



## SD51 Communicable Disease Plan

updated August 2021

### INTRODUCTION

School District 51 is following the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) to ensure our schools are safe places for students and staff. The guidelines are built upon the [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools developed by the BC Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC) to ensure schools have effective measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

These guidelines are intended to support K-12 education employees, students, parents, caregivers, administrators and school community members to:

- Be informed about public health measures and how they support a safe school environment;
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting safe and healthy schools.

SD 51 strives to have safe and healthy schools that are welcoming for learners and staff and that foster and sustain mental well-being as well. We also want to ensure effective and ongoing communication with school leaders, community partners, parents, caregivers, students, unions and employees.

### REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Under the authority of provincial legislation, Medical Health Officers are able to place local Public Health Orders requiring additional safety measures beyond the measures listed in this plan, based on the context of specific communities or regions. Orders from Interior Health may be placed for entire regions or communities, including but not limited to schools, or for specific settings or activities within a health authority region.

Additional regional measures are likely to be similar to some of those in place in 2020/21 school year such as:

- Limits on gatherings and events;
- Reconfiguring room arrangements or incorporating more activities that maximize space between people and reduce face-to-face contact;
- Limiting visitors.

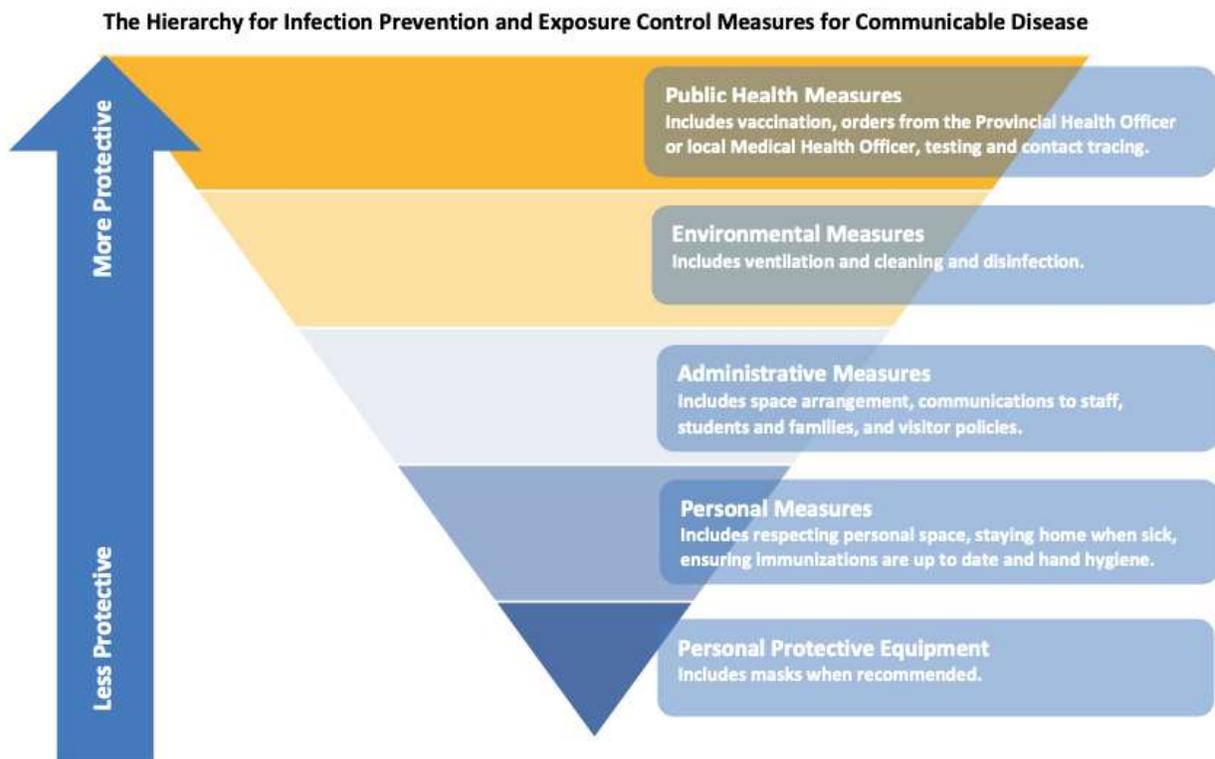
Current regional restrictions can be found at the following link:

[Provincial and regional restrictions | COVID-19 | Interior Health](#)

## INFECTION PREVENTION AND EXPOSURE CONTROL MEASURES

Infection prevention and exposure control measures help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. These measures are very effective in schools where there is relatively consistent groupings of people and multiple measures put in place such as not going to school sick, practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and other environmental measures.

The Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease describes the measures to take to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Control measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is greatly reduced.



## SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

SD 51 schools can support students to practice personal preventive measures by:

- Having staff model these behaviours.
- Share reliable information, including from BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, to parents, families and caregivers.
- Promoting required safety measures in the school through the use of visual aids like floor markings and signage.

SD 51 staff will utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in preventative practices and will not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature. Staff will use trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g. gatherings and events) and interacting with other staff and students, including respecting others' personal space.

## VACCINES

Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. The vaccines used in B.C. remain highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern. Vaccinated people aged 12 and older tend to have milder illness if infected and are less likely to spread COVID-19 than unvaccinated people 12 and older.

Public health encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them, including those not eligible to be vaccinated.

SD 51 will share evidence-based information (e.g., from [BCCDC](#) or [ImmunizeBC](#)) and details on how and where people can be vaccinated with staff, students and families prior to the start of the year. The District will also work with Interior Health to explore opportunities to establish school-based COVID-19 vaccination clinics to help increase community uptake.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Although Public Health no longer recommends physical distancing of 2M as a communicable disease measure in the K-12 setting, the following strategies can be considered:

- Remind students and staff about respecting others' personal space using visual supports, signage, prompts, etc.
- Use available space to spread people out, both in learning environments and for gatherings and events, where possible.
- Use strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times, focusing on entry and exit areas, and other places people may gather or crowd. (Each school will have specific protocols around this item. This information will be on the school's website).
- Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transitions to provide a greater amount of space for everyone. (Each school will have specific protocols around this item. This information will be on the school's website).
- Take students outside more often.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through. (Each school will have specific protocols around this item. This information will be on the school's website).
- Consider using floor markings and posters to address traffic flow throughout schools where hallway congestion is a concern.

## STAFF ONLY SPACES

Use the following practices:

- Use floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding in staff only areas.
- For gatherings like meetings or professional development, respect room occupancy limits, use space available to spread people out, and consider virtual options.
- Gatherings must also occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders and any related WorkSafe BC guidance.

## **SCHOOL GATHERINGS AND EVENTS**

School gatherings and events may occur, including inter-school events, in line with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders and any related WorkSafe BC guidance. Consideration should be given to:

- Respect student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space.
- Respect room occupancy limits, use space available to spread people out, and consider virtual options.
- Gradual transition to larger gatherings like school-wide assemblies, including starting with virtual or small in-person options.

## **SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/DIVERSE ABILITIES**

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS**

- SD 51 health and safety measures will promote inclusion of students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities with supports and services.
- Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at a greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19.

### **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/DIVERSE ABILITIES WHERE PHYSICAL CONTACT MAY BE REQUIRED.**

- When staff are working with a student indoors and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, staff must wear a non-medical mask, face covering, or a face shield with a non-medical mask. Additional personal protective equipment is not required beyond that used as part of personal care routines.
- If students need to see facial expressions and/or lip movements, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, options include having the staff member wear a mask with a transparent section to let students see the mouth.

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

### **BUSING**

- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Bus drivers will clean hands often, including before and after completing trips.
- Drivers are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips.
- Bus drivers will wear non-medical mask on buses except when driving.
- Students in grades 4 – 12 will wear masks when they are on the bus. They must put mask on prior to loading.
- Students in grades K – 3 are encouraged to wear masks on the bus, but are not required to do so. Mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.
- Parent must assess child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, and other infectious illnesses before sending them to school. If child is sick, they cannot take the bus or go to school.
- Students will clean hands before and after taking the bus.

- Passengers should be spread out if empty seats available.
- Open windows if weather permits.
- Practice respiratory etiquette.

