



## **COVID 19 Stage 2 – In Class Learning**

### **Health and Safety Guide**



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# COVID 19 Stage 2 – In Class Learning Health and Safety Guide

## General Information

The Cowichan Valley School District COVID-19 Stage 2 In Class Learning Health & Safety Guide is based on recommendations in the [Ministry of Education's Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) and tailored for local practices. As information on COVID-19 illness is evolving, up to date information on symptoms and prevention can be found on the [BCCDC](#) website.

## About COVID-19

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses mostly found in animals. In humans they can produce symptoms that are like the common cold and flu. Symptoms can range from mild to severe. It can be spread through droplet transmission. Infected persons can spread droplets up to two meters, for example when coughing or sneezing, but they do not stay suspended in the air due to their size. These droplets can infect other people via entry on surfaces like the eyes, nose, and mouth through transfer from hands. Droplet transmission is different from airborne transmission; airborne transmission allows microorganisms to be suspended in the air for long periods and inhaled and droplet transmission does not.

## Children are Low Risk

Current epidemiology in BC continues to indicate that children are at a very low risk for being infected by COVID-19 and are not considered to be “efficient transmitters”. Based on that information, the Provincial Health Officer is supportive of all K – 12 students returning to in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.

## Controlled Environments

Compared to some other community settings that are considered uncontrolled environments (such as grocery stores, retail outlets, restaurants, etc.), schools are considered “controlled environments” in that they have a comprehensive set of safety measures in place, a consistent and limited group of people accessing the building, and the majority of those people are children who are at lower risk for transmitting COVID-19. The combination of these features reduces the risk of bringing more children and youth together in schools.

## Learning Groups

**Typically, we have 3 bubbles – a family bubble, a social bubble and a work bubble. A learning group for students would be considered their work bubble.**

Learning groups are a recommended public health measure to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Organizing students and staff into learning groups helps to reduce the number of different interactions and potential exposure to COVID-19 and supports better contact tracing if there is a confirmed case in a school community.

A learning group is a cohort of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term (e.g. a school quarter, semester or year) and who primarily interact with each other. A learning group could be made up of a single class of students with their teacher, multiple classes that sometimes join for additional learning activities, or a group of secondary school students with the same courses. In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact but they are not required to maintain physical distance.

Two classes from different learning groups can be in the same learning space at the same time if a two-metre distance can be maintained between people from different learning groups.

Students may want to socialize with peers in different learning groups during break times (e.g. recess and lunch). See below for considerations. Schools should make sure these considerations are clearly communicated and explained to students.

Note: for the purpose of these guidelines, Grades K – 7 are considered Elementary Students and grades 8 – 12 are considered Secondary Students. This may be customized at schools to ensure consistency in building practice (e.g. Chemainus Secondary School's grade 7 students would be considered Secondary; Lake Cowichan School's grade 4 to 7 would be considered Elementary and the grade 8 – 12 Secondary; Quamichan's grade 8-9 would be Secondary).

### **Elementary students:**

- When interacting with peers **outside** of their learning group, students should:
  - minimize physical contact when outdoors;
  - maintain physical distance (2m) when indoors.

**Elementary-aged students are less able to consistently maintain physical distance. Outdoors is a lower risk environment than indoors.**

### **Secondary students:**

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

### **Itinerant, Non-enrolling, Support Staff and Specialists**

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

Schools should, where possible, assign staff to a specific learning group to help minimize the number of interactions between students and staff, while continuing to support students who may need special assistance. Examples could include:

- Assigning an educational assistant to a learning group where they can support one or more students in the same learning group.
- Assigning a learning assistance teacher to a cohort for a 6-week duration.

Those outside of a learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. For example, an itinerant teacher (e.g. a teacher teaching on call, an Indigenous support worker, a fine arts teacher, a district specialist, etc.) can teach/support multiple learning groups but should maintain physical distance from students and other staff as much as possible.

