



School District 47 (Powell River)

Health Guidelines and Safety Plan

April 2021

1.0 Introduction

The Purpose of this document is to outline control measures to minimize or eliminate the potential for transmission of communicable disease. In order to coordinate the District’s response and safety measures, a combination of measures will be used to minimize the potential of exposure at school and building sites to the pathogen known as COVID -19.

The Board of Education of School District 47 (SD47), is committed to ensuring the public and our schools are safe.

2.0 B.C.’s Priorities and Framework

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, and staff.
- Provide the services needed to support the children of our essential service workers.
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
- Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: N/A ▪ Middle: N/A ▪ Secondary: N/A 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 60 ▪ Middle: 60 ▪ Secondary: 120 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 60 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 30 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 0 ▪ Middle: 0 ▪ Secondary: 0
DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0% for all schools
IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time all students, all grades	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for all students for the maximum instructional time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed learning supplements in-class instruction, if required.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports In-class instruction for all other students for the maximum time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed and remote learning supplements in-class instruction.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports Remote learning for all other students	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Suspend in-class for all students

3.0 Guidance

This Safety Plan is informed by the following:

[K-12 Education Restart Plan](#)

[Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Setting](#)

[BC Centre for Disease Control – COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Setting](#)

[Work Safe BC – Education \(K-12\): Protocols for Returning to Operation](#)

The SD47 Safety Plan provides guidance for educators, administrators, and support staff to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and to help maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, families, and staff. This document identifies key infection prevention and control practices to implement, as well as actions to take if a student or staff member develops [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

4.0 Responsibilities

Employers are responsible for the health and safety of their workers and all other workers at their workplace. They are responsible for completing and posting the COVID-19 Safety Plan, and to train and educate everyone at the workplace of the contents of that plan. Employers are also responsible for having a system in place to identify the hazards of COVID-19, control the risk, and monitor the effectiveness of the controls.

Workers are responsible for taking reasonable care to protect their own health and safety, and the health and safety of other people at the workplace. In the context of COVID-19, this means workers are responsible for their own personal self-care, which includes frequent hand washing and staying home when sick. Workers are also responsible for reporting unsafe conditions to their employer, and following the procedures put in place by the employer to control the risks associated with COVID-19.

5.0 Protecting Mental Health

Workers in the workplace may also be affected by the anxiety and uncertainty created by the COVID-19 outbreak. It is important to remember that mental health is just as important as physical health, and to take measures to support mental well-being. Here are some resources that can assist with maintaining mental health in the workplace during this time.

- [COVID-19: Staying Well In Uncertain Times](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association of B.C.)
Tips and information on how to reduce and manage anxiety in the workplace due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- [Managing COVID-19 Stress, Anxiety and Depression](#) (Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions)
Tips and resources on things we can do as individuals and collectively to deal with stress and support one another during these challenging times.

- [Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (World Health Organization)
These mental health considerations were developed by the WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Use as messages targeting different groups to support for mental and psychosocial well-being during COVID-19 outbreak.
- [Taking Care of Your Mental Health](#) (COVID-19) (Public Health Agency of Canada)
Tips and resources for taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak.

6.0 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 multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

Schools are considered a controlled environment by public health. This is because:

- Schools include a consistent grouping of people.
- Schools have robust illness policies for students and staff.
- Reinforcement and adoption of effective personal practices that are followed by most people in the setting (e.g. diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.).
- Schools can implement a variety of health and safety measures (e.g., enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, using outdoor space for learning activities, grouping students and staff in learning groups to limit in-person interactions, implementing staggered schedules, etc.)

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



Public Health Measures

Actions taken across society at the population level to limit the spread of the COVID-19 and reduce the impact of COVID-19. The Provincial Health Officer has implemented public health measures, including: prohibiting mass gatherings, requiring travellers to self-isolate or quarantine upon arrival in BC, effective case finding and contact tracing, and emphasizing the need for people to stay home when they are sick.