#### CARPOOLING

- Schools will share the following information with staff and/or families regarding carpooling arrangements (school or personal-related):
  - Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible
  - Travel with same people whenever possible
  - Increase fresh air ventilation; do not recirculate air
  - Open windows when trips permit
  - Clean hands before and after trip
  - Clean frequently touched surfaces frequently
  - For carpooling for school-related purposes, masks must be worn for all staff, students grades 4 – 12 and any other adults. If personal carpooling, as per public health recommendations, people 9 and older are encouraged to wear a mask when carpooling (unless from same household).

#### CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Regular cleaning and disinfecting are essential to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. School facilities will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC CDC's [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document.

#### PRODUCTS AND PROCEDURES

- Prior to disinfecting, cleaning procedures shall be followed to ensure physical removal of visible soiling.

For disinfecting, SD 51 will:

- Use Oxivir, a hydrogen peroxide-based disinfectant approved by the BC CDC and listed on Health Canada's hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Use hospital-grade terminal misting systems in larger school sites to ensure all surfaces are disinfected. Product will be sprayed on and allowed to dry as this is most effective.

#### CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FREQUENCY

The following frequency guidelines must be adhered to when cleaning and disinfecting:

- General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once every 24 hours.
  - As a transitional protocol, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces at schools with more than 50 staff/students regularly attending will occur during the school day. For other sites, frequently touched surfaces will be addressed as part of the regular evening clean.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Garbage containers emptied daily.

The requirements above do not apply to any spaces/equipment that are not being used by students, staff or visitors.

**The recommended cleaning and disinfecting frequency for K-12 schools and other community settings outlined as above was determined by infection prevention and control experts at the BC Ministry of Health, BC Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Health Services Authority.**

#### FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Items used by multiple students and staff including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet handles, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, manipulatives and toys.
  - Students will be able to use water fountains.
  - Hand hygiene will happen before and after use.
  - There will be no restrictions with use of washrooms or other spaces to support student learning and wellbeing. Schools will return to full operation of all spaces in alignments with protocols outlined in this document.
- Shared equipment (computer keyboards and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for science labs, kitchen equipment for culinary programs, sewing machines and sewing equipment for home economic programs, PE/sports equipment, music equipment, etc.,).
- Appliances (staff and students can share the use of appliances and other objects, but treat items like microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, photocopiers, or laminators as frequently touched surfaces).
- Service counters (office service window, library circulation desk).

Frequently touched items like toys and manipulatives that may not be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) can be used but hands must be cleaned before and after use. Carpets and rugs can be used.

NOTE: There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g., children's books or magazines) and items with covers (e.g., DVDs) can be contaminated if handled by a person with COVID-19; however, the risk is low. There is NO need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

#### CLEANING & DISINFECTING BODILY FLUIDS

Follow these procedures, in conjunction with district policies, when cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine):

- Wear disposable gloves.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Follow regular health and safety procedures and regularly used PPE for blood and bodily fluids associated with toileting, biting, spitting.

#### LAUNDRY

Follow these procedures when doing laundry (Home Economics, PE, Life Skills, etc.):

- Laundry placed in basket with plastic liner.

- Do not shake dirty items.
- Wearing gloves optional. If wearing gloves, ensure proper hand hygiene is performed before and after use.

## **VISITOR ACCESS/COMMUNITY USE**

- Schools can leave front doors unlocked for visitor access, but may want to encourage appointments.
- Visitor access may be restricted by local or public health orders.
- Schools will inform visitors of health and safety requirements and will remind them to perform a daily health check before entering school.
- Schools will have information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors by school entrances, on school's website, and included in all communications with students and families.
- Schools will have sign in/sign out at front entrance for all visitors and staff who are not typically on site. Schools will keep list of the date, name and contact information of these people who entered the school over the past 45 days.
- All visitors will wear a non-medical mask when inside school. Exceptions are listed under Masking Protocols section.
- Visitor access should be limited to those areas required for purpose of visit (e.g. school office for drop off/pick up of items, gym for school sports, etc.) and parents/caregivers will drop-off and pick-up students outside.
- Parents/caregivers and other visitors will respect others' personal space while on school grounds, including outside.

