



2021-2022 Back to School & Learning Pathways Guide

Northern Lights Public Schools

Welcome Back

Northern Lights Public Schools is pleased to welcome families Back to School for 2021-2022. We continue to offer families a number of Learning Pathways to choose from, and the opportunity to select the one that works best for their child and their family.

The Board has approved enhanced COVID protocols for our schools to help keep our students, staff and communities safe. Details are provided later in this document. We remain committed to creating safe and caring learning environments for our students and to maintaining our focus on our division

priority to improve student mental health and wellness. These go hand in hand as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the end of last year, we approved turning Our Learning Together Anywhere program into a school to allow the program to grow and offer all of the same services as our other schools, including a school council.

While we remain focused on the safety of our students, we, like many of you are also excited for the return of school events and the opportunity to visit schools, talk to students, families and staff, and see all of the wonderful things happening in our division.

*Arlene Hrynyk
Board Chair*



Table of Contents

<u>Learning Pathways</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Learning Together on Location</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Learning Together Anywhere</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>LTA or Home Education</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Learning Independently (Home Education)</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Selection of Learning Option</u>	<u>8</u>



Learning Pathways

For the 2021-2022 school year, families with students enrolled in in Kindergarten to Grade 9 in Northern Lights Public Schools can choose from three Learning Pathways for their children.

Some COVID-19 measures remain in place for our students who are learning on location at our schools and masks will be mandatory for all students in non-instructional spaces. It is important to note that these measures may change due to changes in provincial requirements or review by the Board.

Our Learning Together Anywhere program is now a school and will offer online instruction and project-based learning to students in Kindergarten to Grade 9. This school is open to enrollment for students throughout Alberta.

In addition, parents also have the option to participate in home education, independent of, or in partnership with an NLPS school. Students in grades 1-9 will partner with our Learning Together Anywhere School and grades 10-12 will partner with Northern Lights Outreach.

For all three options, programming will be provided in accordance with Alberta Education requirements including hours of instruction, expected learning outcomes, and assessment.

High school students also have a variety of pathways to earn the credits they need to graduate. Families are advised to discuss the options available with their child's school.



Learning Together on Location

In-person classes with a teacher at one of our 27 schools. Some measures will be in place to address COVID-19.



Learning Together Anywhere

At-home teacher-directed learning featuring a blend of online instruction and project-based learning. Students will require supervision/assistance from an adult.



Learning Independently

A Home Education program is available in partnership with a Northern Lights school. This option is for parents who decide to retain responsibility for educating their child.

Learning Together on Location

Health and Safety Protocols

With the exception of masking, Northern Lights will be following the government's [2021-2022 School Year Plan](#) and the [Guidance for Respiratory Illness Prevention and Management in Schools](#), which includes:

- Students, staff and visitors to schools staying home if they are sick;
- Enhanced HVAC air circulation practices
- Regular cleaning, including high touch areas, and
- Promoting hand hygiene practices.

In addition, NLPS will require all students, staff and visitors to our schools to wear masks in non-instructional areas (entranceways, hallways, etc.). Masks will not be required in classrooms and other areas of the school where students are participating in instruction (gymnasiums, library, CTS labs, etc.) This requirement will be in place until regional vaccination rates reach 70% or until the situation is re-evaluated at the Sept. 29, 2021 Board meeting.

As per current public health orders, all students and staff are also required to wear masks when on school buses.

Environmental Measures

- HVAC systems will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
- NLPS will continue with the practice of regularly circulating fresh air in schools while maintaining a comfortable temperature for students and staff.
- In addition to the division's regular cleaning protocols, high contact areas will be wiped down regularly. This includes water fountains, washrooms, shared equipment, and commonly used areas.
- Disinfectants will be provided by the NLPS Maintenance Department. Parents do not need to send cleaning products to school with their children.
- Schools will not be available for use by outside user groups. This measure will be reviewed at the September 29, 2021 Board meeting.

Learning Together on Location

Health and Safety Protocols

Stay Home When Sick

- All staff, students and visitors must complete the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#). The checklist will provide guidance on how long your child should stay home from school and if they need to be tested for COVID-19.
- Students with fever, cough, shortness of breath or loss of sense of smell or taste, must stay home and isolate for 10 days. They can return to school before 10 days if they have a negative COVID-19 test and feel better.
- If students or staff develop symptoms of illness while at school they will be sent home. Parents/guardians will be called to pick up their children if they are sick.
- If your child is absent due to illness, please indicate that when you report their absence to their school.
- Schools will continue to work with Alberta Health Services to manage outbreaks of illness, as they did prior to COVID. Whenever 10% of students are absent due to illness, AHS is contacted and determines what measures, if any, need to be taken. Previous outbreaks have resulted in additional cleaning and notifications to families.



