



**Nicole Buchanan**  
*Board Chair*

**Chad Erickson**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

February 9, 2022

Dear Families,

Following yesterday's announcement by the provincial government and to gain further clarity in regards to relaxing health restrictions related to COVID-19, our Division's Senior Administration met with the Deputy Minister of Education this morning.

**As announced by Premier Jason Kenney, effective Monday, February 14, masking requirements for all students in Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 will be removed. This means there will be no masking requirements for any students in schools or on school buses.** Masking will still be required for adults including teachers, administrators, school staff and bus drivers at this time.

Prevention measures including cohorting, as well as enhanced cleaning and sanitization, will remain in all school environments.

In addition, the Board of Trustees has rescinded Policy 20, a temporary policy regarding COVID-19 vaccinations and testing for staff, practicum students, trustees, visitors and volunteers. Proof of vaccination or testing is no longer required effective immediately.

As we have seen throughout the pandemic, local school boards have been given the authority to practice enhanced health measures. However, following yesterday's announcement, under the direction of the provincial government, school divisions do not have the authority to impose guidelines above provincial health mandates.

School authorities cannot deny students access to in person education due to their personal or their family's decisions to wear or not to wear a mask in schools. Regardless of individual and family decisions around masking and vaccinations, it is essential that we maintain respectful school environments for all students, staff and families.

We are currently waiting for more information and updated guidance documents from Alberta Education. We will provide further communications to families as we receive these documents.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Red Deer Public Schools has followed all health restrictions set out by the provincial government. We appreciate your understanding as we navigate this most recent announcement.

Sincerely,

Nicole Buchanan  
Board Chair

Chad Erickson  
Superintendent of Schools