



# SD51 HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

(updated February 26, 2021)

## INTRODUCTION

### GENERAL INFORMATION

As information on COVID-19 is evolving, up-to-date information on symptoms and prevention can be found on the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) and the [Ministry of Education](#)'s websites.

BC CDC also created a website for [School COVID-19 Information](#) that is easily accessible with lots of frequently asked questions and guidance.

BC is currently in Stage 2 of the BC's Five-Stage Framework and our goal is to maximize in-class instruction for all students while adhering to the [COVID-19 Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#).

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.

### COVID-19 SAFETY PLANS

To ensure continued diligence with school safety plans, school and district administrators must regularly review COVID-19 safety plans and will do so with their Site Health and Safety Committees and address areas where there are identified gaps in implementation using the [COVID-19 School Health & Safety Checklist](#).

In particular, the following key areas will be the focus for schools based on reviews of school exposures to date:

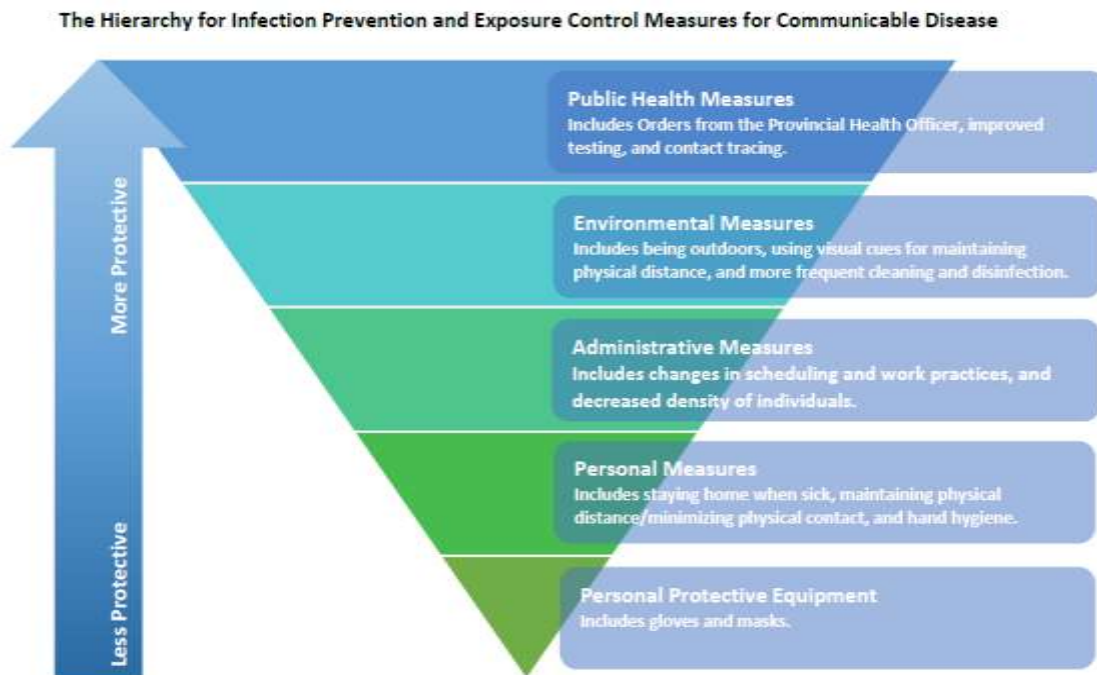
1. Start and end of day, recess, lunch and transition times for students and staff.
2. Avoid close face-to-face contact.
3. Assign staff to specific learning group if possible.
4. Ensure use of masks does NOT reduce or replace critical physical distancing between learning groups and other prevention measures for both staff and students.
5. Ensure prevention measures in place in staff-only areas, including break and meeting rooms.
6. Implement music class according to British Columbia Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in British Columbia [Guidance for Music Classes](#).

## 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 are more effective in settings such as schools where there is a relatively consistent grouping of people and where multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

This includes robust illness policies for sick students and staff, reinforcement and adoption of effective personal practices (diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.) and various health and safety measures, such as enhanced cleaning and disinfecting policies, outdoor spaces for learning, learning groups for staff and students.

The Hierarchy of Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures triangle describes measures to be taken to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Those measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom; therefore, a combination of measures at each level will be implemented to reduce the risk of COVID-19.



## 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.

In line with the K-12 Education Restart Plan's goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all student within current health and safety guidelines for schools, 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. This includes where a student, staff or other adult cannot comply with a specific measure due to health or behavioural reasons – in these circumstances, schools/districts will work with these individuals (and their parents/caregivers, if applicable to a student) to explore other environmental and administrative measures to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

## **LEARNING GROUPS & PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

Reducing the number of close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions an individual has in a day with different people helps prevent the spread of COVID-19. To accomplish this schools will implement two different, but complementary approaches: learning groups and physical distancing.

### **LEARNING GROUPS**

A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term and who primarily interact with each other. It can be made up of a single class of students with their teacher, multiple classes that sometimes join for additional learning activities, or a group of secondary school students with the same course.

In stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact.

The composition of learning groups will remain consistent for all activities that occur in school, so students and staff cannot be part of more than one learning group at the same time. Students and staff can interact with one another while practicing physical distancing.

Learning group composition can be changed at the start of a new term (quarter or semester). Outside of these transition points, composition will be changed as minimally as possible except when required to support optimal school functioning (for example, learning, operational or student health and safety concerns). No additional safety protocols are required following a change in learning composition.

SD 51 school principals/vice principals will keep up-to-date lists of all members of a learning group and others who work with that learning group (i.e., itinerant teachers, TTOCs), and their contact information to support to support swift communications from the school and to share with public health to support contact tracing, if needed.

Consistent seating arrangements are encouraged when practical. This can further reduce the number of close, prolonged face-to-face interactions a person has and will assist public health if contact tracing needs to occur.

In SD 51 elementary schools, a learning group can be composed of up to 60 people. In SD 51 secondary schools, a learning group can be composed of up to 120 people. This learning group is larger because this age group is more capable of consistently minimizing physical contact, practicing good hygiene and ensuring physical distancing.

## INTERACTING WITH LEARNING GROUPS

SD 51 schools will minimize the number of adults (staff and others) who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment. SD 51 staff outside a learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. For example, an itinerant educator (TTOC, Indigenous support worker, teacher candidate, district specialist) can teach/support multiple learning groups but must practice physical distance from students and other staff and avoid close face-to-face interactions.

Unless SD 51 staff members belong to the same learning group, they will maintain physical distance (2m) from one another at all times. Masks are not a replacement for physical distancing between staff from different learning groups.

### SD 51 Elementary Students

- When interacting with peers outside their learning group, students will:
  - Minimize physical contact when outdoors,
  - Maintain physical distance (2m) when indoors. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student will socialize within their learning group or where they can be supported to physically distance.

### SD 51 Secondary Students

- When interacting with students and staff outside their learning group, students will maintain physical distance (2m).
- Secondary students capable of consistently maintaining physical distance, when it is required, will be expected to do so. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student will socialize within their learning group or where they can be supported to physically distance.

### Multi-Learning Group Instruction & Services:

- Students from different learning groups can be in the same learning space at the same time if physical distancing can be maintained and there is adequate space available to prevent crowding of those from within the same learning groups. Masks are not a replacement for physical distancing between students from different learning groups in the same learning space.
- Students from different learning groups may be required to be together to receive beneficial social supports, programs or services (e.g. meal programs, after school clubs, etc.,). Within these supports or services, it is expected that learning groups are maintained, and physical distancing is practiced between learning groups, as much as is practical to do so while ensuring the support, program or service continues.

## ITINERANT STAFF AND SPECIALISTS

SD51 schools will minimize the number of staff who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment.

Staff will be assigned to specific learning groups whenever possible, to help minimize the number of interactions between students and staff, while continuing to support students who may need special assistance.

Staff not assigned to learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group.

