

October 1st, 2026

Re: Permanent daylight-saving time in British Columbia

Dear school partners,

Earlier this year, British Columbia adopted permanent daylight-saving time, with the final clock change taking place on March 8, 2026. As a result, the province now observes Pacific Time (PCT) year-round, eliminating the twice-yearly switch between Pacific Standard Time (PST) and Pacific Daylight Time (PDT).

During parts of the winter, particularly between late November and early February, many children will travel to school before sunrise. Fraser Health is sharing this information to support students, schools and families as they adapt to year-round Pacific Time and maintain healthy sleep habits and safe travel to and from school.

As a Medical Health Officer with Fraser Health, I am committed to supporting the health and well-being of children, youth and the communities in which they live, learn and play. While darker mornings may present some challenges, there are practical steps schools and families can take to support healthy sleep habits and safe travel. This letter provides information, considerations and resources to help support student well-being throughout the year.

Please share this information with your administrative and staff teams, as appropriate.

Health and well-being considerations

- Permanent daylight-saving time will provide an extra hour of daylight in the afternoon, creating additional opportunities for outdoor activity, recreation and social connection.
- Many of us will start our mornings with darker skies. Reduced morning light can affect sleep, alertness and mood, particularly among adolescents, whose biological clocks naturally favour later sleep and wake times. Encouraging [healthy sleep habits](#), such as maintaining consistent bedtimes and wake-up times, will remain important to support learning, mental well-being, and healthy development.
- During winter months, some students who walk, bike or take transit may travel in lower-light conditions. Taking steps to improve visibility and road safety can help support safer travel to school. However, students will benefit from more daylight during after-school travel and extracurricular activities.

How schools can help

Schools may wish to:

- Work with municipalities and community partners to identify and address potential safety concerns along routes to school, including visibility, crossings, signage and traffic-calming measures.

- Consider scheduling extracurricular activities after school rather than before school, where feasible.
- Continue supporting active school travel initiatives such as walking school buses, bike buses and [Drive-to-5 programs](#).
- Share information and resources with families about healthy sleep habits and safe travel during darker mornings.

If you have questions about active school travel initiatives or how to identify potential safety concerns, please contact your Fraser Health Healthy Schools Public Health Nurse or email healthyschoolsprogram@fraserhealth.ca.

What families can do

Support healthy sleep and well-being by:

- Spending time outdoors during daylight hours whenever possible.
- Encouraging physical activity and social connection through after-school programs and activities.
- Maintaining consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.
- Turning off screens at least one hour before bedtime, as evening screen use can make it harder to fall asleep.

Support safe travel to and from school by:

- Helping children choose well-lit routes with sidewalks and designated crossings.
- Encouraging children to wear reflective or high-visibility clothing and use a flashlight when travelling during darker morning hours.
- Reminding children to use designated crossings, scan traffic, and make sure vehicles have stopped before crossing.

If driving:

- Use extra caution when driving near schools, crosswalks, intersections and shared pathways.
- Be aware of one's surroundings and refraining from cell phone use, make eye contact, and shoulder check before turning or changing direction.
- Travel at slow speeds and stop completely at stop signs and crosswalks.

School health resources

Additional school health resources can be found on our website at fraserhealth.ca/schoolhealth.

Please share these resources through newsletters, websites and other family communication channels.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting the health, safety and well-being of children and youth across our communities.

If you or your staff have questions about the information in this letter, please contact your [local public health unit](#).

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m. v. Baxi", enclosed within a thin, hand-drawn oval border.

Dr. Maulik Baxi, MBBS, MPH, FRCPC, Dip. ABPM

Medical Health Officer – Medical Director, Population and Public Health
Fraser Health