



SD 51 COVID-19 September 2020 Return to School Parameters and Health Guidance K-12 Settings (updated December 10, 2020)

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Dr. Bonnie Henry and the Ministry of Health, have recommended a full return to school. This direction is supported by Dr. Henry, BC Health and the BCCDC. **The biggest change in their recommendation is that students and staff must be in learning groups.**

“Lowering the number of in-person, close interactions continue to be a key component of B.C.’s strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term. The use of learning groups in schools allows for a significant reduction in the number of individual interactions, while allowing most students to receive in-person learning in a close-to-normal school environment.” *Ministry of Health*

Please go to the [BC Ministry of Educations Restart Plan](#) for brief and succinct details.

This Restart Plan also clarifies the 5 stages of BC’s Return to School Plan dependent on a change in number of COVID-19 cases. As a province we will be in Stage 2 when we start school in September. However, should there be a 2nd wave or uptick in COVID-19 cases, with direction from Dr. Bonnie Henry, School Districts can pivot and readjust.

Stage 1: Back to normal instruction. In-class instruction provided full-time for all students in all grades. No learning group or density requirements.

Restart

Stage 2: In-class instruction provided full-time for all students for the maximum time possible within established public health [learning group](#) limits:

- Elementary & Middle School: 60 people
- Secondary School: 120 people

School density targets are not applicable for this stage.

Stage 3: In-class instruction provided full-time for students requiring additional supports (all ages) and children of Essential Service Workers (ages 5-12)

- School Density Targets are 50% for all schools. This would mean most students not in category of ESW students and students requiring extra support would attend only twice/week.

Stage 4: In-class instruction provided full-time for students requiring additional supports (all ages) and children of Essential Service Workers (ages 5-12) within established public health learning group limits and school density targets:

- School Density Targets is 25% for all schools. This would mean most students not in category of ESW students and students requiring extra support would attend school one day/week.

Stage 5: Complete suspension of in-class instruction. All instruction is done remotely.

Based on direction from Dr. Bonnie Henry and Ministry of Health, SD51 has developed guidelines to best ensure a safe September return for all students to schools.

School Organization

All schools will maintain their regular pre-COVID start and end times. However, both BCSS and GFSS will have 30-minute lunch hours with added break times. BCSS and GFSS will also switch from a semester system to quarter system to further reduce potential for physical contact. The quarter system has two (2) courses per quarter for a 10-week period.

All elementary schools will have student learning groups of no larger than two (2) classes.

Before and after school procedures for students will be established with the goal of entry and exit close to school bell schedules. Parents dropping or picking up their children are asked to do so as close to school bell times as possible. Members of the public, including parents of students, must make appointments or receive an invitation to enter school sites.

Bussing schedules will be similar to pre-COVID schedules. There may be slight adjustments so please refer to our website at: <https://www.sd51.bc.ca/our-district/transportation/>

Your child must be registered on bus route to use the bus. Students must ride the bus they are registered on during Stage 2 to ensure COVID-19 protocols are followed. Unregistered riders will not be permitted, and alternate drop-offs will not be permitted for registered riders.

Students Not Returning to School

There are a variety of reasons students may not return to school in September. **The Minister of Education has made it clear that school districts are to create in-class learning opportunities as their priority *and that teachers will not be expected to provide remote learning opportunities.***

Upon review, after our September 14 start, 92% of our students returned to SD51 in-school learning. This freed us to redeploy resources to offer distance learning opportunities. The K-7 learning opportunity will look different than the Gr 8-12 learning opportunity. Gr 8-12 students doing SD51 Distance Learning will be expected to complete coursework in the same time frame (about 10 weeks) as in-school Gr 8-12 learners.

All school-age children in BC are required to be registered in an educational program. If your child will not be returning to bricks and mortar learning or has not enrolled in SD51 DL, then you can register with one of the following alternatives or check with your child's school Principal about space in SD51 DL:

- Register for Homeschooling - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/classroom-alternatives/homeschooling>
- Register for Distributed Learning - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/classroom-alternatives/online-distributed-learning>

COVID-19 K-12 Controls

SD51 has developed specific controls to ensure students, staff and the public are safe in all SD51 facilities. It is expected that staff, students and community will abide by these procedures and guidelines.

Dr. Bonnie Henry has reassured British Columbians that BC has done an admirable job in managing the COVID-19 virus. Based on our data as well as data from countries that have successfully flattened the curve and successfully opened schools, the Provincial Health Officer has determined it is a relatively low risk for BC to open schools. The BCCDC and Ministry of Health feel that we can safely return to full-time schooling but with explicit expectations of student and staff conduct and the implementation of learning groups.

