



THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58 (NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN)

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Stephen McNiven, B.Ed., M.A., Superintendent of Schools  
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January 18, 2022

Good afternoon SD58 Staff and Families:

I am writing you today to provide further information regarding the emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant of COVID-19 and the impact it is having on the School District. As you already know, the variant is more infectious and is resulting in a higher number of cases in our communities. This is resulting in an increase in school specific student absenteeism which is being tracked and communicated to the Ministry of Education on a daily basis through our MyEd Data System. In addition to this tracking, when abnormal fluctuations in student absenteeism is reported to the District, it results in a “potential activity signal” that is communicated to public health. These signals indicate that further investigation is warranted by public health to determine if additional actions are required. This includes communicating the potential activity to both staff and families of the identified grade or school. An example of this communication is below.

January 18, 2022

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ School Community,


Based on review of attendance patterns, we’ve determined we have met a COVID-19 potential activity signal. A potential activity signal is a threshold based on school attendance. When met, it means public health will investigate further to determine if additional actions are needed. Because people are absent for many reasons, we do not know if there is increased COVID-19 activity at our school.

We are following up with public health and will share back with our community if they recommend any additional actions should be taken.

We strongly encourage everyone to complete a daily health check and continue to attend school if they are not sick.

Public health continues to recommend everyone stay home when they are sick, and to seek testing when recommended. More information is available from BCCDC.

Sincerely,



Stephen McNiven  
Superintendent of Schools

A functional closure is also a potential outcome of the spread of the Omicron variant. A functional closure of a school is a temporary closure due to a lack of staff needed to provide the required level of teaching, supervision, and / or custodial support to ensure the health and safety of students. If a functional closure were to occur, the District would do its best to provide families and staff with as much notice as possible. With that said it is

important to note that the process for completing a functional closure would occur quickly and therefore we encourage all families to be proactive and have a plan in place for this possibility.

These are challenging times; however, together we will get through the coming weeks. Please follow the public health orders, get vaccinated if you are eligible, and keep children at home if they feel sick. We will continue to do everything we can to support the health, safety and well-being of our students, staff and communities while maintaining as much face-to-face learning as possible for students and staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMN', followed by a horizontal line.

Stephen McNiven  
Superintendent of Schools