

School during COVID-19

Based on the advice and health and safety Guidelines for K-12 School Settings from Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Kindergarten to Grade 12 students will return to classes in public schools in the 2020–21 school year.

Throughout the pandemic, we will keep as many students in classes in schools as is safely possible, with the health and safety of students and staff remaining the first priority.

Priorities for public schools during the pandemic



- Health and safety of students, staff and school communities;
- Learning continues for all students, with as many students in class as safely possible;
- Supports for students with diverse learning needs and for students who need different or additional supports;
- Supports for children of critical and essential service workers; and
- Supports for students, teachers and support staff for flexible learning, including access to technology tools and training.

Ready to adapt

Throughout the pandemic, we will keep as many students in schools as safely possible, based on advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Yukon Department of Education's Pandemic Response Framework.

Should there be an increased risk of transmission, a second wave or a community outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, Yukon schools will further adapt operations as necessary, based on advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the following table and their specific context.



School operations during the pandemic			
Pandemic risk	Advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health	School capacity	What school looks like for students
<p>Low</p>   <p>High</p>	<p>Guidelines for K-12 school settings and Guidelines for school bus operations</p>	100%	<p>Kindergarten to Grade 12 students in classes in schools full-time, for the maximum instructional time possible, 5 days per week.</p> <p>Flexible learning programs for all students.</p>
		50%	<p>If necessary: essential groups in school full-time, and part-time rotating schedules for other students.</p> <p>Flexible learning programs for all students.</p>
		20%	<p>If necessary: essential groups only in school. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students with disabilities or diverse learning needs ✓ Students in need of additional support <p>Distance learning for majority of students.</p>
		0%	<p>Last resort: face-to-face learning suspended; no students in classes in schools.</p> <p>Distance learning for all students.</p>

Health and safety at school

Yukon public schools are preparing to welcome K-12 students back to classes in school in August 2020, with health and safety measures and routines in place to protect students, staff and visitors.

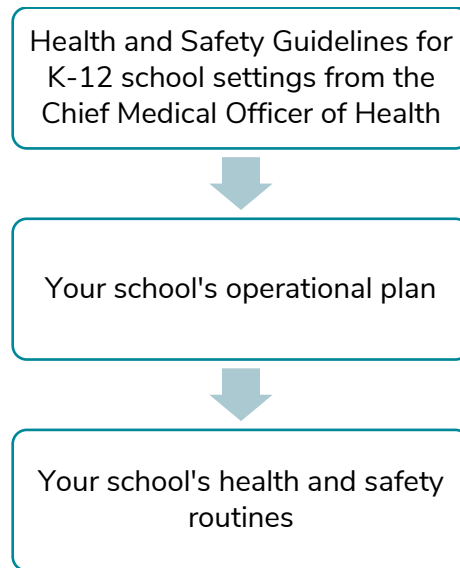
Guidelines and plans for public schools

The health and safety of students and staff is the first priority.

As part of “[A Path Forward: Yukon’s plan for lifting COVID-19 restrictions](#)”, health and safety “[Guidelines for K-12 school settings](#)” have been provided by Yukon’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, based on current information and research on COVID-19.



Yukon public schools are planning their operations for 2020-21 based on the guidelines from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Department of Education's Pandemic Response Framework.



Each school will have its own operational plan detailing how it will follow these guidelines, which include:

- specific health and safety routines at your school, such as spacing and distancing measures, ways they will limit the mixings of groups of students, hand sanitizing stations, traffic flows, markings and signs, water fountain use, visitor rules, etc.;
- your school's schedule information such as pick up and dropoff, lunch hours, recess, etc.; and
- learning supports for students if they need to self-isolate or learn away from school.

School staff will participate in health and safety training before school begins and students will learn about health and safety at school and during the pandemic this year.