Please note that ongoing adjustments made to BCCDC Guidelines K-12 will also impact how we operate and people should look for updates at BCCDC site or it will be posted on our website.

Why Can Students Return to School?

- B.C. currently has low community prevalence and low community transmission of COVID-19.
 - COVID-19 testing is available to those with symptoms of cold, influenza or COVID-19.
 - To date, less than 5% of those tested have been positive for COVID-19. This means of people with cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms, very few have COVID-19.
 - Of those who are positive, 80% of transmission comes from a known, confirmed COVID-19 case (i.e. not community transmission).

COVID-19 and Children

- Most children are not at high risk for COVID-19 infection.
- COVID-19 virus has a very low infection rate in children (ages 0 to 19). In B.C.:
 - Less than 1% of children tested have been COVID-19 positive, and even fewer are suspected to have been infected based on serological testing.
 - Approximately 5% of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 are among children and youth 0-19 years old, despite making up approximately 20% of the general population.
 - Children under 10 comprise a smaller proportion of the total confirmed child cases compared to children between the ages of 10 and 19.
- To the end of August 2020, fewer than five children in B.C. were admitted to hospital for COVID-19. None required intensive care and there have been no deaths.
- Based on published literature to date, the majority of cases in children are the result of household transmission by droplet spread from a symptomatic adult family member with COVID-19. Within households and family groupings, adults appear to be the primary drivers of transmission. Older children are more likely to transmit than younger children.

COVID-19 and Schools

- Children do not appear to be the primary drivers of COVID-19 spread in schools or in community settings.
- Schools and childcare facility closures have significant negative mental health and socioeconomic impacts on vulnerable children.
- Infection prevention measures are most effective in controlled environments with predictable populations and expectations that are readily monitored. **Schools are controlled environments.**

- Children and youth typically have much milder symptoms of COVID-19, most often presenting with low-grade fever and a dry cough. GI symptoms are more common for children while skin changes and lesions are less common.
- There is no conclusive evidence that children who are asymptomatic or even symptomatic pose a risk to transmitting the disease to other children or adults.
- Clusters and outbreaks involving children and youth are unusual and tend only to occur in areas where there are high levels of community spread.
- Long term closures of schools can have significant effect on a students' academic, social and emotional well being.
- Adolescent children should physically distance themselves where possible when outside the family unit or household.
- For younger children, maintaining physical distance is less practical and the focus should be on minimizing physical contact instead.

COVID-19 and Adults

- Most adults infected with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms that do not require care outside of the home.
- Some adults with specific health conditions are at an increased risk for more severe outcomes, including individuals:
 - o Aged 65 and over, and especially the frail elderly;
 - o With significantly compromised immune systems; or,
 - o With poorly controlled underlying medical conditions.
 - o Those at greatest risk are those aged 65 and over with a compromised immune system or underlying medical conditions.
- More information about adults living with health conditions that may place them at an increased risk for developing severe illness is available from BCCDC.
- Adults working within schools who have health conditions that may place them at increased risk for more severe outcomes should speak with their health care provider to determine their individual level of risk, and if this may require workplace accommodation.

Please check BCCDC site for more information on [Health Guidance for BC Schools K-12](#).

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 controlled environments where multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

Schools are considered a controlled environment. This is because schools include a consistent grouping of people, there are robust illness policies for sick students and staff and there is an ability to implement effective personal practices that are followed by most people most of the time in the setting (e.g. diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.).

