



Special Board Meeting

Agenda Package

January 16, 2022

☞ *New Horizons Charter School Society* ☞

AGENDA**Type of Meeting:** Board**Date:** January 16, 2022**Page:**1 of 1*"TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS"**Is it in the best interest of our students?**Does it support excellence?*

**NEW HORIZONS CHARTER SCHOOL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' SPECIAL MEETING
January 16, 2022**

AGENDA

Vision: New Horizons School will enable gifted students to strive for excellence in a positive academic learning environment that fosters social and emotional support for each student.

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| 1. Call to Order | D. Hanson | 7:00 pm |
| 2. Statement of Territorial Acknowledgment | D. Hanson | 7:01 pm |

The Board of Directors of the New Horizons Charter School Society respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we meet is Treaty 6 territory, a traditional home, gathering place, and travelling route for diverse Indigenous Peoples, including Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Nakota, and Sioux, as well as the homeland of the Métis Nation. We recognize our responsibility as Treaty members and honour the heritage and gifts of the First Peoples of this land.

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| 3. Adoption of Agenda | D. Hanson | 7:05 pm |
| 4. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest | D. Hanson | 7:08 pm |
| 5. New Business | | 7:10 pm |
| 5.1 School COVID-19 Re-entry Plan
Recommended Changes | D. Lindquist | |
| 6. Adjournment | D. Hanson | 8:15 pm |

Next Board Meeting – January 19, 2022



Dean Lindquist
Superintendent
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MEMORANDUM

January 16, 2022

To: Board of Directors

From: Dean Lindquist - Superintendent

Re: Superintendent's Report

Background:

NHS Re-entry Plan

Data trends:

	December 29	January 7	January 9	January 13
Current COVID-19 cases (Alberta)	17,396	43,414	57,332	64,129
Current hospitalizations (Alberta)	349	504	635	822
Current ICU (Alberta)	57	64	72	81
12+ populations with at least one vaccine dose	89.2%	89.5%	89.6%	89.7
12+ population fully vaccinated	85.2%	85.4%	85.5%	85.7
Aged 5 – 11 provincial vaccination rates (at least one dose)	35.5%	38.0	39%	40.4%
Aged 5 – 11 provincial vaccination rates (two one doses)	3.3%	4.1	4.4%	4.9%
Sherwood Park schools on alert list	9*	Not tracking	Not tracking	Not tracking
Current active cases aged 5 – 9 (Alberta)	804	1684	2298	2672
Current active cases – aged 10 – 19 (Alberta)	1901	4949	6447	7137

Note current cases are only PCR positive cases.

Changes to AHS Health and Safety Measures

Alberta Health Services are no longer be informing schools of positive COVID-19 cases. We have and will continue to ask parents to inform the school if their child(ren) test positive for COVID-19. One of the challenges the school and parents are facing is the lack of at-home rapid antigen tests. Currently less than

half of our families have received the rapid antigen tests from the school. We received about one-half of what was needed to provide to the students and staff. Therefore, reliability of reporting is not as accurate as it was prior to the Winter Break when AHS reported positive cases to schools.

With changes to AHS testing policies, the current NHS Re-entry Plan needs to be modified. Currently, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to receive an AHS test for COVID-19. The shift is to using rapid antigen tests provided to families by the government. This poses challenges for accurate reporting to the school as we rely on parents to advise us if their child tests positive.

Further AHS health and safety measure changes are the required isolation period for fully vaccinated individuals which now requires a five-day isolation period. This is followed up by a required five days of wearing a mask when in public places or around others. This will be problematic to implement as it will not be possible to operationalize the five days of wearing a mask for students, and yet enable these students to have a location to eat their lunch and, for example, have water. We do have a meeting room, but it would have to be sanitized before and after each use of students having their lunch. If we had any more than 2 or 3 students in this situation, it would not be possible to have these students at school, thus requiring a ten-day isolation period instead.

Isolation periods for close contacts have changed significantly. Please see:

<https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx> for details. Essentially, there are no requirements for close contacts to isolate if fully vaccinated. If there is a close contact in the home, partially or non-vaccinated family members should isolate for 14 days. If a close contact with someone outside of the home, isolation is not required, but individuals are asked to monitor for symptoms and to avoid continuing care facilities and crowded indoor spaces (does not state schools). Changes to isolation periods poses some challenges to our school and how we operationalize any isolation requirements.

Masking rules have not changed, but AHS now strongly recommends students always wear masks except when eating lunch or outside.

For international travel, the Government of Canada, requires isolation for partially or non-vaccinated student travellers. This is 14 days and requires a Day 8 test (from date of return to Canada). The quarantine period extends beyond the infectious period.

Recommended Changes to the NHS Re-entry Plan

The Board is being asked to consider the following changes to the NHS Re-entry Plan (recommendations are in bold):

1. Students and adults who test positive for COVID-19 must quarantine as required by AHS. If fully vaccinated, students and staff must isolate for 5 days from the start of symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer. For the next 5 days, individuals can return to school, but must also always wear a mask when around others. **Administration is recommending that students in this second phase not return until after the full ten days are completed. We are further recommending staff may return after the 5 days (AHS guidelines), if symptom free and have a negative rapid**

antigen test (completed on day of planned return). However, returning staff must always wear a mask when in the presence of others. **Partially vaccinated or non-vaccinated individuals must isolate for ten days from onset of symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is greater.** (<https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx>)

2. **Recommending masking is always required for adults and students except when eating lunch or outside.** This is strongly recommended by AHS.
3. In the current NHS Re-entry Plan, classrooms are moved to at-home learning for 14 days when a student is reported to have tested positive for COVID-19 and were present in the classroom for the infectious period. When this requirement was in place, AHS was reporting positive cases to the school and the risk of false positive cases or false negative results were lower than we anticipate with at-home conducted rapid antigen testing. AHS also no longer requires isolation for close contacts but do recommend isolation for close contact in the home. **The recommendation to the Board is to not move classrooms to at-home learning for instances where the students in the classroom are or could be close contacts.** The school would inform parents in the affected classroom that a student tested positive for COVID-19 and was in the classroom during the infectious period.
4. **For International travel, administration recommends removing the test requirement for those individuals (non-vaccinated or partially vaccinated) completing the required quarantine set by the Government of Canada as the quarantine period exceeds the infectious period of COVID-19 and individuals cannot return to school until symptom free.** The other option is to allow for an at-home rapid negative antigen test be acceptable proof following quarantine. Note that a negative COVID-19 test from a pharmacy, doctor (or note from a doctor) would still be required for fully vaccinated adults and students, who travelled internationally, and are not required to quarantine.
5. **Recommendation for partially vaccinated or non-vaccinated adults entering the building, allow for them to present a day and time stamped picture of their negative at-home administered rapid antigen test. This includes partially vaccinated or non-vaccinated staff.**

Essentially, the changes recommended in 1 - 4 to the board reflect the current recommendations from AHS. The fifth recommendation would affect the COVID-19 Vaccination Status Administrative Procedure 201.

The Board is requested to consider each of the five recommendations.

Sincerely,

Dean Lindquist