If physical distancing cannot be practiced, other measures will be used such as reconfiguring rooms, securing alternate place where physical distancing is possible, installing physical barrier made out of transparent materials, or providing virtual services where possible. If none of these options are available, staff will practice physical distancing as much as possible while providing services.

In addition, all K-12 staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering, or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask will be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools. See *Personal Protective Equipment* section.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing refers to a range of measures aimed at reducing close contact with others. Physical distancing is used as a prevention measure because COVID-19 tends to spread through prolonged, close, face-to-face contact.

- Within learning groups, physical distancing will include avoiding physical contact, minimizing close, prolonged face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the space available.
  - Young children may not be able to consistently reduce physical contact.
- Outside of learning groups, physical distancing will include avoiding physical contact, minimizing close, prolonged face-to-face interactions, spreading out as much as possible within the space available, and ensuring there is 2 meters of space available between people from different learning groups.
- When members of different learning groups interact:
  - If people in same space for extended time (greater than 15 minutes), the space will be sufficiently large, and/or must have limits on the number of people so that 2 m of space is available between people from different learning groups
  - If people will be in the same space for transition purposes (e.g., changing between classes), and other measures are in place (e.g., markings on floor, staggered transition times), there must be enough space to ensure no physical contact, but 2 m physical distancing is not required.
- Within and outside of learning groups there will be no crowding.
- Staff and other adults will seek to reduce the number of close, face-to-face interactions with each other at all times, even if wearing non-medical mask. This includes during break times and in meetings.

Younger students, (Gr K-7) are supported through a respectful expectation that they have minimized physical contact with one another, while older students (Gr 8-12) and adults will maintain a safe physical distance whenever possible.

To support physical distancing requirements, the following strategies will be implemented where possible:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes).
- Regular reminders and encouragement to students about keeping their “hands to yourself”.
- Consider different classroom and learning environment configurations to allow distance between students and adults (e.g. different desk and table formations).
  - Seating arrangements where students directly face one another will be avoided where possible, particularly for secondary students.
  - Use consistent or assigned seating when practical.
  - Store excess equipment.
- Implement strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.
  - Focus on entry and exit areas, and other places where people may gather or crowd.
- Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
  - Ensure learning groups are sent to different outdoor areas to play or muster.
- Take students outside more often for learning activities.
- Learning group *non-contact* sports activities will be organized in a thoughtful way, taking into consideration personal measures.
- Outdoor activities, including playground play, are safe as long as all participants are encouraged to do appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play.
- It is encouraged that facilities like gyms and weight rooms are still used. Teachers choosing to use these spaces must follow the SD51 Cleaning Guidelines.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff.
  - For elementary students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items.
    - Considerations for toys and manipulatives: Individual packaging of toys or manipulatives (i.e. Numeracy learning manipulatives packaged in Ziploc bags for individual or small groups)
    - Fewer toys in a classroom
    - Toys less accessible and possibly placed in bins
    - NO soft toys or stuffies
    - At minimum, any class toy and/or manipulative will be used ONLY by members of the class
  - For secondary students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways. Staggered times of transition amongst learning groups and directional arrows.
- Traffic flow – use directional floor markings and specify learning groups entrances and learning groups transition times to manage traffic flow in a school. DO NOT limit emergency exits.
- Physical barriers – when a person is interacting with individuals outside their learning group (i.e. secretaries), then physical barriers like plexiglass or face shields can be used.
- Parents, caregivers and other non-staff adults must not enter school without permission or an invite.
- All school members as well as visitors must practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distance when they are in the school. Schools will have a sign in sheet to keep track of dates, names and contact information of all visitors.

- Assemblies and other school-wide events will be held virtually or in learning groups to avoid having large numbers of people gathered in one space.

## STAFF ONLY SPACES

Experience to date underscores the importance of COVID-19 prevention among adults, as well as students, in the school setting. SD 51 schools and school districts must ensure physical distancing is practiced within staff only spaces, including during break times, regardless of whether masks are worn or not. To support this, SD 51 schools can implement the following:

- Use floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding (e.g., in the break room, by the photocopies, etc.)
- Hold meetings virtually whenever possible
- Ensure staff practice physical distancing (2m) during face-to-face meetings. Staff are required to wear masks when indoors, unable to maintain physical distance, and a barrier is not present.

WorkSafeBC Guidance for Offices lists measures that will be implemented as applicable to the workplace for staff in office environments (both inside and outside of “bricks and mortar” schools).

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/DIVERSE ABILITIES

SD 51 health and safety measures promote inclusion of students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities with supports and services, including ongoing discussion on needs assessments to better understand what students and/or families need.

Students who may not be able to physically distance will not be excluded from a learning group. Prevention and exposure measures will be implemented to support students to access learning. Learning groups must be established in a manner that allows for implementation of IEPs, respects the principles of equity and inclusion and does not result in segregated learning environments.

Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at a greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19.

When staff are working with a student indoors, physical distancing cannot be maintained, 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 routine.

If students need to see facial expressions and/or lip movements and physical distancing cannot be maintained, staff will wear a mask with a transparent section to let students see the mouth.

- If in elementary school, the student or caregiver determines if student wears a mask.
- If in secondary school, students are also required to wear a non-medical mask, face covering when receiving services indoors, in close proximity and where there is no barrier between student and staff.

In addition to a non-medical mask, those providing health or education services that require being in

close proximity to a student will follow their standard risk assessment methods to determine if additional PPE is required, according with routine practices.

Exceptions will be made for staff and students who cannot wear masks for health or behavioural reasons. For more information, see the Personal Protective Equipment section.

## SCHOOL GATHERINGS

School gatherings will be kept to minimum and, where possible, virtual alternatives will be used.

When necessary to gather, please ensure:

- Gather within learning groups
  - Adequate space must be available to prevent crowding.
- Staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, and other staff-only gatherings will be held virtually whenever possible.
  - If meeting in-person, must physically distance (2m) for face-to-face interactions.
  - If cannot physically distance and barrier not present, wear masks.
- Number of participants and length of gathering must be minimized.

Examinations or assessments are NOT considered school gatherings; however, they must still be delivered in according to SD 51 health and safety guidelines.

In-person inter-school events, including competitions, festivals, tournaments, are not allowed.

**Gatherings or events** at a school, including social gatherings of students and/or staff that aren't educational activities or support services, must adhere to PHO Order for Gatherings and Events.

## PERSONAL ITEMS

Staff and students are only to bring items that are necessary. Items brought regularly to and from school will be limited to those that can be easily cleaned.

Students can use lockers. If lockers must be shared, then schools must ensure students within same learning group share.

Personal items as well as food and beverage are not to be shared.

No homemade food items are to be available to other students. Please note that different guidelines apply to food that is prepared in school which are outlined in *Curriculum, Programs and Activities* section.



## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ON BUSES

Buses used for transporting students will be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in [BC CDC's Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#).

Bus drivers will wear a non-medical mask, face covering or face shield (with non-medical mask in addition) on school buses except while driving or able to maintain physical distance (2 m). Exceptions will also be made for bus drivers who cannot tolerate masks for health or behavioural reasons.

Parents/caregivers must assess child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. See *Daily Health Check* section.

**If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school.**

Additional measures will be taken, including:

- Encouraging private vehicle use where possible to decrease transportation density.
- Students should clean their hands at home to take the bus, when they leave the school prior to taking bus, and when they get home.
- Where possible, bus line up areas will be set up to prevent crowding and allow for physical distancing of 2m where required.
- **Secondary students will wear a non-medical mask when on the bus whether daily riders or daytime riders for field trips.** Masks must be donned before boarding. They may wear their own mask, or one will be provided by the bus driver. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for health or behavioural reasons.
- Elementary students mask use is based on their personal or family/caregiver's choice.
- Students are expected to sit in their assigned seating.
- Seats are loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
- Students from the same household or learning groups may share seats if space is limited.
- School district bus drivers will keep an up-to-date passenger manifest in case contact tracing needs to occur. They will check off names of riders and submit this to Nicole Reid at Board Office weekly.
- Open windows when weather permits.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

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 do the following:

- Use of 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 of 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 and disinfecting of the premises at least once every 24 hours.
  - This includes single use items like individual desks.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces at least twice every 24 hours, including at least once during regular school hours.
  - Frequently touched surfaces include doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks & chairs used by multiple students, keyboards and toys.
- Cleaning and disinfecting any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Garbage containers emptied daily.