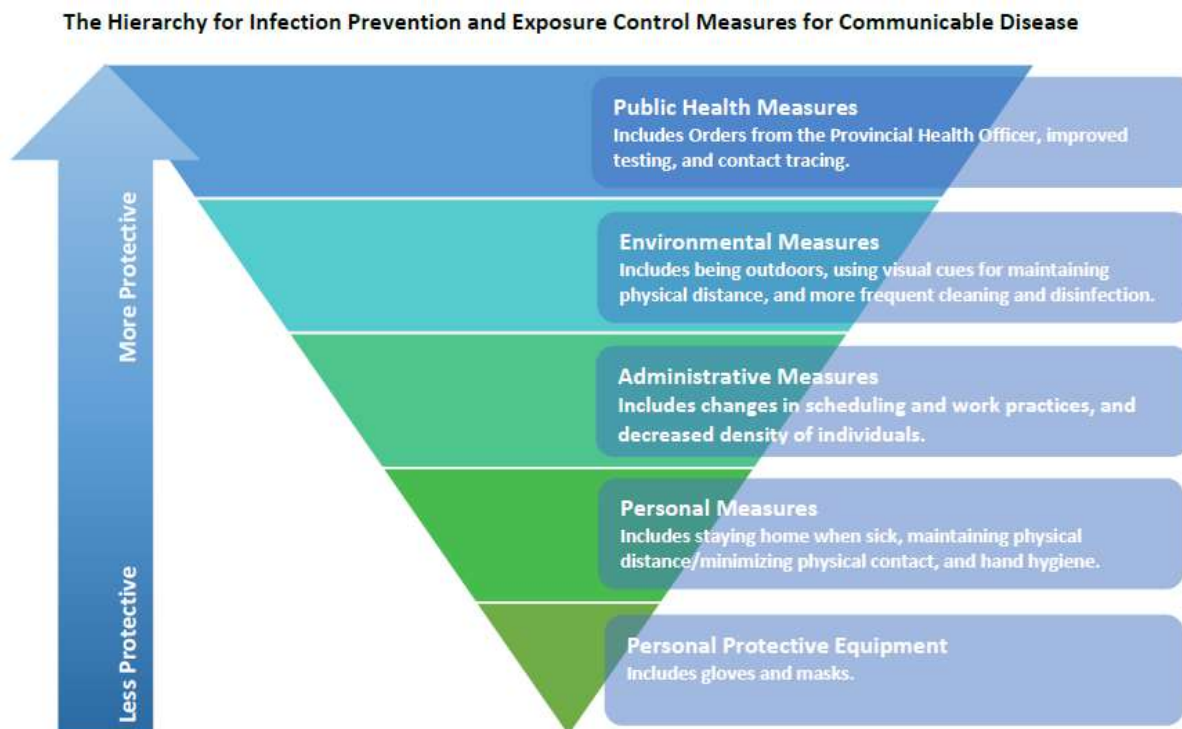
Personal Protective Equipment is the last and least effective of the infection prevention and exposure control measure and should only be considered after exploring all other measures. **However non-medical masks should be used when physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained, or the person is interacting with**

people outside their learning group. Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is a personal choice. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect. More information on mask usage can be found here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

As of Dec 14 it is expected that ALL Staff will wear masks whenever they leave their work bubble. This includes whenever adults are entering a new space.

For example, employees are requested to don their mask if:

- Leaving their classroom to go to any other part of the building;
- Going into any areas considered 'public spaces' like hallways, offices, elevators, staff rooms, photocopy rooms or another learning cohort's space;
- Entering a building through the main entrance; or
- You cannot maintain physical distancing from another adult in your work bubble.



This expectation applies regardless of the number of staff in a public room/space. Masks can be removed when eating or drinking in a public space but promptly placed back on afterwards. Face shields and mouth shields are no longer considered an adequate substitute for a non-medical mask. Physical distancing must continue to be practiced, even when masks are being worn. There should be no social gathering/congregating of employees in any areas.

Public Health Measures

Mass Gatherings - the Provincial Health Officer's Order for Mass Gatherings continues to prohibit gatherings and events of people in excess of 50 people; **however, this Order does not apply to schools.**

If a COVID-19 positive person is identified as a staff member or student in a school, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate and if other staff or students should be notified.

Schools will not provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed by public health.

Contacting parents and staff about COVID-19 is the responsibility of public health.

Students and staff who have travelled outside of Canada are required to self-isolate for 14 days under both provincial and federal orders.

Environmental Measures Cleaning and Disinfection

School facilities will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC CDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document, which includes:

- 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.
 - 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.
- Use of Oxiver, a hydrogen peroxide-based disinfectant approved by the BC CDC.
- 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.
- Garbage containers emptied daily.
- 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.

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.

Administrative Measures

Reducing the number of in-person, close interactions an individual has in a day with different people helps prevent the spread of COVID-19. To accomplish this schools will implement learning groups and where learning groups must share space then physical distancing is required. If this is not possible, then masks must be worn by individuals outside the learning groups.

Learning Groups or Cohorts

Learning Groups or Cohorts reduce the number of individual contacts in a day without physical distancing being consistently practiced. Potential outbreaks can be more efficiently and effectively managed when learning groups size restrictions are implemented.

