



December 30, 2021

Dear Central Okanagan Public Schools Families and Caregivers,

Yesterday, in response to growing case counts related to the Omicron variant, the **Provincial Government announced a delayed return to classroom instruction for all K-12 students in British Columbia, until January 10, 2022.** The government also released additional safety measures for schools, which include:

- Strategies that prevent crowding during class transition times
- Hold school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, etc.) virtually; if they must be in-person, limit the number of people to no more than 50% operating capacity
- Hold staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development activities) virtually where possible
- Limit visitors to those who are supporting activities that directly benefit student learning and wellbeing (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.)
- Pause extracurricular sports tournaments

District staff will return to school on January 4 – 7 as scheduled, to prepare for the implementation of the enhanced safety measures. During this period, school bus transportation services will continue to operate, and our schools will be available to provide care and programming for:

- K-12 students with additional support needs and;
- Students under 12 years of age who are children of parents employed in the essential service roles listed on pages 1 and 2 of [the document at this link](#).

If you have students that qualify for the early return on January 4 and plan to send them to their school next week, please complete the following [form](#) by January 2, 2022 for planning purposes.

During this planning time, staff will continue to work with public health officials to assess the impact of the Omicron variant on education and develop plans to remain adaptive and communicative. We encourage anyone eligible for vaccination to use the opportunity of the delayed start to do so, as it remains the best protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19.

Once again, Central Okanagan Public Schools remain committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all students and staff.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO
Central Okanagan Public Schools