



Return to School Plan 2020-2021



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Message from the Interim Head of School

With September nearly upon us, I write to provide an update on WIC's Return to School Plan for the 2020-2021 academic year. Over the past several weeks, we have developed the following plan, which is the culmination of thoughtful research and collaboration by administrators and faculty, along with medical and technology experts. The health and safety of our students and staff is our first priority, and we want everyone to feel comfortable and safe returning to our campus. As challenging as the circumstances may be this fall, I believe that West Island College is ready to meet this test and succeed.

Please read this information carefully and ensure you and your children are familiar with the changes they will see at school in September. It is also important to note that this plan is subject to change as developments occur, guidelines change, and new information becomes available. Our ability to move successfully forward continues to require everyone's patience, flexibility, and regular open communication.

Each family's circumstances are different, and our views on the current situation vary widely. With that in mind, when we return to school this fall, we will do everything we can to meet each member of our community where they are, and ensure they feel safe and supported.

Our school community's health and wellness is a shared responsibility, and our ability to provide safe, meaningful on-campus learning depends on each member of our community. To that end, we appreciate your willingness to work with us, both on and off-campus, to establish and maintain safe spaces for your children.

I will keep you informed as our plan evolves over the weeks ahead. In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your Divisional Principal.

I hope you join me in feeling optimism and energy as we prepare to begin again.

Sincerely,

Gord Goodwin
Interim Head of School, West Island College

Measures to Reduce the Risk



DAILY SCREENING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS



PHYSICAL DISTANCING



MASKS MUST BE WORN



MODIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND EVENTS IN COMPLIANCE WITH LIMIT ON CROWD SIZES AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING



SANITIZING AND CLEANING PROCESSES IN PLACE



CHANGES TO CAMPUS ACCESS FOR PARENTS AND VISITORS

Cleaning

WIC prides itself on the level of cleaning and disinfecting it has maintained prior to COVID, but in light of this new environment, we will be putting additional measures in place. Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected several times per day. This includes doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, railings, desks and tabletops, and other frequently used materials. There will also be regularly scheduled cleanings of the school when students are not present.

Student & Staff Hygiene and Illness

WIC students and employees will be required to perform a daily self-evaluation symptom check. This ensures that anyone who feels unwell or may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 does not come to campus. Please review the [Government of Alberta's COVID-19 Information Screening Questionnaire](#) each morning prior to attending school. Please do not attend school, should you be exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19. Students who develop symptoms at school will be asked to wear a mask and isolate in a separate room until a parent arrives for pickup. If a separate room is not available, the student will be kept at least two metres away from other individuals.

Adherence to personal hygiene practices, including hand hygiene and proper cough/sneeze etiquette, will be essential for the prevention and control of infection. Students and staff will be expected to exercise proper hand hygiene when they are entering and exiting the school or classrooms as well as before and after eating.

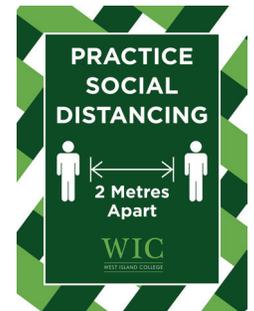
To help students with this, we will place appropriate signage related to personal hygiene around the school and provide an adequate number of hand sanitizing stations.

Physical Distancing and Grouping

Our daily schedule for 2020/21 has been modified slightly to decrease the number of students in the hallways and Hall of Nations at any given time. The timing of the start and end of the day has not been changed.

The setup of our classrooms has been modified to promote physical distancing and ensure students are not facing each other. Plexiglass dividers will be installed in a number of areas. The movement of students and staff through the hallways will be facilitated by using directional markers on the floor or pylons/barriers.

Assemblies and other ceremonies which would generally require large group gatherings will be held virtually.



Masks

Staff and students will be required to wear masks while they are on campus at all times. Two exceptions will be when students are participating in some physical education activities or when eating. Alberta Health Services provides guidance on mask use and the wearing of masks [HERE](#). Specific AHS guidelines on the types of acceptable masks is available [HERE](#). In item #7 of [CMOH Order 33-2020](#), Dr. Hinshaw has clarified that a face shield is not a face mask.

Parents are required to supply the mask they want their child to wear. Alternatively, parents can choose to have their child wear the mask provided by Alberta Education/AHS. Should a student forget their mask, a disposable, non-surgical mask will be provided for the day.

