

To all our dedicated teachers, educational assistants, administrative teams, bus drivers, custodians and other support staff:

With the holiday season upon us, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your excellent work in implementing the Return to School plan. I know this school year has had its challenges, but because of your cooperation, I am proud to say we have been one of the most successful jurisdictions in the world in the fight against COVID-19.

We know that mask wearing, especially when combined with physical distancing, is an effective way to curb the spread of COVID-19. That's why we have invited New Brunswick students and school staff to take part in a "mask-up" campaign upon return to school in January. During the weeks of January 4-8 and 11 to 15, 2021, we're strongly encouraging everyone in the education system to wear their masks throughout the day. Staff at districts and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will be participating too.

We all have a role to play in keeping our communities safe and we know how important it is that we role model positive behaviours for our students. Your actions in and out of the classroom impact everyone around you. By continuing to follow simple rules through these weeks, we can all help keep our schools healthy and safe and help us get back to normal in 2021. Remember:

- Wear your mask
- Keep your distance
- Wash your hands
- If you are sick, stay home
- When in doubt, get tested

I know that the world is excited to get back to normal. Until we can put the pandemic behind us entirely, we have to work together to keep our communities and workplaces healthy and safe for everyone. We are continually working with Public Health and WorkSafe NB to ensure that our schools are safe for staff and students. It can be so easy to get too close to people without realizing it in casual settings, so I want to use this opportunity to remind you of how important it is to respect physical distancing. Especially in meeting and staff rooms, even when you are eating. If possible, please use virtual meeting options.

.../2



Page 2

I know it has not always been easy to adapt to all the new routines we've put in place through the Return to School plan. Thank you for your kindness and flexibility. Have a wonderful holiday season. Please continue to care for yourselves and others and keep following Public Health's advice and guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dominic Cardy". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Dominic" written above the last name "Cardy".

Dominic Cardy  
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development