After hours community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:

- Must occur in line with those activities permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Order.
- Diligent hand hygiene.
- Respiratory etiquette.
- Ensuring participants stay home if feeling ill.
- Limit building access to only those areas required for purpose of activity.

Community users are responsible for collecting names and contact information of participants to support contact-tracing by the local health authority.

## **ILLNESS & SELF-ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS**

### **DAILY HEALTH CHECK**

A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious.

Parents and caregivers must assess their children **daily** for illness before sending them to school.

- Parents/caregivers and/or students can use the provincial [K-12 Health Check](#) (app or web version).

## SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY

- Signage will be posted on entrance doors to remind staff and other adults that they are responsible to complete daily health check before entering the school/worksite and to stay home if sick.
- Frequent clear communication with staff to complete daily health check and stay home if sick.
- Frequent clear communication with families that they need to complete daily health check with child and keep them at home if sick.

If student or staff member becomes sick at school, they will:

- Be sent home as soon as possible,
- Go to safe, comfortable place that is separated from others,
- Be provided with non-medical mask,
- Be supervised (if child) until pick up possible.

Surfaces and/or equipment which the person's bodily fluids may have been in contact with while ill (desk, bathroom stall, etc.,) will be cleaned and disinfected before being used again.

No health-care provider note is required for students or staff to return to school.

## STAY HOME WHEN REQUIRED TO SELF-ISOLATE

Students, staff and other adults must stay home if required to self-isolate. Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available from [BCCDC](#).

## SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS AND RETURN TO SCHOOLS

Students, staff or other adults must stay home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:

- Parents/caregivers and students use the [K-12 Health Check](#) app or online version.
- Staff and other adults can refer to BC CDC's [When to get tested for COVID-19](#)
- Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC's online [Self-Assessment Tool](#), call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.

When a staff, student or other adult can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced (as indicated in [K-12 Health Check](#) app and BCCDC "[When to get tested for COVID-19](#)") and if COVID-19 test is recommended, and the type of illness they had. See Appendix A – COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School at the end of this document for more information.

Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (like allergies) can attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as usual. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and will not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unusual symptoms, they need to seek assessment by a health-care provider.

Students and staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If a household member tests positive

for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school.

## HAND HYGIENE

**Rigorous handwashing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.**

- Washing hands with plain soap and water (water temperature does not change effectiveness) for at least 20 seconds is one of the most effective control measures.
- If sinks are not available (e.g. students and staff are outdoors), use alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 60% alcohol and meets Health Canada's requirements.
- Encourage hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival at school. Place hand washing stations in various locations including school entrances, hallways, and classrooms to encourage appropriate hand hygiene throughout the day.
- Regularly remind staff and students about the importance of diligent hand hygiene.
- Incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.
- Ensure hand washing supplies are always well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff will assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- Students may bring own soap or sanitizer if they are on list authorized by Health Canada.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating microbes. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If it's not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.

Students will perform hand hygiene:

- When they arrive at school
- Before and after any breaks
- Before and after eating and drinking (not drinks kept at desk or locker)
- Before and after using indoor learning space used by multiple classes with shared equipment
- After using toilet
- After sneezing and/or coughing into hands
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Staff will perform hand hygiene:

- When they arrive at school
- Before and after any breaks
- Before and after eating and drinking
- Before and after handling food or helping students with eating
- Before and after giving medication to student or self
- After using toilet
- After contact with bodily fluids
- After cleaning tasks
- After removing gloves
- After handling garbage
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

## **RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE**

Students and staff will:

- Cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve or a tissue.
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

All K-12 staff are required to wear non-medical masks indoors in schools and on school buses. Staff supporting students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care – please see information under Supporting Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities section.

All students in grades 4 to 12 are required to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses.

Students in grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses but are not required to do so – mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.

Staff will use positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in the use of masks and will not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature.

Non-medical masks will be available for students and staff, including those who become sick while at school.

All visitors must wear masks.

### Exceptions for students and staff

The guidance outlined above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:

- To a person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- To a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without assistance of another person;
- If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in educational activities that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier; or
- While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip-reading movements is important.

Schools will not require a health-care provider note (i.e., a doctor's note) to confirm if staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask.

