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SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS CALLS ON ALBERTA GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT SAFE SCHOOL RE-OPENING STRATEGIES

In consultation with pediatricians, emergency medicine specialists, education workers, and aerosol scientists, **Support Our Students (SOS) Alberta** calls on the government to adopt the following **universal (province-wide)** COVID-19 mitigation strategies for safe school reopening for September 2021 in the face of the Delta wave in Alberta. Students under age 12 are not yet eligible for vaccines. Downloading health policies onto individual school boards creates **inconsistent & inequitable protection** for students across the province. Education is a provincial responsibility, with a legislated obligation to provide safe environments under the Education Act. Protocols and funding for a safe return to school is the DUTY of the provincial government.

1. Reinstate Alberta Health Services reporting & contact tracing to support schools
2. Ventilation assessments, install classroom HEPA filters and CO2 monitors
3. Publish school case/outbreak info and targets for scenario changes
4. Age- & ability- appropriate indoor masking
5. Class size caps
6. Safe transportation (assigned seats, masking, distancing)
7. In-school rapid testing
8. All education workers must be provided adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) by province
9. Indefinitely cancel ALL standardized testing
10. Substitute teacher policy to mitigate inter-school transmission
11. Vaccination reporting and in-school clinics for Gr 7-12; mandatory vaccination for education workers
12. In event of scenario change, provide resources for families
13. Take action to reduce community transmission locally
14. Ensure students can access interconnected systems of healthcare and education
15. Acknowledge that school calendars can be altered or re-openings delayed until the resources and parameters for a safer school environments itemized above can be secured equitably across Alberta.

A detailed list with rationale for each of the above strategies is posted at <https://www.supportourstudents.ca/covid-19-response.html>.

Considering the prolonged COVID-19 crisis in Alberta, it is the position of SOS Alberta that every measure for a safer school relaunch should be implemented as soon as possible and for the long term. Now is the time to invest in standards and protocols, like the ones attached, that will create lasting safety measures for Alberta's students, education workers, and broader communities.

Support Our Students Alberta is a non-profit citizens' action group advocating for universally accessible and equitable public education in Alberta.