

Immediate Release: August 27, 2021: On Wednesday, August 25th, 2021, the Board of Trustees for Grande Yellowhead Public Schools Division (GYPSD) held their first Public Board Meeting of the 2021-2022 school year. The Board determined the Division's re-entry plan and what health and safety measures staff and students can expect. During the meeting, the Trustees from each of the five zones that make up GYPSD shared their various constituents' input and concerns.

Prior to voting, the Board acknowledged, "While the government has eased their restrictions in regards to masking, we are confident that vaccinations and masks act as an additional layer of protection from the transmission of COVID-19." In the end, the Trustees agreed on a balanced approach which included implementing the Chief Medical Officer Health's recommended Health Best Practices and the continued practice of requiring staff, students and visitors to schools and Division buildings to access the Alberta Health Daily Checklist.

As per government requirements, the Division will continue to cohort students to ensure that contact tracing can take place should a positive case of COVID-19 be found in a school. The CMOH has this requirement in place until her next announcement about public health requirements, set for September 27th. In addition, masks are legally required for all staff and students on school buses.

The Board's health and safety mandates for the 2021-2022 school year include:

- promoting and facilitating hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- staying home when sick
- maintaining ventilation
- ensuring regular cleaning and disinfection of high touch areas
- strongly encouraging eligible staff and students getting vaccinated
- strongly encouraging the use of masks in common areas and situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained
- supporting anyone who wishes to wear a mask while in school
- using of the Alberta Health Daily Checklist by all staff and students, and by any visitors wishing to enter a school or Division building.

Given the province is currently in the fourth wave of COVID-19, visitors are asked that they continue to make an appointment prior to coming into the school if they need to speak to a staff member. The Board will closely monitor the most current situation in the Division's respective communities to update and revise the use of masks. The first day of classes for GYPSD students is September 7th.