

Good morning. Ey Swayel.

It's November 9th and I wanted to bring you another update this week. There are new health orders out and I want to talk about what that means and I want to tell you what we've seen in our schools since opening day.

So first and foremost, our cases are on the rise. We've gone from a place of 100 to 150 a day in September to numbers that are more like 400 to 500 a day and of course that's a concern to us all. So there are new health orders from Dr. Henry yesterday and I want to talk about what those orders mean for us. And I want to say that there's really no surprises in those new health orders. Re-emphasizing the importance of wearing masks. Please wear a mask. A reminder to everyone that if you have symptoms, stay at home. Do not come to work when you have symptoms or you're ill. For staff and for all of us to be careful in staff rooms, kitchen areas, places where adults gathering formally during breaks and off time. The orders just came out yesterday and we're interpreting them carefully and they're just for our region of Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health. These orders are designed specifically to keep schools open, and to protect schools and Dr. Henry spoke in detail about that in her talk yesterday. So we'll have more information for our schools today and tomorrow, and the new orders are in place until November 23.

It's a substantial week, as it's time for remembrance on November 11, and then Diwali on November 14th. It's a time when we would normally gather, but in our current context, clearly, Dr. Henry is asking for substantial changes to our normal routines of gathering and connecting.

And what have we seen about our schools now that some time has gone by and you know Surrey has seen a lot of notices of exposure. What I can tell you is we have had 123 notices of exposure. So what about transmission. Transmission, I would think, would come when we see classes, whole classes, put into self isolation. We've had three full classes put into self isolation or a larger group. So there's no question that COVID is among us and the numbers are increasing. And what I believe we continue to see is, that in controlled environments like schools, where we have in place health measures and cleaning protocols, that we follow every single day, we are keeping things in check. If we weren't, we would be seeing many more transmission situations in schools and we're just not seeing them. I'm not saying that it hasn't happened, but again, 123 notices of exposure and only three cases of self isolation. So we need to remain vigilant and it's clear that when new orders are assigned, that there is concern in the community, particularly in Fraser Health, where you know we have a vast majority of the cases. Each one of us needs to do our part. In the meantime students are in schools and learning. I watch posts every single day of great things happening in our schools and classrooms around the district. Despite COVID there is joy in schools every day.

As always, I want to extend my huge appreciation and thanks to all of our staff for everything you're doing to make learning happen in new ways and under new protocols. It means a lot to our children and our community for our schools to remain open. So stay tuned, we will update you on the orders as soon as we are able to figure out some more additional details and what those mean. Most important, once again when you listened to Dr. Henry yesterday, these orders are designed to protect schools and to keep them open. It's clearly Dr. Henry strategy and her message and the way in which she intends to keep our schools safe.

So take care. Stay well. Hy'ce:pka