**No students should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask. See Supportive School Environments section for more information.**

## **GENERAL VENTILATION & AIR CIRCULATION**

At this time, there is no evidence that a building’s ventilation system, in good operating condition, would contribute to the spread of the virus. Good indoor air ventilation alone cannot protect people from exposure to COVID-19; however, it may reduce risk when used in addition to other preventive measures.

SD 51 has increased fresh air intake in school by adjusting HVAC systems.

To enhance school ventilation, schools in SD 51 may:

- Move activities outdoor when possible and consider moving classrooms outside when space and weather permit.
- Where possible, open windows if weather permits and HVAC system function will not be negatively impacted.

## **EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION DRILLS**

SD 51 schools will continue to practice emergency and evacuation drills, including the 6 required annual fire drills, and will modify drill procedures to adhere to SD 51 health and safety guidelines (e.g. providing additional muster spots to prevent crowding/congregating).

Other protocols:

- Staff notified in advance of drills (no surprise drills).
- Ensuring drills to be “total evacuation fire drills” involving all occupants as per BC Fire Code.
- Fire safety plans updated to take into account current pandemic protocols, including local public Health Orders.

In place of actual emergency, emergency procedures take precedence over COVID-19 preventive measures.

## **COMMUNICATION & TRAINING/ORIENTATION**

SD 51 schools and departments will provide health and safety orientation for staff (including newly hired staff and staff who change worksites), students and families as needed.

Health and safety guidelines and related resources are available on [SD51 District website](#).

## CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

All curriculum, programs and activities will operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines.

Equipment will be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines in this document. Equipment that touches the mouth (water bottles, instrument mouth pieces, etc.,) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected between use.

Proper hand hygiene will be practiced before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment and whenever hands are dirty.

### FIELD TRIPS

Follow existing policies and procedures as well as guidance in this document. In SD 51, additional measures specific to field trips must be taken, including:

- Follow student transportation guidance in this document.
- Schools will train volunteers providing supervision in SD 51 guidelines and will ensure volunteers strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines.
- Alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- For overnight camps, guidance from BCCDC and BC Camps Association must be followed when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.

### FOOD/CULINARY PROGRAMS

Schools can include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. The following guidelines must be followed:

- Food safety for food and culinary programs.
  - Follow normal food and safety measures and requirements
  - Implement cleaning and disinfecting measures outlined in the *Cleaning & Disinfecting* section of this document.
  - FOODSAFE Level 1 is a helpful resource to ensure food safety and worker safety.
- Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Protocols
  - Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with soap for at least 20 seconds.
  - Students and staff practice diligent hand hygiene in alignment with normal food safety measures and requirements.
  - Refer to *Cleaning & Disinfecting* section for cleaning protocols and laundry.

### FOOD SERVICES

- Schools can continue to provide food services, including for sale.
- Schools can continue to accept food donations to support learning and the delivery of meal programs, breakfast clubs and other food access initiatives.
- School meal programs should follow regular operating practices.
- Food and beverages are not to be shared.

## FUNDRAISERS

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with guidelines outlined in this document. If fundraisers involve the sale of food items, they must align with the [Guidelines for Food & Beverage Sales in BC Schools](#).

## KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM AND ENTRY

- Information about communicable disease prevention measures will be communicated to families and students prior to school start.
- Parents/caregivers must follow visitor guidelines outlined in this document.
- Teach students to learn and practice respecting personal space, recognizing they are unlikely to do this at all times.
- Use gentle reminders and encourage students to kindly support one another.
- Frequently touched items can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after.
- Carpets and rugs may be used.

## MUSIC PROGRAMS

- All K-12 staff and students in grades 4 to 12 must wear masks when indoors and a barrier is not present.
- Masks can be removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g., playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.
- Shared equipment cleaned and disinfected according to Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines.
- Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., instrument music pieces) must be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Music education will be delivered in line with [Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19](#) developed by BC Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in BC.

## SHARED OFFICE SPACE FOR STAFF

The guidelines in this document determine the measures in staff-only spaces within a school.

## PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION(PHE)/OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

- Create space between students and staff and encourage outdoor activities and programs as much as possible.
- K-12 staff and students in grades 4 to 12 must wear masks during PHE/outdoor programs when they are indoors, and a barrier is not present.
- Students do not have to wear a mask during high-intensity activities (e.g. stationary bike, weightlifting, basketball, soccer); mask use during these times left to student's personal choice.
- Move high-intensity physical activities outdoors if possible.
- For low-intensity physical activities (e.g. yoga, walking), students must wear mask if indoors and no barrier present.
- Shared equipment can be used provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section of this document.
  - Students will use proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment and will practice proper respiratory etiquette.
  - Equipment that touches mouth should not be shared (water bottles).

## PLAYGROUNDS

SD 51 playgrounds are a safe environment. There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. The following measures will be used:

- Wash hands before and after outdoor play.
- Try to minimize direct contact between students.
- Sand and water can be used; students must wash hands before and after play.

## SCHOOL LIBRARIES / LEARNING COMMONS

- At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g., children's books or magazines) and items with covers (e.g., DVDs) are low risk items.
- Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal.
- There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.
- For information on cleaning, see guidelines in Cleaning and Disinfecting.
- BC Teacher Librarian Association has developed [Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Common Resources to Meet COVID-19 Requirements](#). If any discrepancy in guidance, SD 51 will follow Ministry of Education guidelines set out in this document.

## SCHOOL SPORTS

Program activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices and games) in SD 51 will comply with the following:

- Requirements of relevant local, regional, provincial public health recommendations and Orders
- K-12 staff, students in grades 4 to 12, and other adults must wear masks when indoors and a barrier is not present.
  - Students do not need to wear masks during high-intensity sport activities; mask wearing is up to student's personal choice.
  - If possible, do high-intensity activities outside.
  - Students do wear masks during low-intensity activities if barrier not present (during stretching, golf, etc.,).
- Shared equipment can be used but must be cleaned and disinfected as per guidelines in this document.
  - Students use proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use as well as proper respiratory etiquette.
  - Water bottles are not to be shared unless cleaned and disinfected.
- Sports activities will be held outside whenever possible.
- See Visitor Access/Community Use section for information on protocols for spectators.
- See the [Return to School Sports Plan from BC School Sports](#) for additional information. Any discrepancy between Return to School Sports Plan from BC School Sports, schools will follow the Ministry of Education guidelines outlined in this document.

## TRADES IN TRAINING PROGRAMS

- Ongoing collaboration and communication with post-secondary institutions for Trades in Training if applicable.
  - Ensure staff and students in K-12 and the post-secondary institution are aware of health and safety measures in place.
  - Diligent student self-assessment when transitioning between school and workplace.
- For Industry Training Authority (ITA), new information can be found at:
  - [WorkSafeBC Communicable Disease Prevention](#) web page, including [COVID-19 and communicable disease information for workers](#).

## THEATRE, FILM AND DANCE PROGRAMS

- Spread out students and staff within available space and encourage outdoor activities and programs as much as possible.
- SD 51 K-12 staff will wear masks during these programs when they are indoors, and a barrier is not present.
- Students in grades 4 to 12 will wear masks during these programs when they are indoors, except during high-intensity physical activity.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section.
- Refer to [ABCDE website](#) for more information from The Association of BC Drama Educators.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Employers must follow current guidelines from [Provincial Health Officer](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#). SD 51 students can engage in work placements, as long as:

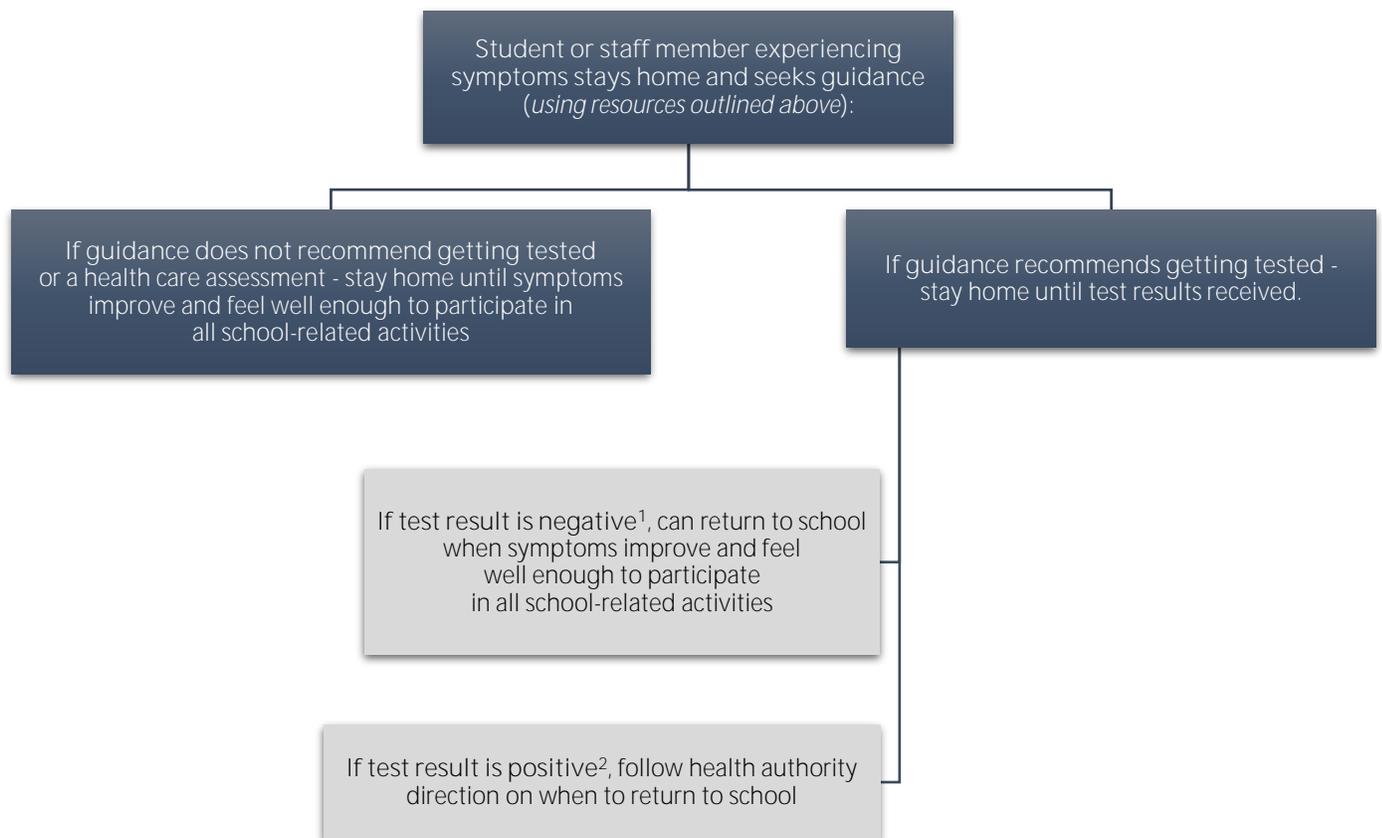
- Students are covered with required, valid workplace insurance as per WorkSafeBC.
  - Information can be found at:
    - [WorkSafeBC Communicable Disease Prevention](#) web page, including [COVID-19 and communicable disease information for workers](#).
- [Ministry Work Experience Program Guide](#) standards are followed.
- Schools will assess and determine it is safe for students to continue or begin a placement, considering SD 51 Health and Safety Guidelines.
  - Schools must obtain parent/guardian sign-off for all new and continuing placements.
- Staff/students accompanying students with special needs will adhere to health and safety guidelines of workplace.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities (in and out of school) and special interest clubs will occur in alignment with the guidelines in this document and requirements of relevant local, regional, provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events.

# Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School

When a student, staff or other adult can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced and if a COVID-19 test is recommended. See the [K-12 Health Check app](#) and BCCDC "[When to get tested for COVID-19](#)" resource for specific guidance. Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online [Self-Assessment Tool](#), or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.



1. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. [BCCDC](#) has information on receiving negative test results.
2. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test. Visit the BCCDC website for more information on [positive test results](#).