Riding the school bus

School bus services for the 2020–21 school year are being adapted based on the health and safety “[Guidelines for School Bus Operations](#)” set by Yukon’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, including:

- loading students on the bus from back to front, and unloading students from front to back;
- seating students at a 2 meters distance from school bus drivers;
- limiting students to 2 per seat, unless they are from the same household, and assigning seats;
- ensuring students and bus drivers are washing or sanitizing their hands before and after boarding the school bus; and
- cleaning and disinfecting buses, including high-touch areas after each trip.

Students will be provided a school bus pass on their first day of school and have an assigned seat on the bus. Students will be required to show their school bus pass when they get on the school bus, which will list their bus number.

Bus route information is posted on Yukon.ca: <https://yukon.ca/en/school-bus-schedules>

The Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Department of Education encourage families to transport students between home and school this year if possible by arranging for students to walk, cycle, drive or carpool to allow for more room on buses for students without other means of transport. High school students are encouraged to register for a City of Whitehorse transit bus pass and ride City transit if possible.

Students will be prioritized for busing in the 2020–21 school year if they are eligible for school busing as described in the [Education Act](#) and [Student Transportation Regulations](#) (if they live more than 3.2 km from their school and are enrolled in their attendance area school). Additional requests for school busing will be considered based on available space on the bus and on a case-by-case basis.



Reminders for students and families

- School will not be business as usual during the pandemic.
- In the first few weeks of school, students and parents will need to learn and understand many new routines and expectations at their school, including about the school day and health and safety.
- Parents will need to [monitor students for symptoms](#) and keep them home if they are showing symptoms.
 - For students who are immunocompromised, please consult your doctor to determine if they should attend school.
 - If students need to be kept at home for health reasons, they will be able to continue with their learning away from school - please contact your school to discuss options.
- Students will need to wash their hands before coming to school and during the day.
- Students will need to distance while waiting for the bus, have their school bus pass and sit in their assigned seat.
- Minimize physical contact with friends and no sharing personal items.
- Masks are only required in certain situations.
- Schools will be cleaned more often.

Operating and adapting school programs

School principals and staff are planning operations to ensure a safe return to school for students and staff based on the health and safety guidelines from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the unique needs and context of their school.

Regular updates will be shared by your local school and [on Yukon.ca](https://www.yukon.ca) about school operations, as part of ongoing communication between school staff and school communities.



The majority of Yukon schools are able to meet the health and safety guidelines and safely return all students to full-time classes five days per week, except for the three larger Whitehorse high schools.

- In rural communities, Kindergarten to Grade 12 students will return to full-day, in-class instruction five days per week.
- In Whitehorse, Kindergarten to Grade 9 students in Whitehorse will return to full-day, in-class instruction 5 days per week. Grades 10 to 12 students will return to half-day in-class instruction and half-day learning away from school 5 days per week.
- Resource Programs for students with disabilities, transitions programs and other programs for students needing additional support will continue at school all day every day.
- For information about the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence, [please contact the office at Gadzoosdaa](#) at (867) 667-8067.

This approach ensures schools are following the health and safety guidelines from the Chief Medical Officer of Health and ensures all grades have daily face-to-face time and support from their teachers and regular routines for learning.

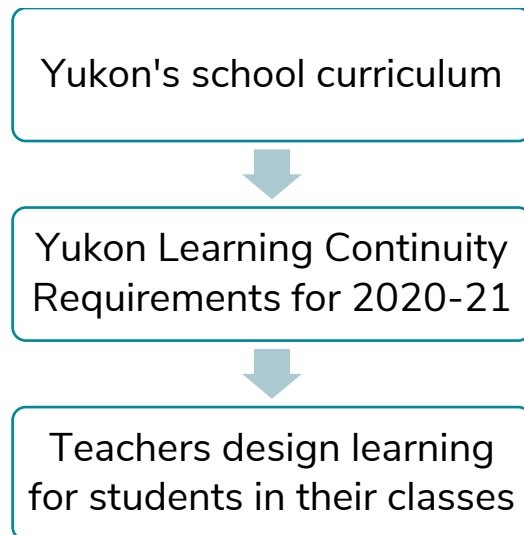
The arrangement for Grades 10 to 12 students will be monitored and assessed as part of planning for the second semester of the school year.