Environmental Measures

Changes to the physical environment that reduce the risk of exposure. Examples include being in outdoor spaces, using visual cues for maintaining physical distance or directing traffic flow in hallways, erecting physical barriers where appropriate and frequent cleaning and disinfection.

Administrative Measures

Measures enabled through the implementation of policies, procedures, training and education that reduce the risk of exposure. Examples of these include health and wellness policies, cohorts, modified schedules, and supporting the ability of individuals to maintain physical distance.

Personal Measures

Actions individuals can take to protect themselves and others include maintaining physical distance/minimizing physical contact, washing your hands frequently, coughing into your elbow and staying home if you are sick.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is not effective as a stand-alone preventive measure. It should be suited to the task, and must be worn and disposed of properly. Outside of health-care settings, the effectiveness of PPE is generally limited to protecting others should you be infected.

SD47 has implemented a combination of measures at different levels, as described in this document. This document includes Environmental, Administrative, Personal Measures and the use of PPE.

7.0 Public Health Measures

School Gatherings and Events

The Provincial Health Officer's Order for Mass Gathering Events prohibits the gathering of more than 50 people for the purpose of an event. This order does not apply to schools. It is focused on one-time events where people gather and where control measures may be hard to implement.

School gatherings should be kept to a minimum. When it is necessary to gather in larger groups the following guidance should be followed:

- School gatherings should occur within a learning group.
- Adequate space should be made available to prevent crowding of those within the learning group.

- Staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, and other staff-only gatherings should be held virtually wherever possible.
 - Staff should practice physical distancing (2m) for face-to-face interactions, whenever possible.
 - If physical distancing cannot be maintained, and a barrier is not present, participants are required to wear masks.
 - The number of participants gathered, and the length of the gathering should be minimized as much as possible.
- Examinations or assessments are not considered school gatherings, however they must still be delivered in accordance with the health and safety guidelines outlined in this document.
- In-person inter-school events such as competitions, tournaments and festivals are not to occur at this time. (e.g., inter school elementary sports, elementary track meet, Festival of the Arts, etc.).

Case Finding, Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

Active testing of people with mild COVID-19 like symptoms (case finding) helps identify cases early in the course of their disease, determine whether others in close contact with them are at risk for infection (contact tracing), and ensure they get appropriate care and follow-up.

Should a COVID-19 positive person be identified by public health staff, significant efforts are undertaken to determine if they are part of a cluster of cases or part of a local outbreak. Specific public health measures are implemented in facilities where an outbreak occurs to prevent further transmission of COVID-19.

Self-Isolation

Students and staff with cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like [symptoms](#) must stay home, self-isolate, and be assessed by a health-care provider. Testing is recommended for anyone with these symptoms, even mild ones.

All students and staff who have travelled outside of Canada are required to [self-isolate](#) for 14 days under both provincial and federal orders. This includes students who are attending school from abroad.

8.0 Environmental Measures

Cleaning and Disinfection

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. SD47 and staff all have a joint shared responsibility to ensure our work areas are clean. Schools should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the [BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document](#).

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. Laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers 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 and Disinfecting Frequency

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

- General cleaning and disinfecting of schools will occur every evening after school ends for the day, and will include items that only a single student uses such as their desk.
- In addition to the evening cleaning and disinfecting of schools, additional cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces will occur during the school day.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Empty garbage containers daily. *(Students and staff should be encouraged to bring any waste resulting from their lunch and snacks home with them to be recycled and composted, in order to limit the demand on recycling and composting).*

The same cleaning and disinfecting frequency guidelines outlined above apply when different learning groups use the same space or equipment (e.g., classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, gyms, home economic rooms, science labs, etc.).