No additional cleaning and disinfecting are required when different learning groups use the same space or equipment, or when the composition of a learning group changes at the end of a school term, beyond the cleaning and disinfecting procedures outlined above.

**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 and staff will be encouraged to bring an individual, filled water-bottle or other beverage containers to school each day for their personal use.
  - Re-filling water stations can be used to re-fill personal containers. These will not include washroom sinks.
  - Water fountains where a person drinks directly from the spout will be used minimally, and only if no other means of water access is available. Hand hygiene will be practiced before and after use.
  - **Access to water and to washrooms will not be restricted.**
- 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)

Limit frequently touched items that are not easily cleaned to those that support learning, health and development.

Some frequently touched items like toys or manipulatives may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g., fabrics) or at all (e.g., sand, foam, playdough, etc.). These items can continue to be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.

**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 no shake dirty items
- Wearing gloves optional. If wear gloves, ensure proper hand hygiene performed before and other use.

#### VISITOR ACCESS/COMMUNITY USE

Visitor access during school hours are limited to supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being.

- Parents/caregivers and other visitors must maintain physical distance and avoid crowding when outside
- Schools will inform visitors of health and safety requirements before entering school
- Schools will ask visitors to confirm they are not ill and are not required to self-isolate before entering
  - This will also be done during sign-in
- Schools will have a list of date, names, and contact information for all visitors and staff (itinerant, TTOC, maintenance or IT personnel, district/authority administration) who have entered school in past 30 days

- All visitors will wear a non-medical mask when inside school. Exceptions will be made for visitors who cannot tolerate masks for health or behavioural reasons.
- Adult volunteers can provide outdoor supervision/monitoring provided they follow required health and safety protocols (e.g. maintain physical distancing or wear a mask when cannot).

After hours community use of facilities has been suspended until further notice.

## **ILLNESS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOL**

If students become 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 until pick up possible.

Supervising staff will wear non-medical mask and face shield if they cannot physically distance. They will avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible and practice diligent hand hygiene.

### **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. Symptoms of COVID-19 can be mild and are similar to other respiratory infections. **Most people in BC with these symptoms do not have COVID-19.**

**Schools must communicate consistently to families about not sending children to school sick.**

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).

Staff must complete a Daily Health Check that is emailed to them daily BEFORE entering any SD 51 school/work site.

- If you answer yes to any of the questions, you may not come to work. Please call your supervisor to inform them you are sick.

**If a student or staff is sick, they must not enter a school or worksite.**

### **STAY HOME WHEN REQUIRED TO SELF-ISOLATE**

The following students, staff or other adults must stay home and self-isolate:

- A person confirmed by health authority as testing positive of COVID-19,
- A person confirmed by health authority as close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19; or
- A person has travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days.

A person who has been tested for COVID-19 **must stay home** while they are waiting for test results.

Anyone required to self-isolate will be contacted, directed and supported by public health. Additional information 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 used 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. If the guidance given does not recommend a test or a health-care assessment, stay home until symptoms improve and you feel well enough to participate. If guidance recommends getting tested, stay home until results received. If results negative, return to school when symptoms improve and feel well enough to participate. If results positive, follow health authority direction about when to return to school. Please see Appendix B – COVID 19 Symptoms, Testing, & Return to School 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 not 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.

**There is no role for staff of SD51 to screen students or other staff for symptoms, to check temperatures, or to recommend COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals.**

## PROTOCOLS FOR MANAGING ILLNESS AND CONFIRMED CASES AT SCHOOL

If a student, staff or other individual who has been in school is a confirmed case of COVID-19 through testing or investigation (i.e. case finding), the local health authority will initiate contact tracing to determine how they were infected and who else may have been at risk of infections.

If there was a potential exposure at a school (i.e. the confirmed case attended school when they may have been potentially infectious), the health authority will work with the school/school district to understand who may have been exposed, and to determine what actions will be taken, including identifying if other students or staff are sick (case finding) or have been exposed and will monitor for

symptoms or self-isolate. If there was no potential exposure at school (i.e. the confirmed case did not attend school when they may have been potentially infectious), the health authority will not notify the school/school district.

**Students and staff are only required to self-isolate if directed to do so by health authority staff – this includes members of the learning group of the confirmed case.**

Personal privacy rights will be maintained. Public health will not disclose that a student or staff member is a confirmed case of COVID-19 unless there is reason to believe they may have been infectious when they attended school. In this case, public health will provide only the information required to support effective contact tracing and only to the school administrator or delegate. Public health will notify everyone who they determine may have been exposed, including if any follow-up actions are recommended (e.g. self-isolate, monitor for symptoms, etc.). They will work with the school administrator to determine if additional notifications are warranted (e.g. notification to the broader school community).

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, and that the information provided is complete and correct, school administrators or staff will not provide notifications to staff or students' families about potential or confirmed COVID-19 cases unless the school administrator is directed to do so by the Interior Health medical officer.

Managing clusters of COVID-19 when multiple confirmed linked cases of COVID-19 occur among students and/or staff within a 14 day period (a cluster), public health, under the direction of the Interior Health medical officer will investigate to determine if additional measures are required to prevent further transmission of COVID-19. The Interior Health medical officer will advise schools if additional prevention measures are needed.

COVID-19 outbreaks in schools' cases and clusters of COVID-19 are expected in school settings, given that COVID-19 is circulating in the community. These occurrences are not considered outbreaks. The declaration of an outbreak of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease in a school setting is at the discretion of the Interior Health medical officer. This is expected to occur rarely, and only when exceptional measures are needed to control transmission.

## **TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

Trauma-informed practice is an informed way of approaching your practice through a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events. Trauma-informed practice includes:

- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments
- Understanding coping strategies
- Supporting independence
- Helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual student needs

To support educators, the Ministry of Education has created trauma-informed practice resources that are available on the [ERASE](#) website.

The Ministry has also developed a [webinar series](#) to support educators as they navigate through times of uncertainty and change. The first webinar, Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal, provides educators with information, ideas and strategies they can use to create compassionate spaces for students, especially when the classroom environment is ever-changing.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) offers a wide range of social emotional learning resources, including [Reunite, Renew, Thrive: A Social Emotional Learning Roadmap for Reopening Schools](#) that outlines a roadmap to implement SEL practices throughout the school year, for both educators and administrators. A [new resource](#) was released in January 2021 as well.

## HAND HYGIENE

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

- Wash 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. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
- 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.
- To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the [BCCDC's hand washing poster](#).
- 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.

## 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)

PPE, including masks, are the lowest level on the hierarchy of infection prevention and exposure control measures. It can provide an additional layer of protection when more effective measures are not feasible. Non-medical masks and face coverings (hereafter referred to as masks) have a role to

play in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and provide some protection to the wearer and those around them.

Those wearing masks must still maintain physical distancing wherever possible. There must be no crowding or congregating of people, even if masks are worn.

Masks will not be used in place of other safety measures. For example, if delivering instruction to more than one learning group, masks do NOT replace the need for physical distancing.

#### K-12 STAFF

All K-12 staff are required to wear non-medical masks in schools – both within and outside their learning group, except when

- Sitting in/standing at their workstation/desk, or while maintaining physical distance (2m), in classroom/learning environment;
- There is a barrier in place;
- Eating and drinking; or
- Outdoors.

All K-12 staff must wear masks on school buses. Mask use outdoors is personal choice.

In “staff only spaces”, staff will wear masks when indoors, unable to maintain physical distance (2m), and a barrier is not present. [WorkSafeBC](#) guidance for offices also lists measures to be considered and implemented as applicable to workplace for staff in office environments (both inside and outside of “bricks and mortar” schools).