Information on Learning Groups (as defined by WorkSafe BC)

- *A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term. Learning groups reduce the number of in-person, close interactions a person has in school without requiring physical distancing to consistently be practiced. For example:*
 - *In elementary, a learning group can be composed of up to 60 people.*

- *In 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.*
- *Learning groups can be composed of students and staff.*
- *Within the learning groups, minimized physical contact should be encouraged but a 2-metre physical distance does not need to be maintained.*
- *Learning group composition can be changed at the start of a new quarter, semester or term in the school year. Outside of these, composition should be changed as minimally as possible, except where required to support optimal school functioning. This may include learning, operational, or student health and safety considerations.*
- *Consistent seating arrangements are encouraged within learning groups where practical.*
- *School administrators should keep up-to-date lists of all members of a learning group to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.*
- *During break times (e.g., recess, lunch), students may want to socialize with peers in different learning groups:*
 - *In elementary schools, students can socialize with peers in different learning groups if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact or if they are indoors and can maintain physical distance.*
 - *In secondary schools, students can socialize with peers in different learning groups if they can maintain physical distance. Students must maintain physical distance when socializing with peers in different learning groups.*
- *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 and physical distance are maintained as much as possible while still ensuring the support, program, or service continues. This does not apply to extracurricular activities where physical distance between learning groups must be maintained.*

Within a learning group, minimized physical contact should still be encouraged, but physical distancing does NOT need to be maintained. Learning groups should stay consistent for learning and breaks.

Fieldtrips – daytime fieldtrips can still happen but only in learning groups.

Extracurriculars – cannot happen at this time as playing teams outside a school diminishes the effectiveness of a controlled environment.

Physical distancing and maintaining 2-meters between two or more people is challenging in a K-12 school setting, particularly with younger students. As such, it is reasonable to establish different expectations for varying age levels and activities.

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

The following physical distancing strategies will be implemented where possible in the K-12 school setting:

- 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).

- Non-enrolling staff (LST, PREP teachers, EAs, CYCWs, Principals) who are responsible for more than one learning group must physically distance and if unable to physically distance MUST wear a mask and if they wish to a face shield. A person can attach themselves to one learning group and then must physically distance or wear a mask ONLY if they join another learning group.
- 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.
- Planning learning group *non-contact* sports activities should 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 younger 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 should be used ONLY by members of the class
- For adolescent 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.
- Parents, caregivers and other non-staff adults entering the school must not enter school without permission or an invite.
- All school members as well as visitors should be reminded to practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distance when they are in the school. Schools should have a sign in sheet to keep track of dates, names and contact information of all visitors.
- Assemblies and other school-wide events should be held virtually or in learning groups to avoid having large numbers of people gathered in one space.

Student Transportation on Buses

Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided.

Please check BC CDC site for more information on Health Guidance for BC Schools K-12:

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

Additional measures should be taken, including:

- **Encouraging private vehicle use where possible to decrease transportation density.** Bus drivers will wear a face shield and mask when students are entering or exiting the bus.
- 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 should share seats if space is limited.

- **Students age 10-19 must wear a non-surgical mask when on the bus whether daily riders or day time riders for field trips.** 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 medical condition that prevents them from doing so.
- School district bus drivers should keep an up-to-date passenger manifest should contact tracing need to occur. They will check off names of riders and submit this to Nicole Reid at Board Office weekly.

Curriculum, Programs and Activities

It is important to student health and well-being that Fine Arts and other elective courses are available throughout each COVID-19 stage. Schools should find ways to continue these courses in creative ways.

Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines:

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf

Staff teaching courses with special health and safety considerations including Foods, Textiles, Technology Ed, ADST, Music, Science, PE and Work Experience must refer to these guidelines:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>

Food Services and Textiles – p.25

Music & PE– p.27

ADST & Science – p.29

Technology Ed, Theatre & Dance – p.30

Work Experience – p.31

Students Requiring Additional Supports

Students with Complex Medical Conditions

Parents of students who are immune-compromised or have underlying medical conditions are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine their level of risk regarding return to school. If a medical professional determines that a student cannot attend school due to their health risks, the school district will work with the family to review alternative learning options for the student.

- Students who need to stay at home because they are immune-compromised will have an at-home learning plan provided by their school district
- This may include providing assistive technologies to help students learn remotely

[Review COVID-19 and children with immune suppression information](#) from the BC CDC.

Students with Exceptionalities and Children in Care

Students who require additional supports will have access to and receive the same supports and services they had prior to the pandemic.

