

COVID-19 SCHOOL RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS: FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS

Overview

COVID-19 School Rapid Response Teams are available to support First Nations schools, at the request of First Nations, regarding their COVID-19 safety plans and to conduct assessments of significant school exposure events (e.g. outbreaks, closures).

The participation of First Nations schools in the rapid response team initiative is completely voluntary and at the discretion of individual First Nations. The Ministry of Education fully respects the authority of individual First Nations to make decisions about school operations in the best interests of their students, schools, and communities, and further recognizes that a number of schools will opt to remain fully or partially closed. First Nations are under no obligation to reopen their schools or to take part in this initiative.

The approach and process taken to support a First Nation school is distinct from the approach for public and non-First Nation independent schools and will be determined on a case by case basis.

Structure & Supports Provided

- Response teams are composed of school district and Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) staff working in collaboration with regional health authority personnel.
- Regional response teams support multiple school districts (one per health region), FISA response team supports independent schools. Upon request of a First Nation, regional response teams can also support First Nations schools.
- The support a response team could provide to First Nations includes:
 - Reviewing school COVID-19 safety plans and related policies.
 - Supporting schools with the implementation of safety plans and communications to students, staff and families.
 - Working with school and health authority staff to review significant school exposure events, make recommendations, and support schools to enhance their safety plans when needed.
 - Rapid response teams may conduct school safety site assessments, at a First Nation's request.

Rapid Response Team Contacts by Region/Scope

Rapid Response Team	Team Lead	Email
Fraser Health Region: led by Surrey School District (SD#36)	Neder Dhillon	dhillon_n@surreyschools.ca
Interior Health Region: led by Central Okanagan School District (SD#23)	Vianne Kintzinger	covid.response@sd23.bc.ca
Island Health Region: led by Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District (SD#68)	Piet Langstraat	systemicsconsulting@telus.net
Northern Health Region: led by Peace River North School District (SD#60)	Sabrina Bourdon	sbourdon@prn.bc.ca
Vancouver Coastal Health Region: led by Vancouver School District (SD#39)	Tina Lau	tlau@vsb.bc.ca
Independent Schools (all regions): led by FISA	Janet Dhanani	iscovidlead@fisabc.ca