Exceptions will also be made for staff who cannot tolerate masks (e.g. health or behavioural reasons). Schools will not require a health-provider note.

#### SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

All secondary students are required to wear non-medical masks in schools – both within and outside their learning group, except when

- Sitting in/standing at their workstation/desk (including shared tables), or while maintain physical distance (2m), in a classroom/learning environment;
  - While this exception applies regardless of the physical distance between students or their specific seating configuration, schools should configure classrooms and learning environments to maximize distance between students and avoid face-to-face seating arrangements where possible.
- There is a barrier in place;
- Eating and drinking; or
- Outdoors.

All secondary students are required to wear a mask on school buses. Mask use outdoors is personal choice.



Exceptions will also be made for students who cannot tolerate masks (e.g. health or behavioural reasons). Schools will not require a health-provider note.

Additional guidance for mask use during specific activities in secondary schools is detailed in the *Music Programs, Physical Education/Outdoor Education Programs, School Sports and Theatre, Film and Dance Programs* sections of this document.

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

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Elementary school students are not required to wear a mask in schools or on school buses. Mask use for these students is based on their personal or family/caregiver choice, and their choices must be respected.

- Masks are not for elementary school students based on international evidence regarding younger children's capacity to comply with the correct use of masks (e.g., frequent touching/removal of mask, wearing mask incorrectly) and potential impact of mask wearing on learning and development.

Non-medical masks are available for staff and students, including anyone who becomes sick at school.

**The use of masks does not reduce or replace other more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in school such as:**

- **Students and staff staying home when sick**
- **Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting**
- **Placing staff and students in learning groups**
- **Adapting learning environments to maximize use of space**
- **Ensuring physical distancing can be maintained between learning groups**
- **Frequent hand hygiene**

**These measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of transmission.**

Supporting students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care may require staff providing health services or other health care providers to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune suppressed student.

- People providing these services should wear a mask (medical or non-medical) when providing services and physical distance cannot be provided, or the service cannot be provided from behind a physical barrier. Additional PPE above and beyond that needed for routine practices and the use of medical or non-medical mask is not necessary.
- Those providing health services in school may be receiving different guidance related to PPE from their regulatory college or employer. Health service providers are encouraged to work with their employer to confirm what PPE is recommended for the services they provide in school settings.

If working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movement is important, see *Supporting Students With Disabilities/Diverse Abilities* section.

## VISITORS

All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when inside school. Exceptions will be made for visitors who cannot tolerate masks for health or behavioural reasons. **Medical masks are not required within school settings for general use.**

## 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.

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.

Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines in this document. Students will be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music program and music equipment use.

In-person inter-school events such as competitions, tournaments and festivals are not allowed at this time. If possible, use virtual alternatives.

For information on mask requirements for K-12 staff and secondary students, please see the *Personal Protective Equipment* section. Additional guidance for mask use during specific activities in secondary schools is detailed in the *Music Programs, Physical Education/Outdoor Education Programs, School Sports and Theatre, Film and Dance Programs* sections of this document.

#### ARTS EDUCATION

- Students and staff practice diligent hand hygiene (wash hand with soap for at least 20 seconds):
  - Beginning and end of class
  - Before and after handling shared equipment
  - Whenever hands visibly dirty
  
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible
  - Avoid sharing equipment if possible
  - Clean and disinfect equipment as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
  - Have students leave personal items in designated areas such as marked side of room
  - Demonstrations and instructions: ensure appropriate space is available for all students to view and understand demonstrations
    - If needed, break class into smaller groups

#### FIELD TRIPS

Follow existing policies and procedures as well as COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. In SD 51, additional measures specific to field trips must be taken, including:

- Field trip locations must provide supervisors with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it doesn't conflict district's plan. The field trip supervisor must share plan with parents and administration.
- Parent volunteer for driving groups of students is not permitted.
- Schools will train volunteers providing supervision in SD 51 guidelines and will ensure volunteers adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines, including wearing masks.
- Field trips will adhere to PHO guidance and Orders.
- Outdoor locations are preferred.
- Risk assessment must be done considering field trip location in regard to SD 51 health and safety guidelines.
- No overnight or international field trips at this time.

## FOOD/CULINARY PROGRAMS

Schools can include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. It is recommended that learning groups be used. 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
    - Beginning and end of class
    - Before and after handling food
    - Before and after handling shared equipment
    - Whenever hands visibly dirty
  - 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.

No homemade food items available to other students are allowed at school to be shared or sold.

Please see appendix D for additional information.

## FUNDRAISERS

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with SD 51 health and safety guidelines. 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

Students transitioning into Kindergarten will need additional time to adjust to the new school environment and develop relationships with educators and peers in the context of COVID-19.

- Use pre-transition strategies to familiarize students with people, spaces and expectations when they start school.
- Provide clear, simple communication to parents about limiting number of adults in building and classroom.
- Implement gradual entry.
- Use photos and/or newsletters to keep parents informed about activities.
- Minimize physical contact through room configuration and furniture arrangement.

- Give clear expectations for classroom materials, play and physical contact. Use gentle reminders and encourage students to kindly support one another.
- Teachers will continue to provide comfort and reassurance in a way that feels comfortable for teacher and student. Students can be comforted through different means, including:
  - Stories, comfort objects, drink of water, songs, soothing words
- Maintain focus on play-based learning while limiting use of shared materials. Follow protocols outlined in *Cleaning and Disinfecting section*.

## MUSIC PROGRAMS

- All classes, programs and activities can continue to occur where:
  - All K-12 staff and secondary students wear masks while singing indoors.
  - Under Stage 2:
    - Physical contact will be minimized for those within the same learning groups, and students and staff are spaced as far apart as possible.
    - Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for K-12 staff and for secondary students when interacting outside their learning groups.
    - Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside their learning groups when indoors.
- Use barriers made of transparent material in places physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- No in-person inter-school competitions/performances/events allowed.
- Shared equipment cleaned and disinfected according to Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines.
- Students must practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.
- 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

[WorkSafeBC Guidance for Offices](#) lists measures to be followed in all adult-only settings including inside and outside “bricks and mortar schools”. Learning groups (cohorts) cannot be applied to adult-only settings.

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

Create space between students and staff and encourage outdoor activities and programs as much as possible.

- SD 51 K-12 educators will plan physical activities that:
  - Do not involve prolonged physical contact or crowding
    - For example, tag-foot ball and tag are low-risk
    - For example, wrestling or partner dancing will be avoided
    - Teachers encouraged to adapt activities where possible to reduce physical contact, including within learning groups.
  - Support physical distancing (2m) outside learning groups.

- SD 51 K-12 staff must wear masks during PHE/outdoor programs when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m), and a barrier is not present.
- Shared equipment can be used provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section of this document.
- Refer to Physical and Health Education [PHE Canada](#) guidelines for ideas on including more individual pursuits than team activities. Explore local parks and green spaces to promote outdoor learning and activity.

In elementary schools, Physical Education and outdoor programs can proceed in alignment with the guidance above.

In secondary schools, PE and outdoor activities can proceed in alignment with the guidance above AND the following additional requirements:

### **High Intensity Physical Activities**

- For high intensity stationary physical activities (e.g., exercise bike, weightlifting), people and equipment need to be 2 meters apart if indoors, including for those within the same learning group. If 2 metre spacing not available and the activity cannot be moved outdoors, then the activity must not take place and a different activity selected.
  - Masks cannot replace the need for 2 metres between students and/or fitness equipment during high intensity stationary activities indoors.
- For high intensity physical activities that involve movement (e.g., basketball, soccer), indoors or outdoors:
  - Student within the same learning group are not required to maintain physical distancing, but the activity must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
  - Students from different learning groups are required to maintain physical distancing (2m).
- Wearing masks during high-intensity exercise (stationary or with movement, indoors or outdoors) is left to students' personal choice.

### **Low Intensity Physical Activities**

- For low intensity exercise activities, secondary students must wear masks when indoors, if unable to maintain physical distancing (2m) and a barrier is not present.