# Appendix B: Communicable Disease Plan Orientation Checklist

This checklist is intended to support school districts and independent school authorities in planning ongoing communicable disease orientation for staff (including newly hired staff and staff who changed worksites), other adults (including volunteers and teacher candidates in practicums) and students. Orientation sessions should provide a comprehensive overview of the key principles and guidelines outlined in the resources listed below, as well as information on how these principles and guidelines will be implemented at the school level:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Communicable Disease Prevention: A Guide for Employers](#)
- School/district communicable disease plan

Schools and school districts should ensure their Joint Health and Safety Committee is established prior to the orientation session. At the beginning of the school year, schools/school districts are encouraged to hold Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings more frequently to help identify and address any safety concerns in a timely manner.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

Adopt a trauma-informed approach:

- where possible, have an employee trained in trauma-informed practice deliver some of the orientation
- conduct needs-based assessments and regular 'check-ins' after the orientation session, and provide contact information to students/staff for requesting additional supports
- provide information on how to access counselling services during school start up
- for staff: consider sharing the [Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal](#) webinar link. This free webinar developed by the Ministry of Education is intended to provide teachers, education assistants, and administrators with information, ideas and strategies that they can use to create compassionate spaces for students.

Highlight the process used to develop the school/district plan (e.g., alignment with provincial direction, engagement at the local level) and the provincial guidelines:

- Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., the latest research, guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, and evidence that children are at a lower risk of developing and transmitting COVID-19, K-12 students can safely participate in full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.
- The Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings have been developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the BC Centre for Disease Control, Indigenous rightsholders and education partners, including district/school leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents.
- These guidelines are based on the public health guidance developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

- Discuss the importance of implementing communicable disease prevention measures that promote equity and inclusion, and outline how these principles are reflected in the school/district plan
- Review the provincial K-12 guidelines and school/district plan, and describe what a school day will look like with the new guidelines (e.g. interactions between peers and staff, traffic flow throughout the school, transition time, recess/lunch, etc.)
- Outline how prevention and exposure control measures are being implemented in schools to ensure student and staff safety (see the [Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures](#) section for more information)
- Discuss measures for gatherings and events; provide opportunities for staff and students to put forward alternatives to continue to support events in a different format if needed (e.g., virtual events)
- Discuss preparation for potential transitions (e.g. regional public health order)
- Review school emergency and evacuation procedures (e.g., fire drill) considering relevant guidelines (see the [Emergency and Evacuation Drills](#) section for more information)
- Outline individual responsibilities (e.g., daily health check, stay home if sick, etc.) and remind everyone to do their part (e.g., practice diligent hand hygiene on a regular basis)
- Outline measures in place to support students and staff who are immune compromised
- Implement strategies to ensure staff and students who cannot attend orientation are made aware of communicable disease protocols (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on communicable disease plans)
- Provide enough time and space for staff, students and families to review the school/district communicable disease plan, ask questions, and provide input; provide contact information for any future questions that may arise
- Describe the process to address concerns and suggestions regarding the communicable disease plan (e.g., suggestions to support continuous improvement)
- Outline the process in place to assess and revise the school/district safety plan on an ongoing basis as well as how staff, students and families will be made aware of any changes in the plan
- Communicate proactively and on an ongoing basis about the changes made to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure staff, students and families are informed in a timely manner
- Provide a list of resources and links for more information (e.g., [BCCDC resources](#), [resources from the Government of Canada](#), guidelines developed by provincial associations, [Ministry-developed trauma-informed practice resources](#) or other resources such as [videos from the BC Health Emergency Services](#))

#### CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO STAFF

- Walk staff (administrators, teachers, teachers teaching on call, support staff, itinerant staff, etc.) through what the first days of school will look like to welcome students back
  - If appropriate, consider involving school staff representatives in the delivery of information pertaining to specific area of expertise
- Ensure orientation includes specific communicable disease protocols for itinerant staff and specialists (e.g., teachers teaching on call, counsellors, education assistants, teacher candidates)
- Include itinerant staff as well as on call and auxiliary staff in orientation sessions

- Implement strategies to ensure staff who work at multiple sites are made aware of communicable disease protocols in each of the sites (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on communicable disease plans for different schools)
- Share procedures and contact information in case of emergencies
- Introduce members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee or any other safety representative (along with **their contact information**) and **outline the committee/representative's role in helping maintain a healthy and safe workplace**
- Outline existing processes to address requests, concerns or accommodations related to communicable disease prevention measures.