



Learning for a Lifetime

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December 1, 2021

Dear SD43 families,

As we approach winter break, we find ourselves with yet another storm and the potential for more flooding and possible disruptions. Once again, I remind you to consider walking, biking or carpooling (with protective masks and safety in mind) to conserve fuel for use by essential services. Also, if you are considering local or international travel in the coming weeks or over the upcoming holiday break, there are important restrictions and factors to keep in mind. Travel within BC is limited and many routes are restricted to essential use only. Further, travelling internationally with children aged 5-11 that are not yet fully vaccinated will mean that they are not able to attend school for 14 days upon return to Canada. Further details and links to important information have been included below.

#### **BC travel restrictions and fuel limits extended**

Since a state of emergency for southwestern BC has been declared due to recent flooding and mudslides as a result of extreme weather, there are travel restrictions in place. In particular, sections of Highways 1, 3, 5 and 7 are affected and use is limited to essential traffic only. For the most current and correct information on road status and BC travel advisories, please visit [www.drivebc.ca](http://www.drivebc.ca) and <https://www.tranbc.ca/current-travel-advisories/>.

In addition to restrictions on travel and road use, a system of voluntary fuel rationing has been implemented by the provincial government through the fuel prioritization order to stretch our current supply until pipeline repairs can be completed and supply chain issues are resolved. Fuel restrictions that include a 30L per visit limit for non-commercial vehicles have been [extended until December 14<sup>th</sup>](#). It is suggested and encouraged that one considers alternate modes of transportation such as walking, biking or carpooling to help mitigate the shortage and conserve fuel for essential operations.

#### **Government of Canada advice re: international travel with unvaccinated or partially vaccinated children**

Restrictions on non-essential international travel, including day trips to the United States, have been recently modified but it is important to understand that unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children cannot attend school for 14 days upon return to Canada according to [federal travel guidance](#). While there are some quarantine exemptions for unvaccinated children accompanied by fully vaccinated adults, there is no exemption to allow unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students to return to school within 14 days of travelling internationally, including the U.S., regardless of who they travel with or if they have received a negative PCR test result.

Students who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated cannot attend the following for 14 days after international travel:

- x School.
- x Day cares or camps.
- x Settings with vulnerable people (i.e.: long-term care facilities).
- x Large crowded indoor or outdoor settings (i.e.: amusement parks, sporting events).
- x Crowded public transportation that does not ensure physical distancing and masking.

If you intend to travel internationally over the winter break or at any time during the school year, please coordinate with your teacher and school before your trip to arrange for schoolwork so that your child does not fall behind while you are away or during the 14-day absence period following your return.

In addition to staying home from school, unvaccinated children returning from international travel must limit contact with others for 14 days, especially those with underlying medical conditions, compromised immune systems, or those over 65. Returning travelers ages five and up must also take a COVID-19 molecular test and monitor their health while watching for symptoms of COVID-19.

Fully vaccinated students may return to school immediately upon return from international travel, providing they have received a negative PCR test result and their second vaccination was at least two weeks prior to their return.

For more information on federal guidance and restrictions, visit [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus). For more information on provincial measures, visit [bccdc.ca/covid-19](https://bccdc.ca/covid-19).

Due to recent extreme weather and the continuing pandemic, it seems our only constant is continuous change. I am hopeful that sharing this information with our SD43 families will help with the recovery efforts and also assist them in making informed decisions around travel based on our current situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Gartland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Patricia Gartland  
Superintendent/CEO