As a general rule, high intensity physical activities involve sustained heavier breathing and elevated heart rates – most people engaged in these activities cannot say more than a few words without having to catch their breath. In contrast, most people engaged in low intensity physical activities can carry on a conversation without having to catch their breath.

Why aren't masks required during high intensity physical activity in secondary schools? During high intensity physical activity, respiration rates are increased (resulting in a wet mask) and the wearer is more likely to touch their face and adjust the mask frequently. These factors lessen the protective value a mask may offer. In addition, a wet mask is more difficult to breathe through; those who choose to wear a mask during high intensity activities should change them as soon as they become wet.

## 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

- School libraries/learning commons are open and book exchanges can occur.
- Staff and students must wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds:
  - Before and after handling shared equipment/resources
  - Whenever hands are dirty
- When in library or learning commons, students and staff will be in learning groups as much as possible.
- BC Teacher Librarian Association has developed [Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Common Resources to Meet COVID-19 Requirements](#).

**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.**

## SCHOOL SPORTS

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

- No prolonged physical contact. Adapt any activities to reduce physical contact.
- No spectators in attendance.
- K-12 staff and other adults must wear masks when indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m) and a barrier is not present.
- In elementary schools:
  - Students within the same learning group are not required to maintain physical distancing, but activities must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
  - Students from different learning groups are required to maintain physical distancing (2m) when indoors. When outdoors, activities must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.

In secondary schools:

### **High Intensity Physical Activities**

- For high intensity stationary physical activities (e.g., exercise bike, weightlifting), people and equipment need to be 2 meters apart if indoors, including for those within the same learning group. If 2 metre spacing not available and the activity cannot be moved outdoors, then the activity must not take place and a different activity selected.
  - Masks cannot replace the need for 2 metres between students and/or fitness equipment during high intensity stationary activities indoors.
- For high intensity physical activities that involve movement (e.g., basketball, soccer), indoors or outdoors:
  - Student within the same learning group are not required to maintain physical distancing, but the activity must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
  - Students from different learning groups are required to maintain physical distancing (2m).
- Wearing masks during high-intensity exercise (stationary or with movement, indoors or outdoors) is left to students' personal choice.

### **Low Intensity Physical Activities**

- For low intensity exercise activities, secondary students must wear masks when indoors, if unable to maintain physical distancing (2m) and a barrier is not present.

As a general rule, high intensity physical activities involve sustained heavier breathing and elevated heart rates – most people engaged in these activities cannot say more than a few words without having to catch their breath. In contrast, most people engaged in low intensity physical activities can carry on a conversation without having to catch their breath.

Why aren't masks required during high intensity physical activity in secondary schools? During high intensity physical activity, respiration rates are increased (resulting in a wet mask) and the wearer is more likely to touch their face and adjust the mask frequently. These factors lessen the protective value a mask may offer. In addition, a wet mask is more difficult to breathe through; those who choose to wear a mask during high intensity activities should change them as soon as they become wet.

- 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.
  - Disinfect teaching aids.
- Sports activities will be held outside whenever possible
- No in-person inter-school competitions/events allowed.
- 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.



## STEM PROGRAMS/SCIENCE LABS

- Students and staff practice diligent hand hygiene (wash hand with soap for at least 20 seconds):
  - Beginning and end of class
  - Before and after handling shared equipment
  - Whenever hands visibly dirty
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible
  - Avoid sharing equipment if possible
  - Clean and disinfect equipment as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
  - Have students leave personal items in designated areas such as marked side of room
  - Demonstrations and instructions: ensure appropriate space is available for all students to view and understand demonstrations
    - If needed, break class into smaller groups

## TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (SHOP CLASSES & TRADES IN TRAINING PROGRAMS)

- Students and staff practice diligent hand hygiene (wash hand with soap for at least 20 seconds):
  - Beginning and end of class
  - Before and after handling shared equipment
  - Whenever hands visibly dirty
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible
  - Avoid sharing equipment if possible
  - Clean and disinfect equipment as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
  - Have students leave personal items in designated areas such as marked side of room
- Demonstrations and instructions: ensure appropriate space is available for all students to view and understand demonstrations
  - If needed, break class into smaller groups
- 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 (ITA0, new information can be found at:
  - [WorkSafeBC COVID-19](#) web page, including
    - [What workers should do](#)
    - [Staying safe at work](#)
    - [Information specific to various industries](#)

## TEXTILES PROGRAMS

- Students and staff practice diligent hand hygiene (wash hand with soap for at least 20 seconds):
  - Beginning and end of class
  - Before and after handling shared equipment
  - Whenever hands visibly dirty
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible
  - Avoid sharing equipment if possible
  - Clean and disinfect equipment as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
  - Have students leave personal items in designated areas such as marked side of room
  - Demonstrations and instructions: ensure appropriate space is available for all students to view and understand demonstrations
    - If needed, break class into smaller groups

## THEATRE, FILM AND DANCE PROGRAMS

- No in-person inter-school festivals/events allowed.
- Dance and drama will minimize contact by reorganizing warmups, exercises, performance work into smaller groups that allow for physical distancing
  - Some of the class may watch as audience then switch
- Blocking of scenes and dance numbers must limit physical touch and face-to-face interactions.
- SD 51 K-12 staff and secondary students will wear masks during these programs when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m) and a barrier is not present.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected as per guidelines in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
- Costume items will be limited in shared use. Follow laundry instructions provided in *Cleaning and Disinfecting* section
- Use outdoors as much as possible
- Consider alternatives for audience engagement such as online streaming.
- 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 covered with required, valid workplace insurance as per WorkSafeBC
  - Information can be found at:
    - [WorkSafeBC COVID-19](#) web page, including
      - [What workers should do](#)
      - [Staying safe at work](#)
      - [Information specific to various industries](#)
- [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 and special interest clubs must

- Ensure physical distancing can be maintained between members of different learning groups
- Reduced physical contact practiced by those within same learning groups and adequate space is provided to avoid crowding.

Dances, performances, and in-person celebrations are considered events and must follow PHO Gathering and Events Order.

In-person inter-school events such as competitions, tournaments and festivals, are not permitted.

## **SD51 ELEMENTARY CONTROLS AND PROTOCOLS**

**\*These must be adhered to for safety of all individuals at elementary school sites**

### **MASKING PROTOCOLS**

All K-12 staff are required to wear non-medical masks in schools – both within and outside their learning group, except when

- Sitting in/standing at their workstation/desk in a classroom or learning space
- There is a barrier in place
- Eating and drinking
- Outdoors.

Exceptions will also be made for staff who cannot tolerate masks (e.g. health or behavioural reasons). Schools will not require a health-provider note. Other safety measures will be used to accommodate.

**Elementary students are not required to wear masks.**

### **STAFF ONLY SPACES**

Physical distancing must be practiced within staff only spaces (photocopy rooms, break rooms, staff rooms), regardless of whether or not masks are worn.

- Use floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding in staff only areas.
- Hold meetings virtually if possible.

### **MOVEMENT/HYGIENE ON-SITE**

- Students clean their hands for 20 seconds with soap or hand sanitizer (with at least 60-70% alcohol) **BEFORE** leaving their home or leaving the bus. **Parents dropping or picking up their children are asked to do so as close to school bell times as possible.**
- Upon arrival at school, students are expected to follow the school's protocol on where to muster and wait for their teacher. Individual school protocols will be communicated to parents and will include learning group measures.

- In elementary schools, teachers will meet their students at muster stations. Then teachers will guide their students to the exterior door of their classroom. If they do not have an exterior classroom door, they will enter through one of the main entrance doors closest to their classroom.
- Upon entry, students will maintain minimal physical distancing and patiently wait to clean their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water OR hand sanitizer.
- Students will be assigned seating. These seats are the only place students sit unless otherwise directed by the teacher.
- **If students transition to other parts of the building, they will do so only with teacher permission.** When students travel throughout the building, they must follow directional arrows on the floor and maintain physical distancing of 1 to 2 m.
- Anytime a student transitions inside or outside the building, uses the bathroom, sneezes or touches items that have potentially been touched by others, they must clean their hands for 20 seconds.
- Students are required to clean their hands before they leave for the end of the day.

