

Deh Gáh Elementary and Secondary School



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Dear parents and guardians,

As you may be aware, the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) made updates to the Isolation Order, which went into effect as of 5pm, February 14, 2022. You can view the Public Health Order [here](#).

Under the new public health order, the only individuals that are required to isolate due to the public health order are:

- Those who have symptoms and need assessment/testing to confirm if they have COVID-19;
- Those who are sharing accommodations with someone who has COVID-19 (household members); and
- Those who have active COVID-19 infection.

National data continues to show that children remain at low risk of severe symptoms of COVID-19; however, children are experiencing the impacts of school closures as it relates to social interactions and accessibility to other services that our schools provide. The goal of this update is to continue to address COVID-19 transmission while minimizing disruption.

What does this mean for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 students?

There are several important changes for parents and guardians of students to be aware of:

- Students attending JK-12 do not need to isolate, regardless of their vaccination status, when there is an exposure;
- When an [exposure occurs](#), students must monitor for symptoms and continue to wear masks wherever possible (barring complex needs) for 10 days;
- Schools will no longer be sending exposure or transmission letters to families. Families can view the GNWT's [Exposure Notification webpage](#); and
- Students or staff experiencing symptoms will need to isolate and arrange for testing. Positive at-home test results must be reported to Protect NWT at 811. Please remember that 811 is for information. 811 does not provide clinical or

pharmaceutical advice.

Students are still expected to use the [Daily Symptom Screening Tool for Students, School Staff and Early Childhood Care Workers](#), and the [Self-isolation, Isolation and Testing Navigator](#) is also a valuable tool.

All existing health and safety measures in schools, such as masking and cleaning, will remain in place. These risk mitigation measures mean that schools are one of the safest places for students to be.

We recognize that these changes reflect a further shift in guidance on managing COVID-19 within schools and it will take time to become comfortable with it.

As always, we encourage students to take time for their mental wellness. Supports are available through:

- Child and Youth Care Counsellor, Dafne Blanco-Sarlay, is available through the school;
- **Breathing Room** is a newly launched e-mental health program for youth aged 13-24. It supports youth and young adults in learning new ways to manage stress, depression and anxiety, as well as strengthening their existing coping skills. NWT youth can access this program at <https://app.breathingroom.me/register?code=XXQTGPUE;>
- NWT Help Line – available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is 100% free, confidential and anonymous. Call 1-800-661-0844;
- Kid’s Help Phone – young people needing to talk to someone can call the Kid’s Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or go to [www.kidshelpphone.ca;](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)
- The [NWT Community Counselling Program](#) – is available free-of-charge to every NWT resident, in every region of the NWT. It helps people deal with a variety of issues, including family violence, mental health issues and addictions.

Mahsicho,



Angela Griffin, Principal

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