In situations where staff outside a learning group cannot practice physical distancing, other measures must be explored, such as reconfiguring rooms, securing an alternate space to allow for physical distancing, installing a physical barrier, or providing virtual services where possible.

When staff are interacting with people outside of their learning group; physical distance cannot be consistently maintained; and none of the strategies outlined above are viable options, staff are required to wear a non-medical mask. Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff. See the [Prioritizing Health and Safety Flow Charts](#) of the Provincial K- 12 Guidelines section for more information.

The maximum learning group sizes (inclusive of students and staff) for Stage 2 is:

Elementary: 60

Middle: 60

Secondary: 120

## Physical Distancing

Reducing the number of close, in-person interactions an individual has in a day continues to be a key component of B.C.'s strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This can be accomplished in K-12 school settings through two different but complementary approaches: belonging to learning groups (cohorts) and/or physical distancing.

**In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact but they are not required to maintain physical distance.**

### How to Support Physical Distancing When Outside of a Learning Group

To support physical distancing requirements, the [Provincial Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) provide strategies that could be implemented, including:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes).
- Regularly remind students about keeping their hands to themselves. Use visual supports, signage, prompt, video modelling, etc. as necessary.
- Consider arranging desks/tables so students are not facing each other and using consistent or assigned seating arrangements.
- Consider traffic flow planning to reduce congestion in hallways and tight spaces such as using floor markings and posters. This may include one-way hallways and designated entrance and exit doors.
- Consider appropriate signage to encourage and instruct people on feasibly utilizing physical distancing.
- Barriers can be installed in places where physical distance cannot be regularly maintained, and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a learning group. This may include at a front reception desk where visitors check in or where food is distributed. (Barriers can include tables, cones, tape, and closed doors, etc.)



## Supporting Students with Disabilities

Health & Safety measures to promote inclusion for students with disabilities and diverse abilities will be put into place to facilitate this; which includes ongoing discussion on needs assessments to better understand the supports that student and families may require.

- Students with diverse abilities who cannot physically distance are not to be excluded from a learning group. Prevention and exposure control measures should be implemented to assist students (e.g. assigned seating, prompts, visual support, education using video modelling, social stories etc.)
- Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. For guidelines specific to children with immune suppression (e.g. students who have had a recent organ transplant, who are receiving chemotherapy, those with an illness impacting their immune system), please refer to [Students with Immune Suppression](#) in the Employee/Student Attendance section of the Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.
- In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact, but they are not required to practice strict physical distancing. Outside of a learning group, staff and other care providers working with students with disabilities/diverse abilities should continue with the physical distancing precautions mentioned above.
  - **If staff are not required to be in physical contact with students for educational purposes:** personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, is not needed for staff beyond that used as part of regular precautions for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work.
  - **If staff are required to be in physical contact with students for educational purposes:** personal protective equipment, such as non-medical masks or face coverings, should be used.

## Personal Items

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to only bring items that are necessary (e.g. backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles). At the end of the day, students will take home all personal items with the exception of school supplies.

Staff and students should not share personal items (including electronic devices, writing instruments, etc.)

- Personal items could be labelled with student's name to discourage accidental sharing.

## Food Safety

- Students are not to share individual food or drinks.
- Schools should not allow homemade food items to be made available to other students (e.g. Birthday treats, bake sale items).
- Staff and students are encouraged to bring necessary food for the day and take related belongings home at the end of each day.
- Any food served will be done so in a way to minimize transmission, including the use of regular handwashing, distancing while serving food, and selection of products to limit handling.
- Please note that different guidelines apply to food that is prepared in schools (e.g. as part of a culinary program) which are outlined under the Curriculum Programs section of this guide.
- As students tend to prepare food together in culinary programs, use of learning groups is encouraged.

## Student Transportation on Buses

To reduce the number of close in-person interactions on school buses the following strategies are recommended:

- Buses used for transporting students will be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in [BCCDC's Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#).
- Bus drivers will clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips and wear a non-medical mask as needed.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. **If a child has any symptoms, they must not take the bus nor go to school.**
- Parents are encouraged to ensure that students 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.