#### STRUCTURAL

- Schools will have directional arrows and 2-metre incremental lines to maintain physical distancing.
- **Learning groups may have staggered lunches & breaks.** Students will be monitored by a district employee. Teachers are not on duty during lunch, unless there is a safety issue in which the Principal may direct teachers to help cover lunch break.
- Learning groups will be directed to specific areas outside the school to play to reduce cross socialization.
- Students will not share food, water bottles, personal items, etc.
- Students supplies/equipment will be labelled with their full name and may be left at the student's workstation.
- Students are NOT to share personal items like stuffies.
- There will be washrooms assigned to learning cohorts.
- No more than one student will be allowed in a washroom at a time. Students will line up 2-metres apart. Spacing dots will be installed. A green/red – stop/go marker will be placed on the floor of each washroom. RED indicates IT IS NOT OPEN. Students must obey this sign.
- Water fountains will not be available; *however, water fillers will be.* Students and staff will bring water bottles to school preferably filled.
- It is recommended that Prep teachers supporting multiple cohorts provide Prep time in the Regular teachers' classroom.
- Staff must physically distance in staff rooms even if wearing a mask.
- Parents that drop off and pick up their children are asked to leave the school grounds promptly and not to socialize on school grounds.
- **Parents and guardians must make an appointment to enter school or be invited to attend a meeting at the school.** Please do not enter classrooms.

#### CLEANING

- High touch areas like doorknobs will be disinfected twice every 24 hours on school days.
- There will be a full clean at the end of each school day.

- Each class with a sink and running water will have soap and paper towels to dry hands. Classes without running water will have hand sanitizer. People will clean hands for minimum of 20 seconds. (Happy Birthday 2X)
- Larger schools will have a hydrogen peroxide mister terminal cleaner. This device sprays all surfaces efficiently and ensures all surfaces (nooks and crannies) are covered. The liquid hydrogen peroxide disinfectant solution kills all virus within 5 minutes – allow to dry to be most effective. All schools have manual misting units.
- All classes will be provided with a spray bottle of hydrogen peroxide so teachers can spray high touch surfaces. Teachers or EA's will spray on surfaces and let dry to be most effective.
- Teachers are responsible to ensure instructional items (i.e. manipulatives, toys) are cleaned as required. Learning groups, small group work and placing manipulatives into Ziploc bags will reduce the urgency of cleaning instructional items.
- Students will clean their hands before and after activities.

***Please recognize that the focus is minimizing student contact in a kind and respectful way. It is ok to structure small group interactions. Students who are grouped together should play or work in the same small groups through the day. Teachers and EA's will reinforce a hands-off policy (no touching others, hugging or tag).***

## **SD51 SECONDARY CONTROLS AND PROTOCOLS**

**\*These must be adhered to for safety of all individuals at secondary school sites**

### **MASKING PROTOCOLS**

All K-12 staff and secondary students are required to wear non-medical masks in schools – both within and outside their learning group, except when

- Sitting in/standing at their workstation/desk in a classroom or learning space
- There is a barrier in place
- Eating and drinking
- Outdoors.

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

Exceptions will also be made for staff or students who cannot tolerate masks (e.g. health or behavioural reasons). Schools will not require a health-provider note. Other safety measures will be used to accommodate.

### **STAFF ONLY SPACES**

Physical distancing must be practiced within staff only spaces (photocopy rooms, break rooms, staff rooms), regardless of whether or not masks are worn.

- Use floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding in staff only areas.
- Hold meetings virtually if possible

### **MOVEMENT/HYGIENE ON-SITE**

- Students will enter the building through one of the exterior doors assigned to learning groups to reduce the density of students entering the building. This will be communicated by the school principal to students and parents.

- Students will clean their hands *immediately* upon entry to the building at the hand sanitizing or mobile hand cleaning station.
- Students will maintain minimal spacing outside while waiting to enter. Upon entry to the building students will head directly to their first class following directional arrows on the floor while maintaining physical distancing.
- Upon arrival to their classroom, students will be directed to their designated seats.
- If students transition to other parts of the building, they will only do so with teacher permission and a **HALL PASS indicating who their teacher is.**
- **No more than one student will be allowed out of a class to go to the bathroom.** The principal will designate bathrooms and usage protocols (i.e. # of students in a bathroom at once).
- When students travel throughout the building, they must follow directional arrows on the floor and maintain physical distancing according to the horizontal 2-metre taped lines.
- Anytime a student transitions inside the building or outside, uses the bathroom, sneezes or touches items touched by others, they must clean their hands.
- Students are asked to clean their hands as they exit the school.
- **Parents/Guardians/Community Members are NOT to enter the school building.** They must call and make an appointment.

#### STRUCTURAL

- Schools will have directional arrows and 2-metre incremental lines to maintain physical distancing.
- **Learning groups of classes may have staggered start times, lunches & breaks.**
- **Physical contact will not be tolerated.**
- Students are NOT to share personal items.
- Water fountains will not be available; *however, water fillers will be.* Students and staff will bring water bottles to school preferably filled.
- Staff must physically distance in staff-only rooms.
- Parents and guardians are asked to drop off their students and only enter the building if they have made an appointment with the school or received an invite to the school.

#### CLEANING

- High touch areas like doorknobs will be disinfected twice every 24 hours on school days.
- There will be a full clean at the end of each school day.
- GFSS and BCSS will have a hydrogen peroxide mister terminal cleaner. This device sprays all surfaces efficiently and ensures all surfaces are covered. The liquid hydrogen peroxide kills all viruses within 5 minutes – allow to dry to be most effective.
- Each class with a sink and running water will have soap and paper towels to dry hands. Classes without running water will have hand sanitizer.
- All classes will be provided with a spray bottle of hydrogen peroxide so teachers can spray high touch surfaces. Teachers or EA's will spray surfaces and let dry to be most effective.

**Guidelines pertaining to specific programs as outlined in SD 51 Health and Safety Guidelines must be followed. This includes Food/Culinary Programs, Food Services, Music Programs, Physical Education, School Libraries/Learning Commons and School Sports.**

## **BUSING SAFETY PROTOCOLS 2020**

### **BUS DRIVER PROTECTION:**

- Use facility procedure protocols when coming to the bus garage.
- Use recommended hygiene procedures.
- Cleaning supplies
  - Drivers each have their own spray bottle and rags stored in a secure location in the bus
  - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after using all shared cleaning supplies
- Personal Measures: maintaining physical distance, use of face shields if requested, use masks or bandanas, washing or hand sanitizing your hands frequently, practicing appropriate coughing/sneezing etiquette, and staying at home if necessary. (check Appendix E)

### **STUDENT PROTECTION:**

- Use hand sanitizer at the entrances to the buses before getting on the bus.
- Place numbered stickers on the seats indicating where students can sit.
- Students seats will be staggered down the rows if possible.
- **Secondary students will wear a non-surgical mask when on the bus.** They may wear their own mask, or one will be provided by the bus driver. Students will not be required to wear a mask if they have a physical or behavioural reason that prevents them from doing so. Alternate safety measure accommodations will be used.
- **Students MUST be registered to a bus route to ride that bus.**
- Students will remain in their seats and remain in their designated space.
- High touch points are disinfected by driver in between each run.
- Entire bus is wiped down and cleaned with a disinfectant at the end of the day.
- No eating anything on the bus
- Parents must do a symptom check before students get on bus.
- If elementary student exhibits COVID 19 symptoms on the bus, they will be asked to wear a mask. Bus drivers will let school personnel know there is a concern.
- Bus drivers will document who rode the bus weekly & submit this to Nicole Reid at SBO.

### **LOADING AND UNLOADING:**

- Students will be asked to stand on spacing dots in a line when loading from the school.
- One student at top of stairwell, before next student boards.
- Students load rear to front, working their way forward filling seats in order to avoid passing other students on the bus.
- Unload from the front first, working their way backwards in order to avoid passing other students on the bus.
- Once unloaded the students will follow the school's protocols.