Busing

All students riding the bus will be required to wear a mask at all times. We will develop a seating plan for all of our school buses and ask students to sit in the same seat each day. Students will load from back to front to minimize contact with other students. When unloading, students in the front seats will exit first. Where feasible, we will limit the number of students per bench unless from the same household. Therefore, students from the same household will be asked to share seats. The cleaning of buses has been increased to meet AHS guidelines.

Shared Items

Students in Grades 9-12 will continue to bring their own devices to school. Students in Grades 7 & 8 are encouraged to bring their own device that meet [these suggested specifications](#). If they do not have one, WIC will provide access to a device from our laptop carts.

We will have a no sharing policy - all students should have their own classroom supplies. Where sharing of specialized equipment is required, for example during science lab activities, the equipment will be cleaned between uses.

Food Services

Proper nutrition throughout the day is an integral part of student wellbeing and learning. Cafeteria services will be provided, but with a limited selection of pre-packaged items. Food provided by the family will be stored with the student's belongings in their lockers until lunchtime. There will be no access to microwave ovens, so please keep that in mind when packing your lunches.

Students must practice physical distancing while eating. To reduce the number of high-touch surfaces, all common food items (e.g., salt and pepper shakers, ketchup) will be dispensed in individual packets. No activities that involve the sharing of food between students or staff will occur.

Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 Protocols

The zone medical officer of health will work with school authorities on the rapid identification of cases through easily accessible testing, rapid close contact identification, and isolation measures when needed. The zone medical officer of health will also work with school authorities to provide follow-up recommendations and messaging for staff, parents and students.

Alberta Health Services may request the school close in-person classes to allow the public health investigation to occur. WIC will support students and staff to learn or work at home if they are required to self-isolate.

Timetables

Timetables have been staggered to allow for a staggered start to the lunches for Grades 7-8 students and Grades 9-12 students. Lunch for students in Grades 9-12 will begin at 11:15 am, while those students in Grades 7-8 will begin lunch at 11:30 am. This will minimize the number of students in the common spaces (Hall of Nations, cafeteria, Great Hall). Students are expected to remain in cohorts as much as possible. To view this year's timetable, [click here](#).

Athletics

Athletics are an integral part of WIC life. All decisions regarding athletics will be directed by the evolving guidelines for student involvement in athletics from AHS and ASAA. The guidelines released by ASAA on August 11 allow only for in-school practices at this time. The current Alberta education restriction on all field trips requiring group transportation will apply to all travel, including athletic trips.

Co-Curriculars

WIC will continue to offer co-curricular activities (clubs, leadership groups, etc.) within the AHS guidelines. Many of these activities may need to be reimaged and operate in a different form, but we intend to offer a comprehensive set of programs.

Outdoor Education

Outdoor education opportunities will continue to be evaluated based on the AHS relaunch strategy.

Social and Emotional Support

We recognize and appreciate that the challenges of physical isolation and remote learning have different impacts on different students. While many students are excited for the social connection and support offered by in-class learning, some will be anxious. Teachers and staff will work closely with families to support the social and emotional needs of our students as we transition back to in-person learning. Supports will be available from the Student Success Centre Staff.

Parents are encouraged to reach out to their child's teacher or the Junior High School or Senior High School Principal for in-school support.

Consideration of the following can help set up students for success:

- Focus on the positives and what they are looking forward to about school.
- Provide reassurance and help your child to feel understood and supported.
- Focus on what you can control and help children identify situations they can control and apply practical strategies to reduce anxiety.
- Get back into school routines at least a week early – waking up, eating, going to bed at regular times.
- Stick to familiar routines as much as possible.
- Allow for extra time the first day so you are not rushed.
- Practice wearing a face mask.

Technology Supports

Over the summer, WIC has invested in technology hardware and software to support student learning this year. Examples of this include increased bandwidth, standardization of AVs in classrooms, and the purchase of supplementary web cameras and microphones for all teachers and classrooms.

Meet the Teacher Night & Parent Teacher Interviews

Both Meet the Teacher night and Parent Teacher Interviews will be held virtually. We will provide additional details as they become available.

Questions?

For any questions, please reach out to your Divisional Principal:

Tracy Armitage

Principal of Junior High School
(Grades 7-9)

Danielle Lamoureux

Principal of Senior High School
(Grades 10-12)

References

COVID-19 information : guidance for school re-entry - scenario 1

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/3bc9f561-36aa-4ac8-8e73-afce55227c05/resource/1b341a44-1906-4c62-8acf-6f0500cc0102/download/edc-covid-guidance-school-re-entry-scenario-1-update-2020-07-21.pdf>