- The way supports are provided at school may look different than the past, but all students will have access to learning in school and the necessary supports to be successful. We will continue to maintain an inclusive learning model.

Personal Measures

Stay Home When Required to Self-Isolate

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

- A person confirmed by public health as a case of COVID-19; or
- A person confirmed by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19; or
- A person who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

Anyone required to self-isolate will be contacted, directed and supported by public health. Additional information is available from BCCDC.

Stay Home When Sick

Staying home when sick is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. When COVID-19 is present in the community, the risk of introducing COVID-19 into schools is reduced if staff, students and parents/caregivers:

- Perform a daily health check.
- Stay at home when sick.
- Get a health assessment and/or COVID-19 test when sick.

These steps do not replace usual health care. Health questions can be directed to 8-1-1 or your health care provider. These recommendations are discussed in more detail below and may change over time.

As of Dec 14th, SD51 has implemented enhanced protocols which now require **staff** to submit confirmation to their supervisor that the health check has been completed before entering any SD51 site each day.

This information will be collected via a webform. A message will be sent to your SD51 email early each morning with a link to the webform. Please review the questions carefully and then confirm you have completed the health check by clicking submit button. The form will automatically be submitted to your supervisor. You can access the form through your SD51 email account on any device, including cell phones, laptops, iPads, Chromebooks, etc.

If you answer yes to any of the 4 questions, please DO NOT report to work and inform your supervisor as you normally would when absent.

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. An example is included as Appendix E. 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.**

- School administrators should ensure parents, caregivers, school staff and other adults routinely entering the school are aware of their responsibility to assess themselves daily for key symptoms of illness prior to entering the school. (i.e. perform a daily health check). See Appendix E for more information.
- Parents and caregivers should assess their child daily for key symptoms of illness before sending them to school (i.e. perform a daily health check for their child). See Appendix E for more information.

- Staff and other adults should assess themselves daily for key symptoms of illness prior to entering the school (i.e. perform a daily health check). See Appendix E for more information.
- There is no need for schools to verify that the health check has occurred every day, nor to require that parents submit a daily health check form to the school.

Stay Home When **New** Symptoms of Illness Develop

Students and staff should stay at home when new symptoms of illness develop. The key symptoms to watch for are fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

- **If the staff or student (or their parent) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they may return to school. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.**
- **For mild symptoms without fever, students and staff can monitor at home for 24 hours. If symptoms improve, they can return to school without further assessment.**
- **If symptoms include fever, or if after 24 hours, symptoms remain unchanged or worsen, seek a health assessment. A health assessment can include calling 8-1-1, a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner or going to a COVID-19 testing centre.**

When a COVID-19 test is recommended by the health assessment:

- If the COVID-19 test is positive, the person should stay home until they are told by public health to end their self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
- If the COVID-19 test is negative, the person can return to school once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. 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.
- If a COVID-19 test is recommended but is not done because the person or parent chooses not to have the test or a health assessment is not sought when recommended, and the person's symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, they should stay home from school until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then may return if feeling well enough.

If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, the person can return to school when symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. *Well enough* means they do not have to be completely free of the symptom but that the symptom has improved from initial onset. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).

- Students and staff may still attend school if a member of their household has a cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms, provided the staff or student is asymptomatic. It is expected a symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a healthcare provider.
- Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19 like symptoms related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal.
- School Principals must clearly communicate with parents and caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.
- Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school to be sent home as soon as possible.

- Those unsure if they or a student should self-isolate, should be directed to use the [BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool](#).
- If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input or to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

Returning to School

In cases where someone has a singular (1) symptom (Appendix E) of illness, not including fever, they should stay home for 24 hours from the onset of the symptom. **Should the symptom improve, and if one feels well enough, they may return to school.**

In cases where the symptom worsens or the individual has two or more of the listed “Key Symptoms of Illness”, or they have a fever, individuals are directed to call 8-1-1 or a primary care provider. A health assessment is required, the individual is directed to not return to school until COVID -19 has been excluded and the individual’s symptoms improve. 8-1-1 or the primary care provider will determine if you should get a COVID-19 test.

Important to note is that individuals with a singular (1) symptom and no fever, that wait the 24-hour period and feel well enough to return to school, may do so despite having remnants of an ongoing symptom such as a lingering cough. It is important to recognize that a cough may occur with other health conditions (eg asthma, allergies).