- Hand sanitizer is optional and will be provided to students as they board the bus.
- Parents are encouraged to support their child to physically distance while waiting for the bus for pick up.
- Where possible, at school bus line up areas should be set up to prevent crowding, and allow for physical distancing of 2m (e.g., tape on pavement, etc.) where required.
- Students are expected to use their bus pass to scan on and off the bus for the purpose of contact tracing.
  - Names of students will be recorded if no bus pass is provided for tracing purposes.
  - Up-to-date passenger lists will be kept to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.
- Students should not plan for friends to ride home with them on the bus – only registered students are permitted to ride a bus they are registered to.
- Face masks are mandatory for Secondary students – masks are available from the Bus Driver
- Students will load the bus from the back to the front.
  - Siblings will be asked to sit together on high capacity routes.
  - If space is available, students will be assigned to their own seat.
  - Students will not be seated directly behind the driver.
  - Students will be asked to sit by the window if seated alone.
  - Bus Drivers will use consistent seating as much as possible.
- When unloading the bus at school all students will exit the bus starting from front to back.
- When unloading the bus at home students will exit the bus starting with the most forward student. Students will be passing by other seated students but are asked to exit without contacting or engaging seated students.
- Bus Drivers will wear a mask and gloves (discard after each student) when in close contact with a students who require special care such as restraints, etc.

Families are encouraged to make alternate arrangements to using the Bus Service, if they are able.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. School will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with [the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document. Staff are asked to NOT bring in their own cleaning supplies as unhealthy chemical reactions can occur.

Schools will be cleaned and disinfected as follows:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least **once in a 24-hour period**. This includes items that only a single student uses, like an individual desk.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces will be undertaken by Custodians or designate at least **twice in 24 hours, including once during regular school hours**.
  - Frequently touched surfaces include:
    - Doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, toilet handles, keyboards, tables, desks and chairs used by multiple students e.g. outside a counselling or administration office.
    - Photocopier.
- In a Learning Group environment, school staff will continue regular cleaning/ disinfecting practices of toys, manipulatives, educational materials and any surface that is visibly dirty within their classroom (e.g. a dirty desk from a lunchtime spill or art project, etc.).
- All staff will implement ongoing, informal cleaning and disinfecting of their workspaces.
- The same cleaning and disinfecting frequency guidelines outlined above apply when different learning groups use the same space (e.g., classroom, gym, library, arts room, home economics or science lab, etc.). These spaces do not require disinfecting between each usage.

## Cleaning Supplies

- Custodial services will provide, readily accessible, approved and properly mixed disinfectant and paper towels for 'as needed' cleaning by any staff member. Disinfectant will be available for each classroom.
- Material Safety Data Sheets for all cleaning products are available through the Operations Department and the school office.
- All chemicals will be properly labelled in accordance with WHMIS requirements.
- A safe storage area will be designated by the school for all 'as needed' cleaning supplies.
- Custodial staff will ensure ongoing top-up of hand washing supplies and alcohol-based sanitizer.

## VICTORY Electro-static Disinfection

Classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned when the school day is complete and will be followed with a daily disinfection using a VICTORY electro-static cleaner. These cleaners efficiently disinfect all surfaces in a room through an electro-static charge which enables the disinfecting chemicals to attach to all surfaces. Dwell times are required for surface drying.

- To ensure proper classrooms cleaning using the VICTORY cleaner, the following must take place each day:
  - All desks and counters are cleared and free of items (including papers and pens)
  - No jackets or clothing left on backs of chairs
  - No items or articles are left on the floor, under desks and chairs
  - All cups, bottles and utensils are put away and not left in the sinks
  - All footwear has been put into appropriate designated spaces

## 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 (e.g., gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).

## **Laundry**

Follow these procedures when doing laundry (Home Economics, Physical and Health Education, 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°C).

