in a specific school.

- Parents have the choice for their child to learn at home, in school, or a blended approach.
- Google Classroom will continue to be the primary platform for students who learn from home.

2021-2022 School Safety Measures (January-June)

Masks and Protective Equipment:

- 3-layer masks are mandatory for all staff and required for students grades 4-12.
- PPE required will be supplied to staff and students, including hand sanitizer, gloves, face shields, masks and other PPE.
- KTCEA has secured pediatric and adult medical grade masks for the remainder of the school year for all staff and students. Medical grade masks are now strongly recommended by health experts.

Staff Screening, Visitors and Symptoms of Sickness:

- All staff and visitors will be required to complete a daily self-assessment form.
- All school staff will have temperatures taken **daily**.
- There is a **zero tolerance for sickness for students and staff** in schools and at central office.
 - Staff/students should not come to school if they are exhibiting cold/flu like symptoms and are required to self-rapid test or be tested at the local FirstNation Health Centre
- Only essential staff, parents/guardians and service providers are allowed inside the schools.

- KTCEA is encouraging staff who commute to school to take highest levels of precautions and to travel only when necessary.
- KTCEA strongly encourages staff to be fully vaccinated (all doses and boosters) for the safety of our students, staff and community members.
- Specialists/service providers will only be allowed to visit the school (e.g. speech therapy, mental health, consultants, caterers and contractors) if they have received both doses of vaccinations.
- Specialists/service providers must provide proof of a negative test result prior to entering the schools. The test must be taken 24 hours before entering the school.

Isolation Requirements:

- KTCEA requires all individuals who test positive to **isolate for 10 days, regardless of their vaccination status.**
- These isolation requirements are different from the Government of Alberta COVID-19 isolation requirements released on January 3, 2022 (see below).
 - o *Fully vaccinated- Individuals isolate for 5 days from the start of symptoms or until they subside, whichever is longer.*
 - o *Not fully vaccinated- Individuals Isolate for 10 days from the start of symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer.*
- The province has implemented these changes, however, to ensure the safety of our students and staff, KTCEA mandates individuals who test positive to isolate for **10 days.**
- If staff/students test negative and have symptoms, they are to stay home and away from others until symptoms resolve.

Close Contact Requirements:

- Definition: **Close Contact – an individual who had direct exposure for more than 15 minutes while unmasked to a positive case.**
- KTCEA now has the ability to provide at-home rapid test kits for our staff and students to self-administer. In the event a staff or student has been identified as a close contact, KTCEA has developed this strategy to ensure education is continued and the health and safety of staff and students is maintained.
- Any staff or student who is identified as a close contact **MUST** isolate for a minimum of 5 days from the last day of exposure. After five days, staff or students may return to school provided they have no symptoms.
- Staff or students should complete an at-home rapid test every 72 hours for a period of 14 days.
 - o If a negative result is received and there are no symptoms, staff and students may return to school and work on day 6, but continue to test themselves every 72 hours for the next 8 days.
 - o Staff **MUST** submit proof of a negative test result to their school principal or immediate supervisor before returning to work.
- If a positive result is received, staff and/or students will be required to isolate immediately, and administer a second test 24 hours from the first initial test. If positive results are received from the second test, staff and students will be required to isolate for 10 days from when the first positive result was received.
- If a staff or student becomes symptomatic during this time period and have a negative result, they **MUST** adhere to KTCEA zero sickness policy, and stay home until symptoms subside.

Household Contacts:

- If a staff or student has been identified as a household contact and are unable to isolate away from the positive case, they will be continuously exposed during the isolation period and **MUST** isolate as follows:
 - Isolate with the positive case for the duration of 10 days.

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- If the staff or student is unvaccinated, they will be required to isolate for 14 additional days from the last day of exposure, which would start from the positive case's isolation end date.
 - If the staff or student is vaccinated, they will be able to return to work or school after the 10-day isolation period is completed. Upon return to school or work, staff **MUST** administer an at-home rapid test and submit proof of a negative test result to their school principal or immediate supervisor.
 - If a positive result is received, they will be required to isolate for 10 days from when the test was taken or from the first onset of symptoms.

Staff Testing:

- Due to the ongoing rise of the Omicron variant in the province, there will be weekly testing for all school staff at each school site.
 - o This is to be reassessed again in February- depending on the continued spread of the Omicron variant.
- Staff will be required to administer at-home rapid test kits every Sunday and Wednesday and submit results to their immediate supervisor.
- Staff will be required to follow all provincial guidelines if positive results are received.

Student Testing:

- As an additional measure, parents/guardians who would like to participate in at-home rapid testing for students can arrange with their school principal to receive at-home rapid test kits. Parents can also pick up self-rapid tests at their local health centre.
- If a positive result is received, KTCEA requires for that child to stay home and isolate as per KTCEA isolation requirements, which is a maximum of 10 days from the first onset of symptoms or when the test was taken. For additional testing, please contact the local health centre.
- Testing of students will not take place at the school.
- KTCEA strictly enforces a zero-sickness policy, students who become symptomatic **MUST** stay home until symptoms subside if it is not COVID related.