Student learning during the pandemic

Schools are following the [Yukon Learning Continuity Requirements for 2020-21](#), which outline the expectations, approaches and supports for learning to deliver the curriculum and a full and complete school year during the pandemic.

These requirements guide the delivery of blended learning, meeting all students where they are in their learning from last year, and adapting instruction and learning supports.





As part of Yukon's modernized curriculum, teachers and students will continue to use technology as part of learning to develop digital literacy and skills they will need for their lives and careers, including through blended learning.

Students needing access to technology (such as devices or Internet access) for any learning away from school will be supported. Families should contact their school to discuss their needs and options.

Blended learning combines:

- Face-to-face teaching and learning, where students apply knowledge, deepen understanding and demonstrate learning with their teachers (teacher-led activities, on the land learning opportunities, work stations, labs, etc.);
- Student-led learning where they use digital and online tools to gather information, collaborate and do coursework (reading, research and assignments);
- Teacher support, instruction and feedback both in person and online; and
- Students learning skills to manage some of their own learning (goal setting, organization, time management, etc.) with some flexibility for the time, place and pace of their learning.

A handout on blended learning is available on Yukon.ca: <https://yukon.ca/en/what-blended-learning-handout>



School principals and staff will also continue to communicate and work with the First Nations Initiatives Branch and Yukon First Nations to support Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being learning as part of student instruction during the pandemic.

What students and parents can expect for learning this year

Kindergarten to Grade 3

- Will return to full-day, in-class instruction 5 days per week, and will have traditional direct instruction and support from teachers for their learning.

Grades 4-7

- Will return to full-day, in-class instruction 5 days per week and will have both face-to-face activities with their teachers and classmates and digital activities with technology and online tools during the day in class.

Grades 8-9

- Will return to full-day, in-class instruction 5 days per week, and will have both face-to-face activities with their teachers and classmates and digital activities with technology and online tools during the day in class.
- The Grade 8s from FH Collins Secondary School will be temporarily relocated for the year to the Wood Street Centre.

Grades 10-12

- For community schools, students in Grades 10-12:
 - Will return to full-day, in-class instruction 5 days per week, and will have both face-to-face activities with their teachers and classmates and digital activities with technology and online tools during the day in class.
- For Whitehorse high schools, students in Grades 10-12:
 - Will return to half-day in-class instruction and half-day learning away from school 5 days per week.



- Will learn for the half the day with face-to-face activities with their teachers and classmates in school and learn for the other half of the day away from school with digital activities with technology and online tools.
- Those who need additional support to learn away from school or who need internet/technology access will be able to access supports at in-person and virtual study halls.
- The Wood Street Centre programs will be temporarily relocated for the year:
 - ACES, CHAOS, ES 11, FACES and MAD to a dedicated space at Porter Creek Secondary;
 - FACES and PASE to FH Collins Secondary.
 - All of these programs will be full day.

Students with diverse learning needs and those who need different supports

- Resource programs for students with diverse learning needs and disabilities, transitions programs and other programs for students needing different supports will continue at school all day every day.
- More information about these supports is available through your school and in the [Yukon Learning Continuity Requirements](#).

Next steps

Aug 19-Sept 1	First days of school for students for the 2020-21 school year. See 2020-21 school calendar.
Sept 30	Student enrolment is finalized for the year.
Early Nov	Adjust school operational supports and learning supports for students as needed.
Mid Nov	Check-in COVID-19 student learning survey for students, families and school staff.
Dec - Jan	Assess approach for Grades 10-12, and adjust as needed for second semester within the Guidelines for K-12 School Settings.



May	Check-in COVID-19 student learning survey for students, families and school staff.
Ongoing	Monitoring of school operations and learning supports for students; advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health; programming adjustments.

More information

- General information about COVID-19: <https://yukon.ca/en/covid-19-information>
- Health and safety guidelines for schools: [Guidelines for K-12 school settings](#)
- Health and safety in schools: <https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/covid-19-information/education-and-school-supports-covid-19/planning-2020-21#health-and-safety-in-schools>