Learning Together on Location

Health and Safety Protocols

Hand Hygiene

- Hand sanitizer will be placed in convenient locations throughout schools where soap and water may not be available.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted before and after activities (ie entering/leaving school or classroom, changing activities, before and after using shared equipment, before and after eating after using washrooms, and before and after physical contact with others.
- Verbal reminders and signage will be used to promote hand hygiene.



Masks

- All staff, students and visitors to schools are required to wear masks in non-instructional areas such as entrance ways and hallways.
- All students and staff are required to wear masks on school buses.
- Masks are not required in classrooms and other areas where students are participating in instructional activities (gymnasiums, libraries, CTS labs, etc.)
- Students who choose to wear masks during instructional time will be supported in their decision to do so.



Watch a video on how to wash your hands: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjrKDx6S4rk&feature=emb_logo

Learning Together Anywhere

Students enrolled in our Learning Together Anywhere School follow the same curriculum and [calendar](#) as our other schools. Instead of attending classes in person, they connect with their teachers and classmates online. Students are engaged through live on screen instruction, pre-recorded teacher-directed lessons, and project-based learning.

Technology Requirements

Each student will need their own device (Chromebook, laptop or computer) with a working camera and microphone. Phones and tablets will not be sufficient for participation. A reliable Internet connection is essential.

Extracurricular Activities

Students will have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities including individual and teams sports and possibly Esports.

Parent Involvement

In order for students to fully participate, an adult will need to provide some supervision and assistance. The level of involvement will vary depending on the age, grade level and individual needs of the student. Parents will need to commit to ongoing, timely communication with their child's teacher to ensure outcomes are being met. They will also be expected to assist and support students in using the technology required to participate.

This year, LTA will try to establish its own school council and parents are encouraged to participate, meet other parents, and provide feedback to the school.

Learn More

Go to learningtogetheranywhere.ca for more information about our school!



LTA or Home Education?

For parents who would prefer to have their children learn at home, it is important to understand the difference between our **Learning Together Anywhere School** and Learning Independently as part of a Home Education program in partnership with NLPS.

Learning Together Anywhere

- Teacher-Directed - The teacher is responsible for creating lesson plan, delivering instruction and assessing student learning.
- Parents support their children to complete assignments and exams and use the technology required to participate.
- Student-Centred - Students share in learning decisions, believing in their capacity to lead and help in planning, implementation, and assessments.
- Families can access support services for their students.



Learning Independently

- Parents create lesson plans, choose the format of instruction, assignments and exams, and take on the role of providing it.
- Parents may connect with other families for group learning experiences.



Home Education (in partnership with NLPS)

Home Education is a parent-directed approach to educating a student in Grades 1 to 12 at home or elsewhere in which they are responsible for making all educational decisions.

Parents choosing Home Education have the primary responsibility for planning, managing, providing, evaluating, and supervising their children's courses of study. They must develop a Home Education program that enables the student to achieve appropriate learning outcomes.

If a parent requests it, the associate board must provide assistance and advice to improve student learning.

The associate board must also arrange for certificated teachers employed by the associate board to conduct at least two formal evaluations of each student each school year.

These evaluations include a review of the student portfolio & recommendations to help students make improvements.

Together with the parents, the associate school board must ensure that each student meets the parents' educational outcomes in accordance with the [Home Education Regulation](#).

In order to receive their portion (50%) of the Home Education Grant, the parent must have been notified and been accepted by an associate board regarding the Home Education program by September 30.

If you are pursuing Home Education, you will need to complete the [Home Education Regulation Notification Form](#)

Before you complete the form, we recommend you speak to our school principals about what home education connected to NLPS looks like. Please contact our [Learning Together Anywhere School](#) (grades 1-9) or [Northern Lights Outreach schools](#) (grades 10-12) to discuss your options.

More information about Home Education is available at: nlpsab.ca/programs/home-education and in the [Alberta Education Home Education Handbook](#).



Selection of Learning Option

Learning Together on Location

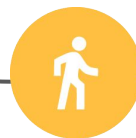
If you intend for your child to return to in-person classes, and you are already registered with NLPS, you do not need to re-register.

The week before school starts, you will receive notification that there is a 2021-2022 Student Update and Verification Form for you to complete in School Engage. Please complete and submit this as soon as possible so we can ensure we have your up-to-date contact information.

Learning Together Anywhere

If you are already an NLPS student and would like to transfer to our Learning Together Anywhere School, please contact your current school and tell them you wish to transfer. Please do this as soon as possible so we can ensure adequate staffing and supports are in place.

If you are not already enrolled with NLPS, please register online at nlpsab.ca, select the online learning option and choose Learning Together Anywhere School.



Home Education

Parents who wish to participate in Home Education in partnership with NLPS are required to complete the [Home Education Regulation Notification Form](#). This should be done as soon as possible to ensure appropriate resources are in place.