

# Snapshot of Back-to-School Recommendations Across Canadian Provinces and Territories

This document contains a brief summary scan of back-to-school policies and recommendations from each of the Canadian provinces and territories. It is important to note that each P/T's information may vary depending on the epidemiological context and the outbreak situation in that jurisdiction. This document was prepared by the Public Health Physicians of Canada, the national specialty society for Public Health and Preventive Medicine Specialists and public health physicians.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Back-to-School (K-12) public health recommendations and requirements Across Canadian Provinces and Territories

Province/Territory	Distancing/class size requirements	Grouping/Cohorts	Masks	Remote Learning options
<b>Alberta</b> <a href="#">K to 12 School Re-Entry (Scenario 1)</a>	Practice physical distancing when possible.	Cohorting students by class where possible.	Mandatory in for staff/teachers and students Grades 4 to 12 where physical distancing is not possible (buses, shared hallways, etc.).  Required in the classroom when close contact between students, or students and staff, is occurring.	
<b>British Columbia</b> <a href="#">B.C.'s Back to School Plan</a>	No physical distancing required within learning groups.  Outside of a learning group, including extracurricular activities, grade 6-12 students all K-12 staff must keep a healthy distance (recommends 2 metres).	Students cohort in "Learning Group" Sizes: Elementary: 60, Middle: 60, Secondary: 120.	Required for all staff and all grade 6-12 students when in high-traffic areas.  Staff will have choice to wear mask when interacting with students in classroom.	Alternatives to in-class available for immune-compromised students only.

<p><b>Saskatchewan</b> <a href="#">Saskatchewan Safe Schools Plan (Level 2/3)</a></p>	<p>Contact will be minimized between students and staff as much as possible.</p> <p>Front-facing instruction for students.</p>	<p>Teacher and class cohorting, with a focus on cohorting teachers to a limited number of students and keeping students in one cohort as much as possible.</p>	<p>Mandatory masks for Grade 4 to 12 when physical distancing is not possible, school divisions may opt-out.</p>	<p>Options for hybrid or remote learning if determined necessary by CMOH.</p>
<p><b>Manitoba</b> <a href="#">Restoring Safe Schools</a></p>	<p>2-meter distancing where possible.</p>	<p>Where 2-metres physical distancing is not possible, students (Grades 9-12) will be in distinct cohorts; Max size is 75 students.</p>		<p>Only for high school students, to be implemented in conjunction with in-person learning</p>
<p><b>Ontario</b> <a href="#">Guide to reopening Ontario's schools</a></p>	<p>As much distancing as possible should always be promoted.</p> <p>No reduction in class size requirements.</p>	<p>Grades K-8, students will be in class cohorts.</p> <p>Grades 9-12, cohorts will be approximately 15 students.</p> <p>Secondary students in some regions will have a hybrid (in-person and virtual) to allow for this size of cohort.</p>	<p>All Staff and students in Grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical or cloth masks inside schools.</p>	<p>Available for all grades.</p>
<p><b>Quebec</b> <a href="#">COVID-19 Back-to-school plan</a></p>	<p>Physical distancing not required within cohort.</p> <p>1-metre physical distancing must be maintained with anyone outside the class cohort.</p>	<p>Each class will form a cohort and physical distancing is not required within these groups.</p>	<p>Elementary 5 and 6 students will be required to wear a face covering when they are in common areas, and/or in presence of other cohorts.</p> <p>Secondary schools, face coverings are mandatory for outside classrooms, in common areas or in the presence of students from other cohorts.</p>	<p>Full in-person classes are mandatory with allowed medical exemptions.</p> <p>Secondary IV and V may have alternate solutions if cohorting is not achievable with specific course schedules.</p>
<p><b>New Brunswick</b> <a href="#">Return to School: September 2020</a></p>	<p>No physical distancing requirements within cohorts for grades k-8. 2-meter distancing required between cohorts.</p>	<p>Grades K-8 will have class cohorts.</p>	<p>Mandatory for Grades 6-12, and recommended for K-5, in common areas when physical distancing is not possible.</p>	<p>A mix of virtual and in-person learning for Grades 9-12 only.</p>

	<p>Secondary students must maintain physical distancing.</p> <p>For grades K-5, reduced group sizes (as close to 15-22 wherever possible); For grades 6-8, regular class size; For Grades 9-12, attend school on a rotational basis.</p>			
<p><b>Nova Scotia</b> <a href="#">Nova Scotia's Back-to-School Plan</a></p>	<p>2-metre physical distancing is strongly encouraged even within cohorts.</p>	<p>Cohorts of students will be created to support physical distancing.</p>	<p>Mandatory for Grades 4 to 12, if physical distancing is not possible.</p>	
<p><b>Prince Edward Island</b> <a href="#">Back to School</a></p>	<p>Physical distancing is not required within cohorts.</p>	<p>All students will be placed in cohorts to minimize interactions within school groups.</p>	<p>Required for Grades 7-12 during transitions between classes and emergency procedures, such as fire drills.</p> <p>All students are recommended to wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible.</p>	
<p><b>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</b> <a href="#">K-12 Education Re-entry Plan</a></p>	<p>2-metre physical distancing is recommended when possible.</p>	<p>Cohorting a group of students and staff is highly recommended.</p>	<p>Not required while in classrooms but recommended when physical distancing is not possible.</p> <p>Grades 7-12 must wear masks in common areas.</p> <p>Required for staff when physical distancing is not possible.</p>	<p>Virtual learning or other forms of structured learning must be put in place for students who are required to stay home because they are sick or in isolation due to COVID-19 infection or exposure</p>

<p><b>Nunavut</b>  <a href="#"><u>2020-21 Opening Plan for Nunavut Schools: Health and Safety (Stage 1)</u></a></p>	<p>Classroom density is 100% at this time.</p>			<p>Students will transition to remote learning if COVID-19 is confirmed in a community.</p>
<p><b>Northwest Territories</b>  <a href="#"><u>Reopening Schools Wisely in 2020-2021</u></a></p>	<p>Grades 7-12 must maintain physical distancing.</p>		<p>Recommended for all grades when physical distancing is not possible.</p>	<p>Remote learning is available for students who are self-isolating.</p>
<p><b>Yukon</b>  <a href="#"><u>Planning for the 2020-21 School Year</u></a></p>		<p>Cohorting for grades K-9 will be determined by individual schools.</p>	<p>Recommended for age 10 and older when physical distancing is not possible.</p>	<p>Hybrid of virtual and in-person for grades 10-12 (note: five full-days of in-person class instruction for rural communities)</p>