## **School Staff Access**

- School entrance and exit procedures must be adhered to, including sign in and sign out sheets.
- Maintenance and Itinerant staff must, in all cases, sign in and check-in at the front office when carrying out work in schools.
- To avoid gathering, staff and students may be assigned a particular entrance at the site.
- Hours for school staff other than custodians will be between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday with no access on the weekend. This is to ensure that the Friday evening thorough after-hours cleaning is not contaminated or subject to any unknown exposures.

## **Visitor Access/Community Use**

Visitor access during school hours should be prioritized to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. teacher candidates, public health nurses, meal program volunteers, etc.). Parents are welcome but expected to make an appointment with the school before entering to ensure safe protocols are in place.

Schools should ensure that visitors are aware of health and safety protocols and requirements prior to entering the school.

- Schools are responsible for ensuring that all visitors confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering.
- Schools should keep a list of the date, names and contact information for any visitors who entered the school.

After hours community use of facilities can be considered after District consultation (e.g. after school programs).

### **Employee/Student Attendance**

Schools should notify their Association Superintendent and District will notify their local medical health officer if staff and/or student absenteeism exceeds 10 percent of regular attendance.

### **Illness & Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols**

- All staff who work in our schools must complete Daily Health Self-Assessment.
- Clearly communicate with parents and caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.
  - Schools should consider methods to receive confirmation from parents that a child does not have symptoms.
- Staff and students must stay home if sick and get tested for COVID-19.
- In the event of onset of student or staff illness, staff must follow the Protocol if a Student/Staff Member develops illness at school.
- School staff, including bus drivers, do not perform routine screening of students or staff for symptoms, check temperatures or perform COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals. However, if a child is visibly unwell, please contact parents as per normal school protocols.

### **Self-Assessment, Self-Isolation and Symptoms**

Anyone who wants to attend school **must** check themselves for symptoms of any sickness prior to going. Monitoring of symptoms must be done prior to taking any medications to relieve symptoms (e.g. Tylenol for fever; DayQuill for cold symptoms). Parents are responsible for monitoring their children for symptoms before bringing them to school.

For more information on symptoms of COVID-19, please see the [BCCDC Symptoms of COVID-19](#) page.

If you show any signs of COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home and get tested. Please use the [BC CDC COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) for guidance. Please notify your school and call out of your absence.

- Any student, staff or other person within the school who has symptoms of COVID-19 **OR** travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and [self-isolate](#), including children of essential service workers.
- Any student, staff, or other person within the school who has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms should seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms, provided the student/staff is asymptomatic. It is expected the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider.

Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

**If a student or staff is confirmed to have COVID-19, public health will do an investigation to confirm if any staff or students have been in close contact with that person and need to self-isolate. Public health will inform the school and superintendent if there are close contacts of a confirmed case within a learning group or school and provide instruction on next steps.**

### **Protocol if a Student/Staff Member develops symptoms of illness at school**

If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, schools should:

- Provide the student/staff with a non-medical mask if they don't have one (exceptions should be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical and disability-related reasons).
- Provide the student/staff with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others.
  - Principals will select a separate area that can be used as a “waiting area” for separating a sick child while awaiting parental/caregiver pick-up, which also allows for supervision. The selected area will, ideally, have access to a sink and handwashing supplies. As a minimum, it will be supplied with a hand



sanitization dispenser, and waste receptacle. The selected location shall not be the first aid room, to not impede the timely provision of school first aid services.

- The student is to be supervised and cared for, when separated.
- Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible.
- Contact the student's parent/caregiver with a request to have their child picked up as soon as possible. When the parent or caregiver arrives to pick up their child, they will phone school indicating they are in the parking lot and the student will be brought out to the parent or caregiver.
- Clean and disinfect the areas the student/staff used.
  - Any immediate hazards such as bodily fluids must be cleaned by school personnel following the Safe Work Procedure for Bodily fluids.
  - Access needs to be restricted to the waiting area to only those supporting the sick person. The waiting area needs to be cleaned and disinfected prior to being used by a different user.
  - Principal will inform Health and Safety Manager and or the Custodial Manager of the usage of the waiting room to ensure proper cleaning and disinfection.
- Encourage the student/staff to seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Request that the student/staff stay home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have resolved.