Building Cleanliness and Ventilation:

- Additional custodial staff have been hired to ensure a high level of cleanliness.
 - We have 2 custodians at each school during the day shift and one custodian and one maintenance/security/custodian during the evening shift.
 - Recommend same staffing levels as last year. COVID funding available for this purpose.
- Washrooms will be cleaned every 30 minutes by wiping down commonly touched areas.
- Furnace filters will be replaced at all schools for better ventilation on a 3-month schedule for replacements.
- Portable HEPA Filter Air purifiers will be purchased for KTCEA schools and facilities.
- To ensure students have access to water, water fountains will be turned back on. Students will be provided reusable KTCEA water bottles.
- High touch surface areas such as door knobs, water fountains and light switches will be cleaned every 30 minutes.

Social Distancing, Class Sizes, Gatherings and Movement:

- Signage and traffic flow markers will be installed in all schools.
- Students and staff are required to practice social distancing even if they have no symptoms.
- All classrooms will adhere to social distancing measures. Desks will be spaced as far apart as possible to accommodate all students.
- Movement of all persons will be limited in classrooms and hallways.
- Recess and washroom breaks will be staggered.
- Teaching staff will role model, teach, coach and provide positive reminders to students about hygiene

and social distancing.

- Smaller group activities and gatherings indoors are highly recommended.
- Virtual attendance will be required of staff who have not been vaccinated for events that involve staff coming together from multiple school sites/central office.

Transportation:

- Bus drivers will receive COVID safety training
- Loading and unloading procedures have been developed to adhere to social distancing.
- Buses will be disinfected daily.
- Students will be required to wear masks on the buses and will be given assigned seating, and those from the same home or grade can be seated together.
 - A record of this seating plan will be maintained in order to assist with contact tracing in the event a student is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Parental conveyance will be provided to parents who prefer to drive their children to school.
- Principals to work with bus operators to develop drop off and pick up schedules that support social distancing.
- Bus monitors will be in buses where possible.

Foods:

- All Foods Staff have received COVID safety training.
- Specific food handling procedures are required of Foods staff.
- There will be no sharing of foods between students.
- Foods will be delivered to every classroom via a serving cart that has barriers. This will ensure students get hot and fresh food.
- Food is to be served by a designated person who has received the training.
- No one is allowed entry in the kitchen (staff/students) other than Foods staff.
- Potlucks or buffet style meals for staff or students are not permitted.
- The same food handling requirements will be adhered to for KTCEA functions outside of the school.

Physical Activities/Intermural Activities/Field Trips/LBL:

- Physical activities can be performed by students in the same grade or division. Activities are to be kept to smaller group sizes.
- Students and educators must sanitize hands upon entry and exit, and must wear masks at all times.
- Physical distancing is to be maintained between participants as much as possible.
- Equipment is to be limited to one group of users at a time and must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Activities are to be scheduled at appropriate intervals to allow time to clean, sanitize, and ventilate the space between activities.
- During the warmer months, gym doors can be open to increase airflow throughout the space.
- No interschool activities are permitted at this time.
- Land Based Learning field trips are permitted for individual schools at one time. All other field trips must be approved by the Superintendent.

Staff Training/Oath of Commitment:

- All school staff will receive training on COVID health and safety measures before the opening of the school to students.
 - This training will be provided at School Kick Off along with an awareness session on vaccines.
 - This will include providing staff with training on a rapid response and cleaning procedures and for when a student/staff displays symptoms.
- Every staff person will be required to sign an Oath of Commitment acknowledging their responsibility to uphold all of the KTCEA Safety Measures.

Confirmed COVID Case at a School (one case):

- The following protocol will be followed in the event of a confirmed COVID case at school:
 - Immediate isolation of the individual and notification of parents/guardians.
 - Principals must contact Superintendent immediately. Health and Safety Coordinator will provide support to Principals with the process (for example providing information for contact tracing).
 - Superintendent Office will provide notification to First Nation Chief and Council, KTCEA Board Chair, First Nations Health Centre, Alberta Health Services, Director of Emergency Management and Environmental Health Officer (ISC).
 - If contact was made between the individual and other students and employees, KTCEA Superintendent will initiate a meeting with the Nation's Chief and Council to determine the next steps regarding school closure.

Compliance:

- A Health and Safety Coordinator will be monitoring compliance with the safety measures.
- Audits will be conducted bi-weekly for the first month, and then monthly for the remainder of the school year. Follow-up for non-compliance will be referred to Superintendent.

Many of these measures are made possible through funding provided by Indigenous Services Canada for COVID safety measures this school year. These funds support things like additional cleaning supplies, personal protective equipment, signage, extra staffing, and technology for at-home learning.