



Yellowknife Catholic Schools

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January 19, 2022

To all Parents and Guardians:

Re: Return to In-person Learning on January 24, 2022

On January 18, 2022, the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) recommended that schools in the Northwest Territories (NWT) return to in-person learning on Monday, January 24, 2022, with the exception of schools in Inuvik and Fort Smith who are newly experiencing community transmission.

Yellowknife Catholic Schools supports this recommendation and beginning Monday, January 24, 2022 all YCS schools will return to in-person learning for all students.

We recognize that the shift back to in-person learning may be met with mixed emotions. It is important to note that schools have strong health and safety measures in place, including symptom checks, classroom bubbles, masking, and refraining from high risk activities, such as high intensity sports. These factors contribute to a safe return to in-person learning for our students.

The OCPHO recommendation is grounded in the need to balance risk tolerance with risk mitigation so that students can return to in-person learning and access the supports provided through the in-school experience, including in-person instruction and learning activities, social connection with their peers, low-risk physical activities, and healthy food programs.

Learning materials will be provided if your child is required to isolate; however, educators are not resourced to provide at-home learning plans for families who choose to keep their children out of the classroom.

We recognize that this shift has an impact on everyone and thank you for your continued commitment as we navigate the safety and wellbeing of staff, students, and families.

Recognizing that students may have mixed feelings about returning to in-person learning, below is a list of mental health supports students may wish to explore:

- Child and Youth Care Counselors (please contact your child's school)
- **BreathingRoom** is a newly launched e-mental health program for youth aged 13-24. It supports youth and young adults in learning new ways to manage stress, depression and anxiety, as well as strengthening their existing coping skills. NWT youth can access this program at <https://app.breathingroom.me/register?code=XXQTGPUE>
- NWT Help Line – available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is 100% free, confidential and anonymous. Call 1-800-661-0844.

- Kids Help Phone – young people needing to talk to someone can call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or go to www.kidshelpphone.ca
- The [NWT Community Counseling Program](#) – is available free-of-charge to every NWT resident, in every region of the NWT. It helps people deal with a variety of issues including family violence, mental health issues and addictions.

Sincerely,

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

Simone Gessler
Superintendent