Frequently Touched Surfaces

Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Items used by multiple students and staff, including Doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, faucet handles, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, manipulatives and toys and water fountains.
 - Water fountains can continue to be used however students and staff should be encouraged to use personal water bottles which can be refilled at the fountain filling stations. If using water fountains, students and staff should practice hand hygiene before and after use, and should not place their mouth on the fountain. Water fountains should be cleaned as a frequently touched item.
- Shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for science labs, kitchen equipment for culinary programs, sewing machines and equipment for home economics 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).

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

- Some frequently touched items like toys and 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.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Bodily Fluids

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

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Follow regular health and safety procedure and regularly used PPE for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).

Laundry

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

- Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner.
- Do not shake dirty items.
- Wearing gloves is optional. If choosing to wear gloves, ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after use. No other PPE is required.
- Clean hands with soap and water immediately after removing gloves.
 - Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90 degrees Celsius)

Traffic Flow

Floor markings and posters will be used where required, to address traffic flow throughout the school. This may include hallways and designated entrance and exit doors. It is important not to reduce the number of exits and to ensure that the fire code is adhered to.

Physical Barriers

Barriers will be installed or utilized in places and circumstances where physical distance cannot regularly be maintained and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a learning group.

9.0 Administrative Measures

Reducing the number of in-person, close interactions an individual has in a day with different people helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This can be accomplished in K-12 school settings through two different but complementary approaches: learning groups (cohorts) and physical distancing.

Learning Groups

A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term, semester or year, and who primarily interact with each other. A learning group may 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 students with the same courses.

The composition of learning groups should remain consistent for all activities that occur in schools (i.e. students and staff cannot be part of more than one learning group at the same time). Students and staff from different learning groups can interact with one another while

practicing physical distancing (see the Interacting with Learning Groups section for more information).

Learning group composition can be changed at the start of a new term (e.g., quarter, semester). Outside of these transition points, 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. No additional safety protocols are required following a change in learning group composition.

School administrators should keep up-to-date lists of all members of a learning group, and others who work with that learning group (e.g. itinerant teachers, TTOCs), and their contact information to support swift communications from the school and to share with public health to support contact tracing, if needed.

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

Interacting with Learning Groups

Schools should minimize the number of adults (staff and others) who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as is practical to do so while supporting learning and a positive, healthy, and safe environment.

Staff outside of a learning group must practice physical distancing (2m) when interacting with the learning group. For example, an itinerant educator can teach multiple learning groups but should maintain physical distance from students and other staff and avoid close face-to-face interactions as much as possible. In an elementary or secondary school, two classes from different learning groups can be in the same learning space at the same time if a two-metre distance is able to be maintained between people from different learning groups.

During break times (e.g. recess, lunch), students may want to socialize with peers in different learning groups.

Elementary 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.

Secondary 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.

Itinerant Staff and Specialists

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

Staff not assigned to a learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. When physical distancing isn't practical, other measures must be explored such as the use of transparent barriers and/or non medical masks.

Barriers and masks will be made available to each school for such circumstances.

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 should 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 should include avoiding physical contact and 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.
- For situations where members of different learning groups interact:
 - If people will be in the same space for an extended period of time (>15 minutes), the space should be sufficiently large, and/or should have limits on the number of people so that 2 meters 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 the floor, staggered transition times), there should be enough space to ensure no physical contact but 2 meter physical distancing is not required.
- Within and outside of learning groups, there should be no crowding.
- Staff and other adults should seek to reduce the number of close, face-to-face interactions with each other at all times, even if wearing a non-medical mask. This includes during break times and in meetings

Physical distancing requirements vary between stages 2, 3 and 4:

Stage 2	Stage 3 & 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing (2m) for K-12 staff and for middle and secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groups • Physical distancing (2m) for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups while indoors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing (2m) for K-12 staff, middle and secondary school students at all times. • Physical distancing (2m) for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups while indoors.