### **PROCEDURE AROUND RIDING THE BUS AND IF NOT FOLLOWING SAFETY PROTOCOLS:**

- Clearly communicate with parents and caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.
- If not following the safety protocols of sending healthy students, practicing safe hygiene or other items listed above, students will have their privilege of riding the bus revoked.

(SD51 Director of Operations, May 22, 2020)

As an employee of SD51 you need to be aware of COVID 19 WorkSafe regulations. While you are aware of your responsibilities and rights in normal times, it is important to be aware of them in these unprecedented times as well. Please take the time to review WorkSafeBC COVID-19 'Returning to Safe Operation' guidelines below:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/education>

Our district H&S protocols require all staff to perform a daily health check before coming to work each day before entering any SD51 site. You will receive an email at your SD 51 email account early each work day with a link. This link is unique to you and cannot be shared. The information will be collected via a webform. The form has four questions to consider, including a list of symptoms that are predictive of COVID-19. Please review questions carefully and then confirm you have completed the health check by clicking the green box "I confirm I have completed the above daily health check". If you answer yes to any questions, DO NOT report to work and inform your supervisor as you normally would when absent.





# Appendix A: Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts

There is a suite of measures that can be implemented in school settings to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. These flow charts have been developed to assist school districts and independent school authorities in navigating the layered approach of environmental and administrative measures available to schools (e.g. organizing students/staff in learning groups, maintaining physical distance, enhancing cleaning and disinfecting protocols, using outdoor space for learning activities, implementing staggered schedules, reinforcing effective personal practices such as diligent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, implementing robust illness policies for students and staff).

School districts and independent school authorities must ensure that all options for the highest level of measures have been explored before moving to the next level. All decisions should be made to prioritize health and safety and in consideration of the best interest of students.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFF (INCLUDING ITINERANT STAFF)

Schools should minimize the number of staff who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment. The following flow chart outlines the considerations to assign staff to a learning group and the steps to take when a staff cannot be assigned to a learning group (e.g. specialist teacher or EA working with multiple learning groups, TTOC).

Level 1: Can the staff member be assigned to a learning group?  
Consider learning group size limits, nature of staff's role and responsibilities, and student needs.

Level 2: If no, can the staff member fulfill their duties while maintaining physical distancing?  
Consider reconfiguring rooms or securing an alternate space.

Level 3: If no, can environmental measures be implemented?  
Consider installing a physical barrier made of transparent materials, or having the staff member provide remote/virtual services.

Level 4: If none of the measures outlined above can be implemented, the staff member should maintain as much physical distance as possible. Also, see the Personal Protective Equipment section for information on mask requirements for all K-12 staff.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Schools and school districts are required to deliver the full breadth of provincial curriculum as outlined in the [Expectations for Each Stage](#). The following flow chart outlines considerations for schools and school districts when planning instructional delivery to students in secondary schools.

1. Organize students and staff into learning groups, considering the following:

a. Can “natural learning groups” be identified through analysis of student enrolment data (students taking the same core subjects and/or electives)?

b. Which courses or programs could be delivered using physical distancing (based on the required learning environment and available space relative to number of students enrolled), and can therefore be excluded from learning group considerations<sup>1</sup>?

2. Create timetables including “in-learning group” and “cross-learning group” classes

a. “In-learning group” class = all students are from the same learning group; students must minimize physical contact.

b. “Cross-learning group” class = students are from different learning groups; students must maintain physical distance (2m)

*Note: See the Personal Protective Equipment section for additional information on mask requirements for middle and secondary students.*

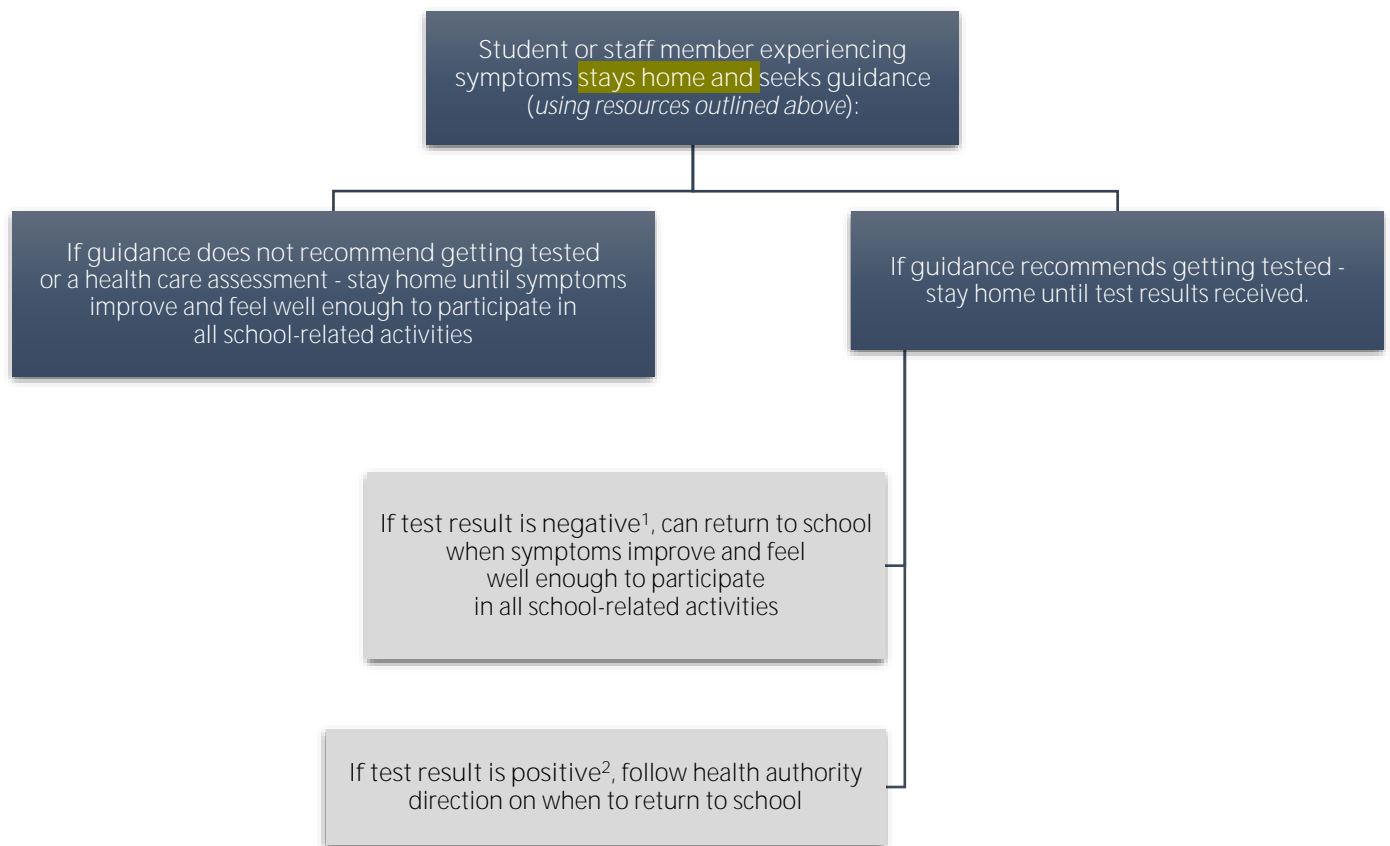
3. Supplement in-class instruction with self-directed or remote learning for those courses/programs that cannot be accommodated via learning group or physical distancing approaches.

Requiring students to wear masks during class is not an acceptable alternative to the use of learning groups or physical distancing.

<sup>1</sup> Within learning groups, minimizing physical contact is the rule. Consider focusing application of learning groups on subject areas that cannot be delivered using physical distancing strategies.