The defining aspect in this scenario is whether the symptom is a **new symptom**. If so, individuals must stay/go home and then follow the [BCCDC K-12 Guidelines](#). If the new symptom improves in 24 hours, even if the individual is not symptom free, they may return to school. **As a school district we will continue to strongly encourage parents to keep their children home if they are sick and that it is imperative that their child feels healthy and capable of learning before returning to school.**

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

Washing Hands

- 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.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- 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.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers where sinks are not available and posters to promote the importance of regular hand washing.
- 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 should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.

Please check BCCDC site for more information on [Health Guidance for BC Schools K-12](#)

What happens if there is a case at a school?

Case Finding and Contact Tracing

If a staff or student has a confirmed case of COVID-19 through testing or investigation (i.e. case finding), public health will identify who that person has been in close contact with recently (i.e. contact tracing) to determine how they were infected and who else may be at risk of infection.

If there was a potential exposure at a school (i.e. a student or staff who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 AND attended school when they may have been potentially infectious), public health will work with the school to understand who may have been exposed, and to determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff are sick (case finding) or have been exposed and should monitor for symptoms or self-isolate. A process map for how contact tracing would occur is included as Appendix B.

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 should 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.

p. 6-7 http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

SD51 Elementary and Secondary Controls and Protocols

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

Elementary

Movement/Hygiene On-Site

- Students should 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.
- Student backpacks and jackets will be placed beside their seats (unless the teacher directs students to do otherwise). **Students will not have access to lockers to start the school year.**
- **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 (sing Happy Birthday 2X).
- Students are required to clean their hands before they leave for the end of the day and before they leave home to come to school.

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.
- Lockers will not be available until good habits have been developed. Students must bring all belongings in their backpack including supplies, lunch and a water bottle filled with water until which time this is re-evaluated.
- Students should not share food, water bottles, personal items etc.
- Students supplies/equipment should be labelled with their full name. These CAN 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 should 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 unless from same learning groups
- Parents that drop off and pick up their children are asked to leave the school grounds promptly and to not socialize on school grounds as we have a large group of bussing students to manage.
- **Parents and guardians are asked to drop off their students and only enter the building if they have made an appointment or 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 should 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 should 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 should clean their hands before and after activities.

We anticipate a learning curve for elementary students especially those who did not return in June regarding social distancing, especially younger students. We ask staff to recognize that reinforcing physical distancing should not be the focus, rather the focus is minimizing student contact in a kind and respectful way. We recognize this will be challenging but we must consistently remind ourselves that there is little evidence that students transmit the virus. It is ok to structure small group interactions. It is recommended that students who are grouped play/work in the same small groups through the day. It is also recommended that teachers and EA's reinforce a hands-off policy. (no touching others, hugging or tag)

Secondary

Movement/Hygiene On-Site

- Students will enter the building through one of the exterior doors assigned by 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.
- Student backpacks will be placed beside their seats unless the teacher directs students to do otherwise.
- **Students will not have access to lockers during this time.** This will be revisited later into the school year.
- 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.
- If class transitions include more than one cohort in hallways or common areas, then both staff and students in the transition should wear masks.
- 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.**
- **Lockers will not be available.** Students must bring all belongings in a backpack, including all supplies, snacks and water bottles (preferably filled) .
- Students are NOT to share personal items.
- Water fountains will not be available; *however, water fillers will be.* Students and staff should bring water bottles to school preferably filled.
- Staff must physically distance in staff rooms unless from same learning groups.
- 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 should spray surfaces and let dry to be most effective.

There is a high expectation for students to follow these strict guidelines. Students who wilfully do NOT comply will be sent home.

Bussing Safety Protocols 2020

Bus Driver Protection:

- Using facility procedure protocols when coming to the bus garage.
- Using 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)

Students 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.
- **Students age 10-19 MUST 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 medical condition that prevents them from doing so.
- **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.
- Should a student younger than 9 years exhibit 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 and submit this manifest 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 should 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; however, the enhanced protocols now require staff to submit confirmation to their supervisor that the health check has been completed before entering any SD51 site each day.

This information will be collected via a webform. A message will be sent to your SD51 email early each morning with a link to the webform. Please do not share this link with others as it is unique to each employee. The form includes 4 questions to consider, including a list of symptoms that are predictive of COVID-19. Please review the questions carefully and then confirm you have completed the health check by responding YES. The form will automatically be submitted to your supervisor. You can access the form through your SD51 email account on any device, including cell phones, laptops, iPads, Chromebooks, etc.

If you answer yes to any of the 4 questions, please DO NOT report to work and inform your supervisor as you normally would when absent.