



## **School Notice Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

Recently, there has been an update from Nova Scotia Health regarding absenteeism due to illness in our school. If we have illnesses reaching 10% on any given day, we have been asked to provide information on the reason for absenteeism, and if possible, the type of illness as reported by parents. Please read the letters attached.

This means that if your child is not going to be in school, we need to hear from you. You can leave a message on the answering machine, send a note with a sibling, or call the school. The information collected is essential for Public Health to identify and respond to communicable diseases, such as influenza and COVID 19.

Wela'lioq,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marjorie Pierro".

**Marjorie Pierro**



6 October 2020

Dear MK Principal,

Thank you for the invaluable role your school plays in the health of your students. As we do at the beginning of every new school year, we wish to remind you about the importance of reporting school absenteeism. It is crucial to do so in this pandemic year to support appropriate public health response to any communicable diseases that may be circulating in the school community, including COVID-19.

The information collected from your school is an essential part of ongoing disease surveillance, enabling Public Health to identify and respond to communicable disease such as influenza and gastrointestinal illness –and this year COVID 19 - and to monitor the impact of these illnesses on our communities. This information will also help support the response to communicable disease outbreaks in the school.

The ask is to inform Public Health when absenteeism **most likely due to illness** reaches 10% or absenteeism that is higher than baseline levels determined by your school. All schools will be asked to provide information on the reason for absenteeism and if possible, the type of illness as reported by parents. If your school has an answering service for absenteeism, you may wish to include directions to parents to provide basic information on the type of illness affecting their child.

**Reporting absenteeism for the 2020-21 School Year.**

When absenteeism due to illness reaches 10%, regardless of the health reason, please complete the attached form- **Nova Scotia School Daily Surveillance Reporting Tool**- and email the completed form to:

- [PHCOVIDschoolsupport5@nshealth.ca](mailto:PHCOVIDschoolsupport5@nshealth.ca)

Thank you in advance for your assistance. For MK, the Public Health School COVID-19 Liaison Support person is Christine Johnson. Please reach out and direct questions that you may have on the most recent Public Health Guidelines related to school-reopening to her. Christine can be reached at [ChristineP.Johnson@nshealth.ca](mailto:ChristineP.Johnson@nshealth.ca) or 902 476-0142.

Wela'lin,

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Catherine Hebb  
Director, Western Zone  
Public Health

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Jennifer Cram MD, CCFP,  
MPH, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

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Daniela Kempkens, MD, MPH,  
FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

## Nova Scotia School Absenteeism Reporting Tool

*Each school day, when the percentage of total students absent is 10 % or higher, please complete this form and send to Public Health at [PHCOVIDschoolsupport5@nshealth.ca](mailto:PHCOVIDschoolsupport5@nshealth.ca) by 10 am.*

### School Information:

<b>Name of School</b>	Name of school
<b>Regional Centre for Education</b>	RCE
<b>Contact Name</b>	Contact Name
<b>Telephone #</b>	Telephone #
<b>Total # of Students</b>	Total # of students
<b>Total # of Staff</b>	Total # of staff

### Absenteeism Report:

<b>Reporting Date</b>	Reporting date.
<b>Total # of students absent</b>	Total # of students absent
<b>% of students absent</b>	% of students absent
<b># of staff absent</b>	# of staff absent

### If the following information is known from your current absence reporting processes please provide:

<b># of students absent due to illness</b>	# of students absent due to illness
<b># of students with an excused absence</b>	# of students with an excused absence
<b># of students absent for unknown reason</b>	# of students absent for unknown reasons

### In the previous few days have any students or staff been sent home due to COVID-19 symptoms?

- Yes      # of students sent home
- No

### If known, please indicate any symptoms that have been reported by students/parents or staff:

#### Respiratory illness symptoms:

- Fever/Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose/nasal congestion
- Headache
- Shortness of breath

#### Other symptoms:

- Abdominal Pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Aches & Pains
- Other

Please provide any additional comments related to the level of absenteeism in your school.

Enter additional comments here