## Appendix B: 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 C: Health & Safety Orientation Checklist

This checklist is intended to support school districts and independent school authorities in planning ongoing health & safety 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 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [BCCDC's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [WorkSafeBC's Education \(K-12\): Protocols for returning to operation](#)
- School/district COVID-19 safety 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 health and 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 health and safety 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 return to full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.
- The Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings have been developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, 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 health and safety measures that promote equity and inclusion, and outline how these principles are reflected in the school/district plan

Review the health and safety guidelines and school/district plan, and describe what a school day will look like with the new guidelines (interactions between peers and staff, traffic flow throughout the school, transition time, recess/lunch, school schedule, etc.)

Outline how comprehensive 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 and the

Prioritizing Health and Safety Flowcharts in the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) for more information)

- Discuss measures for extracurricular activities, as well as school-wide activities 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)
- Review school emergency and evacuation procedures (e.g., fire drill) considering the new health and safety guidelines (e.g. establishing additional muster points to reduce gathering size)
- 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, only bring personal items if they are necessary, specific guidelines for visitors, etc.)
- Outline measures in place to support students and staff who are immunocompromised
- Implement strategies to ensure staff and students who cannot attend orientation are made aware of health and safety protocols (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on COVID-19 safety plans)
- Provide enough time and space for staff, students and families to review the school/district safety 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 COVID-19 safety 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](#) – including a [poster on how to wear a mask](#), [resources from the Government of Canada](#) on how to put on, remove, store and clean a non-medical mask/face covering, 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 health and safety protocols for itinerant staff and specialists (e.g., teachers teaching on call, counsellors, education assistants, teacher candidates) including protocols pertaining to site-based scheduling and access to building
- 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 health and safety protocols in each of the sites (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on COVID-19 safety 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 the process to request and conduct a needs assessment pertaining to health and safety (e.g., implementing additional control measures in a specific setting such as a transparent barrier, signage in the school, etc.)

# Appendix D: Selected Annotated Bibliography

Alberta Government. (2020, August 20). COVID-19 information: Guidance for school re-entry—Scenario 1—Open Government. <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-guidance-school-re-entry-scenario-1>

The Alberta 2020-21 School Re-entry Plan is based on three scenarios: 1. Near-normal conditions (with health measures) 2. Partial in-class learning resumes (with additional health measures) 3. In-school classes suspended/cancelled. This document provides guidance to the Alberta school system for scenario 1. The document includes guidance on health and safety measures, how to support student learning growth, planning for elementary, middle and secondary schools, students with special needs, extracurricular activities and transportation.

CDC. (2020, April 30). Communities, schools, workplaces, & events. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/clean-disinfect-hygiene.html>

Reducing the risk of exposure to coronavirus (or SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19) by cleaning and disinfection is an integral part of reopening schools that will require careful planning.

This guidance is intended to aid school administrators as they consider how to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of students, teachers, other school staff, families, and communities and prepare for educating students this fall.

CDC. (2020, August 28). How to clean and disinfect schools to help slow the spread of flu. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/cleaning.htm>

Cleaning and disinfecting are part of a broad approach to preventing infectious diseases in schools. To help slow the spread of influenza (flu), the first line of defense is getting vaccinated. Other measures include staying home when sick, covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands often. This webpage provides tips on how to slow the spread of flu specifically through cleaning and disinfecting.

CDC. (2020, August 21). Schools and childcare programs. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

The CDC website provides information on measures schools, childcare programs, and families can take to mitigate risk of COVID-19.

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Disinfection of environments in healthcare and nonhealthcare settings potentially contaminated with SARS-CoV-2. ECDC: Stockholm; 2020. [https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Environmental-persistence-of-SARS\\_CoV\\_2-virus-Options-for-cleaning2020-03-26\\_0.pdf](https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Environmental-persistence-of-SARS_CoV_2-virus-Options-for-cleaning2020-03-26_0.pdf)

This document provides guidance to EU/EEA Member States on environmental cleaning in healthcare and nonhealthcare settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Harvard Global Health Institute. (2020, July 20). Path to zero & schools: Achieving pandemic resilient teaching and learning spaces. <https://globalhealth.harvard.edu/path-to-zero-schools-achieving-pandemic-resilient-teaching-and-learning-spaces/>

This document **provides guidance on when it's okay to reopen and how to do it safely in a U.S. context.** The briefing explains how risk incidence levels, the creative adaptation of infection control guidelines for healthy buildings, and national investment in pandemic resilient schools can optimize operations, keep people safe, and restore schools as trusted sites of learning during the pandemic.

Johns Hopkins University. (n.d.). Eschool+ initiative—Ensuring ethics and equity in the pandemic response: Tools and resources for K-12 Schools. Retrieved September 1, 2020, from <https://equityschoolplus.jhu.edu/>

**John Hopkins' Eschool+** initiative provides a selection of resources to help school reopen safely during the pandemic including a tracker for state and national schools re-opening plans, a whitepaper on the ethics of K-12 school re-opening, a Covid-19 school re-opening checklist, and samples of equity-oriented reopening policies.

Jones, E., Young, A., Clevenger, K., Salimifard, P., Wu, E., Lahaie, Luna M., Lahvis, M., Lang, J., Bliss, M., Azimi, P., Cedeno-Laurent, J., Wilson, C., Allen, J. Healthy Schools: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Healthy Buildings program. June, 2020.  
<https://schools.forhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/06/Harvard-Healthy-Buildings-Program-Schools-For-Health-Reopening-Covid19-June2020.pdf>

**Recognizing there is no “zero risk” option, only risk mitigation strategies based** on the best available evidence, and that closing schools comes at an immense social and societal cost, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has compiled a list of best practices for school systems to consider when re-opening during the pandemic divided into five categories: Healthy classrooms, healthy buildings, healthy policies, healthy schedules and healthy activities.

National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools. (2020). Rapid Evidence Review: What is the specific role of daycares and schools in COVID-19 transmission? <https://www.nccmt.ca/knowledge-repositories/covid-19-rapid-evidence-service>.

This rapid review was produced to support public health **decision makers' response to the** COVID-19 pandemic. It seeks to identify, appraise and summarize emerging research evidence to support evidence-informed decision making. This rapid review is based on the most recent research evidence available at the time of release. A previous version was completed on June 26, 2020. This updated version includes evidence available up to July 20, 2020. Key points are that based on evidence to date, young children are not a major source of transmission of Covid-19 and that adults were more likely to transmit the virus to children rather than vice versa.

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2020, August 12). COVID-19 guidance for schools Kindergarten to Grade 12. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/guidance-schools-childcare-programs.html>

Directed to administrators of schools from kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) and local public health authorities (PHAs), this guidance provides information for both public and private institutions providing K-12 education programs in the classroom setting. It takes into consideration the diverse needs of population groups based on



vulnerability, ethnicity/culture, disability, developmental status, and other socioeconomic and demographic factors. The guidance is not prescriptive in nature, rather, it supports administrators and PHA's to consider potential risks and mitigation strategies associated with the resumption of in-school classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Hospital for Sick Children. (2020, July 29). COVID-19: Guidance for School Reopening. <http://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>

This living document is meant to provide information to policy-makers by highlighting paediatric-specific considerations based on our collective experience with children and their families/caregivers. The authors agree bringing children and youth back to school for in-person, full-time learning, with appropriate risk-mitigation **strategies to ensure everyone's safety, is the ultimate goal. This updated document provides additional** considerations for a spectrum of stakeholders as they prepare to return to school. It highlights the need to consider the epidemiology of COVID-19 in decision making and provides recommended health and safety measures, with age and developmental considerations, to support schools in keeping students, staff and their families safe.

World Health Organization (WHO). (2020, May 10). Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19. <https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/considerations-for-school-related-public-health-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19>

WHO has issued guidance on adjusting public health and safety measures while managing the risk of resurgence of cases. A series of annexes has been developed to help guide countries through adjusting various public health measures in different contexts. This annex provides considerations for decision-makers and educators on how or when to reopen or close schools in the context of COVID-19. These decisions have important implications for children, parents or caregivers, teachers and other staff, communities, and society at large. This document was drafted based a review of available literature, discussion with experts, regional partners and country examples. See also the [Q&A: Schools and Covid-19](#)