The following physical distancing strategies should be implemented in schools where possible:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes).
- Regularly remind students about keeping their hands to themselves.
- Create space between students/staff as much as possible.
 - 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 should be avoided where possible, particularly for middle and secondary schools and programs.
- Use consistent or assigned seating arrangements where practical.
 - Consider storing excess furniture and equipment.
 - Consider strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.
 - Where possible, stagger recess/snack, lunch, and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
 - Take students outside more often, where and when possible.
 - 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.
 - For secondary students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
 - Manage the flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding.

When Physical Distancing Cannot be Maintained

- Consider installing barriers made of transparent material in places where physical distance cannot be regularly maintained, and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a learning group.
- Where other measures are not sufficient, consider the use of non-medical masks, understanding that these have limitations.
- [Selecting and using masks](#)
- [How to use a mask](#)

Staff Only Spaces

Experience to date underscores the importance of COVID-19 prevention among adults, as well as students, in the school setting. Schools and school districts must ensure physical distancing is practiced within staff only spaces, including during break times, in addition to mask use. To support this, schools can implement the following strategies:

- Utilize floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding (e.g. in the break room, by the photocopier, etc.).
- Hold meetings virtually whenever possible.
- Ensure staff practice physical distancing (2m) during face-to-face meetings. Staff are also required to wear masks when indoors.

[WorkSafeBC guidance for offices](#) lists measures that should be considered and implemented as applicable to the workplace for staff in office environments (both inside and outside of 'bricks and mortar' schools).

Employee/Student Attendance

Schools should notify District Administration if staff and/or student absenteeism exceeds 10 percent of regular attendance so that the local medical health officer can be notified.

This reporting will be helpful in early identification of clusters and outbreaks.

Communication and Orientation

The School District will continue to post relevant information on the District home page and the District COVID-19 page in addition to posting to school websites as well as using other electronic means of communication such as facebook, twitter and email.

- Stakeholder groups are being consulted on the development of the plan.
- Schools and other work sites will ensure the Safety Plan is posted on a bulletin board and online.
- Staff and students will be provided with an orientation on the District's return to school plans.
- Schools and worksites will post signage, [including occupancy limits](#) and effective [handwashing practices](#). Signage should also be posted at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the premises (including [visitors](#) and workers with symptoms.)

Student Transportation on Buses

The following strategies will be considered for student transportation on buses:

- Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in [the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document](#). Additional guidance is available from [Transport Canada](#).
- Bus drivers should clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips. They are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips.
- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) on school buses except when driving.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory diseases before sending them to school. **If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school.**
- Students should clean their hands before they leave home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home.
- Where possible, bus line up areas should be set up to prevent crowding, and allow for physical distancing of 2m.
- Students in grades **4 to 12** are required to wear non-medical masks when they are on the bus. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.
- Non-medical masks are encouraged but **not required** for students in K to grade 3.

To reduce the number of close in-person interactions on school buses, the following strategies will be considered:

- Use of consistent or assigned seating arrangements.
 - Up-to-date passenger and seating arrangement lists will be kept to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.
 - The seating arrangement can be altered whenever necessary to support student health and safety (e.g. accommodating children with a physical disability, responding to behavioural issues, etc.)
- Consideration for the order students typically load and offload to support buses being loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
- If space is available, students will each have their own seat (unless sharing with a member of their household) and sit separated side to side and front to back.

Additional measures related to student transportation are being taken, including:

- Installing a physical barrier made of transparent materials between the driver and students. For additional information with respect to safety considerations when deciding to install a physical barrier, read the [Joint Guidance Document from Transport Canada and CSA D250 School Bus Technical Committee](#).
- We are encouraging private vehicle use and active transportation (e.g. biking, walking, etc.) where possible to decrease transportation density.

Curriculum, Programs and Activities

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with [provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines](#), including school lead activities held off campus.

Music Programs

All classes, programs and activities (e.g. Band, Choir) can continue to occur where:

- K-12 staff and secondary students wear masks while singing indoors.
- Physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group, and students and staff are spaced as far apart as possible.
- Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groups.
- Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups when indoors.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.
- Music education should be delivered in line with the [Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19](#) developed by the B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C.

