



September 2020 Newsletter

HILLSIDE HAPPENINGS

"A Caring Commitment to Learning"



Northern Gateway
Public Schools

Volume 18, Number 1

School Council Meeting: October 5, 2020@ 12:00pm (noon) via Google Meets. Please contact the school to access the link.

NORMAL, FOR RIGHT NOW

Back to school planning typically brings feelings of anxiety, fear, nervousness, and excitement. This year, in the middle of a worldwide pandemic and global uncertainty, these feelings can have us parents feeling completely overwhelmed, vulnerable and hopeless.

What is a parent to do? So many decisions, confusion and few places to find unbiased information. Do we send our child to school with a flippant wave "sayonara, kiddo, may the odds be ever in your favour?" or do we mask up, bubble wrap, bathe in sanitizer and invest in a hazmat suit. Perhaps we should board up our windows and doors and hibernate until it is all over. All joking aside, our reality is truly no laughing matter. The stakes are high and the consequences grave. I cannot say what the right answer is. Every family has different circumstances. Whatever you decide to do with your child, I can share with you my perspective as a Division Office staff member and a parent, and perhaps that will calm your fears.

Every District Office staff, Administrator, and school staff member at Northern Gateway Public Schools have been working around the clock since March 15 to ensure that children and staff will be as safe as absolutely possible, while continuing to provide a high quality education. **Education and safety has been the number one priority** and what is being accomplished is outstanding. Each risk factor has been analyzed and discussed with solutions being found. If you decide on the at-home, on-line learning format for your child, be assured that there is ample support and dedicated teachers to connect with, build a relationship with and make the experience successful.

On a personal level, I am sending 3 of my children back to school for in-class learning. I am confident that our school division and staff are prepared for a safe and healthy environment.

Trust me, as a school division, the last thing we want is to have a student or staff member become sick. **We need EVERYONE to be healthier than they have ever been:** staff, student, parent.

The schools are doing their part. **As parents, there is much we can do to prepare our children** for back to school in the middle of this pandemic.

- The most important thing: MODEL CALMNESS and CONFIDENCE; in our words and actions. Our children are watching and listening.
- Practice having children put on and take off their mask on their own. Practice storing it properly. [Listen to this catchy song about masks.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMVsCwKeARO) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMVsCwKeARO>) Or you can read [a social story about wearing masks.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnP-uMn6q_U) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnP-uMn6q_U)
- We have heard this a thousand times already, children must be able to practice good hand cleaning and hygiene on their own. We cannot leave it to teachers. [Here is a cute little "Hand washing Hero" video.](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing-heroes-dv.html) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing-heroes-dv.html>)
- Keep the immune system strong. Get enough sleep, eat a large variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, drink plenty of water, exercise regularly, get outside for healthy doses of sunshine, and try to keep stress to a minimum.

As September approaches and we send the ones most precious to us to school, either in person or on-line, be confident that they will be safe. Our children's **teachers, school and district office staff are completely and wholeheartedly prepared** for them.

There are many arguments, attitudes and thoughts about COVID-19. You may have your own personal opinion on the virus, masks, social distancing, whether schools open or not, etc. As a school division, we are following the direction and guidance of the Government of Alberta and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Deena Hinshaw.

School in September will not be normal and we hear the words "new normal" tossed about. I do not like the term "new normal"; there isn't anything normal about this! Wearing masks everywhere, sanitizing our hands a thousand times a day and staying 6 feet apart is not normal! I prefer the term: "**normal for right now**". We are hardwired for connection, structure, stability and collaboration. But, **FOR RIGHT NOW**, we must follow provincial guidelines and mandatory health instructions. **We are all in this together and together we can get through this pandemic** with as few long term negative effects as possible.

Despite all our School Division is doing, remember, as parents, **we have the most influence on resilience and the psychological wellness of our child.** It is critical that we manage our own discomfort and angst, because our children pick up on our feelings. Yes, we are terrified and feel we are not ready. We may fear what is to come. **But we (children too!) are strong, brave and adaptable.** Have faith that the leaders of our schools are prepared, excited and ready for September!

This article was written by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She advocates for students and parents, providing a link to other supports within the community. Tammy has been a social worker for over 20 years and is a mother to 4 teenagers.

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER 2020

		1	2	3	4	5
			First Day Grade 7 & 12	First Day Grade 9 & 11	First Day Grade 8 & 10	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Labour Day	First Day for Everyone				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
		 Picture Day Grades 7-9	 Picture Day Grades 10-12  Orange Shirt Day			

OCTOBER 2020

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					PD Day	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	 Thanksgiving Day					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		 Picture Retake Day				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

News, Sports & Events

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Preferred payment method for school purchases are: SchoolCashOnline, Debit, Visa, Mastercard. Cash and Cheques are still accepted.
- ▶ The next School Council Meeting is October 5, 2020 @ 12:00pm via Google Meets. Please contact the school for access to the link.
- ▶ Scholastic Book Orders are to be turned into Mrs. Staples in the Learning Commons.
- ▶ As directed in the Northern Gateway COVID reentry play, there are no Vending machines currently available at the school.
- ▶ You can now have the newsletter emailed to you. Please contact Mrs. Staples in the Learning Commons at 780-524-3277.
- ▶ There is no cafeteria available at this time.
- ▶ Hillside Webpage:

hillsidehigh.ca

Newsletter is Available on the Webpage!