School Libraries/Learning Commons

- School libraries/learning commons should be open and book exchange can occur.
- Students and staff should practice diligent hand hygiene.
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. books, magazines, worksheets, etc.) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) are low risk items. Regular book browsing and

circulation processes can occur as normal. There is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time.

- When visiting the library/learning commons, students and staff should remain in their learning group as much as possible and maintain physical distance from members outside of their learning group.
- Students should bring their personal school supplies for classes held within the space.
- A barrier made of transparent material should be installed at the library check out desk if physical distance cannot be regularly maintained.
- The BC Teacher Librarians Association has developed [Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Commons Resources to Meet COVID-19 Requirements](#).

Physical and Health Education

- Create space between students and staff, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible.
- Teachers should plan physical activities that:
 - Do not involve prolonged physical contact or crowding. For example, activities such as tag and touch football are low-risk, whereas activities like wrestling or partner dancing should be avoided. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities wherever possible to reduce physical contact.
 - Support physical distancing (2m) outside of learning groups.
- K-12 staff are required to wear masks during PHE program classes when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m), and a barrier is not present.
- At secondary:
 - For high intensity exercise activities (that significantly increase respiration rates):
 - If indoors and the activity is stationary, students and/or fitness equipment (e.g. stationary bikes, treadmills, weight training equipment, etc.) should be spaced 2 meters apart. If indoors and the activity involves movement, ensure there is ample space available to reduce the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
 - Activities should take place outdoors, or be replaced with low-intensity exercise activities, if the conditions above cannot be met.
 - Wearing masks during high-intensity exercise (indoor or outdoors) is left to personal choice, however masks cannot replace the need for 2 metres between students and/or fitness equipment during high intensity stationary exercise indoors.
 - Guidance for high intensity exercise activities applies within and between learning groups.
 - For low intensity exercise activities, middle and secondary students are required to wear masks 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 the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.
 - Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use.
 - Disinfect teaching aids (e.g., clipboards, white boards, pens, plastic bins for transporting materials etc.)

Refer to Physical and Health Education ([PHE](#)) [Canada guidelines](#)

Classroom Environment

De-cluttering

- Classroom staff will de-clutter classrooms to facilitate effective and efficient cleaning as well as increased space for distancing.
- All non-essential supplies and equipment will be removed or relocated within a designated space in the classroom or school.
- Where possible, fabric and soft surface materials, such as carpets and blankets will be removed.
- Teaching staff will direct students to take home any unnecessary personal items and keep their desks clean and uncluttered.

Toys and Manipulatives

- Toys and manipulatives will be reduced. Only those items that support learning and that can be readily disinfected will remain.
- Staff will develop a plan for the disinfecting of shared toys and manipulatives.
- No plush toys.

Science, Shop, Textiles and Culinary areas

- Science, Shop, Textiles and Culinary teachers will develop a plan for ongoing disinfection of high touch areas within the science and shop areas, and will educate, direct and supervise students to ensure adequate cleaning and disinfection of equipment, supplies and tools before and after use.

Keyboards and Electronic Devices

Keyboards and electronic devices, mobile phones, iPads and other frequently touched electronics such as tablets, remotes, keyboards, mice and gaming consoles can carry germs. These electronics should be cleaned and disinfected when shared.

Strong Start Centres

It's expected that there will be a virtual and outdoor Strong Start programs available to families but that the centres in the various elementary schools will remain closed for the time being.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if physical distancing can be maintained between members of different learning groups and reduced physical contact is practiced by those within the same learning group.

In-person inter-school events such as competitions, tournaments and festivals are not to occur at this time. (e.g., inter school elementary sports, elementary track meet, Festival of the Arts, etc.).

Field Trips

Field Trip such as a beach or wilderness walks can only take place if they originate from the student's school.

- Any trips requiring transportation are not permitted at this time.
- Any trips to places such as the Outdoor Learning Centre, the Recreation Complex, and Museum etc. are not permitted at this time.

Playgrounds

There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. School Playgrounds are a safe environment and remain open at this time. The following measures should be taken when using playgrounds:

- Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play.
- Attempt to minimize direct contact between students.
- Sand and water can be used for play if children wash their hands before and after play. COVID-19 does not survive well on surfaces, other than hard surfaces. There is no evidence showing that the virus survives on sand, in water, or on playdough.
- More [information on playgrounds](#) is available on the BC Centre for Disease Control website.

Community Use of School District Facilities

Apart from any formal or historical occupancy or lease arrangements, School District facilities such as the Max Cameron Theatre and the various School Gymnasiums will not be available for after hours, public access, or use at this time.

10.0 Personal Measures

Illness and Self-Assessment

Daily Health Check

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

- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.
 - Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the provincial [K-12 Health Check app](#) or the [District Daily Health Check form](#) for daily assessment of symptoms.
 - Schools are not required to verify that the student health check has occurred every day or require that parents/caregivers submit a daily health check form.
- Staff and other adults are required to complete an active daily health check, in line with the Provincial Health Officer [Order on Workplace Safety](#), prior to entering the school.
 - School and district administrators are required to verify that staff and other adult health checks have been completed before they enter the school.

- An entry check poster for worksites, and additional information on health checks for workers, is available on the [WorkSafeBC website](#).
- If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school.

Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms

Staying Home When required to Self-Isolate

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

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

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

Information on self-isolation for international students, and homestay contingency plans for illness, is available in the [COVID-19 Operational Guidelines for K-12](#).

Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available from [BCCDC](#).

Symptoms of illness and Return to School

Students, staff or other adults should stay at 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 can use the [K-12 Health Check app](#).
- Staff and other adults can refer to BCCDC's "[When to get tested for COVID-19](#)"
- Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC 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 and if a COVID19 test is recommended.

Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g. seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and should not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a healthcare provider.

Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the 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. Most illness experienced in B.C. is not COVID-19, even if the symptoms are similar.

Protocols for Managing Illness and Confirmed Cases at School

Refer to the [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators](#) for more information.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness (antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19).

Follow these guidelines to ensure effective hand hygiene in schools:

- Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water).
- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene:
 - Use portable hand-washing sites and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol, where sinks are not available.
 - Hand-washing should be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using gym/playground equipment.
- Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly; for example, display BCCDC's [hand hygiene poster](#) at handwashing sites.
- Remind staff and students to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- 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.
- Students and staff may bring their own sanitizer or plain soap if they are on the list authorized by Health Canada or have a medical condition that requires specialized soaps. (See the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](#) for products that have met Health Canada's requirements and are authorized for sale in Canada.)
- If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand rubs can be used to clean hands if they are not visibly soiled.

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker).
- Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.).
- After using the toilet.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:

- When they arrive at school.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch). Before and after eating and drinking.
- Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.
- Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
- After using the toilet.
- After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).
- After cleaning tasks.
- After removing gloves.
- After handling garbage.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Respiratory Etiquette

- Cough and sneeze into the bend of the elbow, sleeve, or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

11.0 Personal Protective Equipment

Although personal protective equipment (including masks) is 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 (masks) have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. They provide some protection to the wearer and to those around them.

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

Masks should not be used in place of the other safety measures detailed in this document. For example, masks are not a replacement for the need for physical distancing for in-class instruction delivered to students from more than one learning group.

K-12 STAFF:

All K-12 staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses - both within and outside of their learning group.

K-12 STUDENTS:

All students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses - both within and outside of their learning group. Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses, but are not required to do so - mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.

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

EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS:

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

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

Schools must not require a health care provider note (ie: a doctor's note) to confirm if staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask.

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask.

More information about COVID-19 related mask use, including how to clean and store reusable masks, is available on the [BCCDC website](#) and the [Government of Canada website](#).