Hillside High School
 Bag 3
 4701-52 Avenue
 Valleyview, AB T0H 3N0
 Phone: 780-524-3277
 Fax: 780-524-4205
 e-mail: hillside@ngps.ca



**Lunch Hour
 12:19-12:59**

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Screening Questionnaire

COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS MUST USE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DAILY TO DECIDE IF THE STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL

The tool is meant to be used to assist with assessing attendees who may be symptomatic, or who may have been exposed to someone who is ill or has confirmed COVID-19.

Attendees should fill out this checklist prior entering school daily. If an individual answers YES to any of the questions, they must not be allowed to attend school. Children and youth will need a parent to assist them to complete this screening tool.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, this screening tool will be updated as required.

Screening Questions

1.	Does the attendee have any new onset (or worsening) of any of the following	CIRCLE ONE	
		YES	NO
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / Fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle/ Joint aches	YES	NO
	• Headache	YES	NO
	• Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	YES	NO
2.	Has the attendee travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Has the attendee had close contact* with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
4.	Has the attendee had close contact with a symptomatic** close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?	YES	NO

* Face-to-face contact within 2 metres. A health care worker in a occupational setting wearing the recommended personal protective equipment is not considered to be a close contact.

** 'Ill/symptomatic' means someone with COVID-19 symptoms on the list above

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Student illness

If a student has COVID-19 symptoms

Students with symptoms must not attend school. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies, chronic cough), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before returning to school.

Anyone that reports symptoms must stay home and seek health care advice as appropriate. Parents can call Health Link 811 or their primary health care practitioner, and fill out the [AHS Online Self-Assessment tool](#) to determine if their child should be tested.

Parents, household members, and contacts of a student who has symptoms but is not a COVID-19 case, are not required to quarantine.

Only the people identified as close contacts of an individual who is a case of COVID-19 need to quarantine. The contacts of the close contacts do not need to quarantine.

Book a test

Book a testing appointment online with the AHS assessment tool or call Health Link 811. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>

Symptoms

You should get tested if you have any COVID-19 symptom.

If you have any of these symptoms you are [legally required to isolate for at least 10 days](#) from the start of your symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer:

- Fever
- Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)
- Runny nose
- Sore throat

If you have any of these other symptoms, stay home and minimize your contact with others until your symptoms resolve:

- Chills
- Painful swallowing
- Stuffy nose
- Headache
- Muscle or joint aches
- Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite)
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Conjunctivitis, commonly known as pink eye

Monitor your child's health and call [Health Link 811](#) if you have questions or concerns. Call 911 immediately if experiencing severe symptoms of COVID-19, including difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, feelings of confusion or loss of consciousness.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Isolation requirements

Albertans with symptoms

- You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.
- The mandatory isolation period is 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.

Tested positive for COVID-19

- You are legally required to isolate for a minimum of 10 days if you have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Isolation period is 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.

Have symptoms but tested negative for COVID-19

- If you tested negative and have known exposure to COVID-19, you are legally required to quarantine for 14 days from the last date of your exposure.
- If you tested negative and have no known exposure to the virus, you are not legally required to isolate. However, it is important to stay home until your symptoms resolve so that you do not infect others.

Close contacts of confirmed cases

- You are legally required to quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms if you are a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 (provides care, lives with or has close physical contact without appropriate use of personal protective equipment, or comes into direct contact with infectious body fluids).
- If you become sick with cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat during this time, you must isolate for an additional 10 days from the beginning of symptoms or until you are feeling well, whichever takes longer.

If you are self-isolating:

- Stay home — do not go to school, work, social events or any other public areas or community settings.
- Avoid close contact with other people, including household members but especially seniors and people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.
- Do not use public transportation or ride sharing.
- Do not go for walks in public places. This includes children in mandatory self-isolation.
- If you go outside, you must remain on private property not accessible by others.

If a student has symptoms related to allergies or a pre-existing medical condition

- The student should be tested at least once before returning to school and have a negative COVID-19 test result.
- These symptoms would be their baseline health status. As long as the cough or runny nose is always the same and does not get worse, the student can attend school.
- Talk to your school about your child's pre-existing medical condition so the school may keep a confidential record of this condition.

Note

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, information regarding COVID-19 will be updated as required. Please check online for the latest information and links to testing, symptoms and isolation requirements: alberta.ca/covid19

For more information: alberta.ca/covid19

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Alberta

COVID-19 Information—Student illness

STAY AT HOME GUIDE

This summary, based on the September 2020 Government of Alberta update, [COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness](#), provides further clarity to parents about the 'isolation' period or 'stay home and minimize contact with others' period if a child has presenting symptoms.

It is still expected that parents complete [Alberta Health's Daily Checklist](#), each day, before sending your child to school.

My child has COVID-19 symptoms. How long must my child stay home?

If my child has any of these core COVID-19 symptoms:	If my child has any of these (secondary) symptoms:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough) Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening) Runny nose Sore throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chills Painful swallowing Stuffy nose Headache Muscle or joint aches Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite) Loss of sense of smell or taste Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
What should I do next?	What should I do next?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete AHS' Online Self-Assessment Tool and call 811. 2. You are legally required to have your child isolate for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. 3. It is strongly recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete AHS' Online Self-Assessment Tool and call 811. 2. Keep your child home from school and minimize your child's contact with others until symptoms resolve. 3. It is recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19.
When can my child return to school?	When can my child return to school?
<p>Your child may return to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the 10-day isolation is complete and symptoms have resolved, OR When your child has received a negative COVID-19 test result, has no known exposure to the virus, and symptoms have resolved. 	<p>Your child may return to school once symptoms have resolved and your child is feeling better.</p>
<p>Please see Alberta's COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness document for information regarding pre-existing conditions.</p>	