### **Protocol in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case in a school**

If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, and were potentially infectious while they were at school:

- Public health will perform an investigation to determine if there were any potential close contacts within the school. (To learn more about contact tracing, visit the [BCCDC website](#).)
  - Students and staff who have interacted with the confirmed case may be asked to stay home by Public Health while they complete their investigation.
- If it is determined that there are close contacts within the school, public health will notify the school administrators to request class and bus lists to assist with contact tracing and provide guidance on what steps should be taken.

- Public health may then:
  - Recommend 14-day isolation if necessary (for confirmed close contacts).
  - Recommend monitoring for symptoms if necessary.
  - Provide follow-up recommendations if necessary.
- Schools must continue to provide learning support to students required to self-isolate.
- Together, schools/school districts and public health officials will determine if any other actions are necessary.

## 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 rub dispensers, especially 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 may bring their own sanitizer or plain soap if they are on the list authorized by Health Canada or have a medical condition that require 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. If alcohol-based hand rub is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.
- The maximum occupancy for student washrooms must be posted.
- Handwashing instruction should take place at least once weekly with each group of students in Elementary.
- Handwashing signage will be posted throughout the school.

When Student Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<p>When they arrive at school.</p> <p>Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).</p> <p>Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker).</p> <p>Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the library, gym, music room, science lab, etc.).</p> <p>After using the toilet.</p> <p>After sneezing or coughing into hands. Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</p>	<p>When they arrive at school.</p> <p>Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch). Before and after eating and drinking.</p> <p>Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.</p> <p>Before and after giving medication to a student or self.</p> <p>After using the toilet.</p> <p>After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).</p> <p>After cleaning tasks.</p> <p>After removing gloves.</p> <p>After handling garbage.</p> <p>Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</p>

## Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

- Cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue.
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Maintain distance of 2 meters (6 feet) from anyone coughing or sneezing.

## Personal Protective Equipment

### Face masks and Face Shields

Staff 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) in high

traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Students in Secondary school are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical and disability-related reasons. For these exceptions, schools/districts should implement other environmental and administrative measures to ensure student and staff safety.

Schools are to provide resources for students and parents on how to properly wear, remove and care for non-medical masks.

**Non-medical masks are recommended for use in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance and is in close proximity to a person outside of their learning group or household. This may include riding the bus to school.**

**Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff) but can be provided upon request or if a student becomes ill.**

Staff can also wear a mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) within their classroom or learning group if that is their personal preference. Refer to the [Prioritizing Health and Safety- Flow Charts](#) section for more information.

Wearing a non-medical mask, face covering, or face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice for students and adults. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Those that choose to wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields must still seek to maintain physical distance from people outside of their learning group. There must be no crowding, gathering or congregating of people from different learning groups, even if non-medical masks are worn.

**Face shields are a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. They may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. Face shields should not be worn in place of non-medical masks.**

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

**Wearing non-medical masks at all times in schools is not recommended, as there are multiple, more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in place, such as:**

- **Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or required to self-isolate, including ensuring everyone entering the school performs a daily health check;**
- **Enhanced cleaning and disinfection;**
- **Placing students and staff into consistent groupings of people (learning groups);**
- **Adapting learning environments to maximize the use of space;**
- **Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between learning groups; and**
- **Frequent hand hygiene.**

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

## Gloves

- Broad spectrum glove use may increase transmission, and as such workers will not be permitted the use of gloves unless performing a tasks where they constitute required PPE as defined within the Safe Work Procedures for that task.
- Gloves may be used by staff providing first aid, staff providing close personal care or custodians working with cleaning agents. Glove use does not replace the safety provided by good hand washing and sanitation practices.

## General Ventilation and Air Circulation

At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, is contributing to the spread of the virus. The district has reviewed all ventilation systems, ensuring proper operation and air exchange.

In order to enhance school ventilation, schools should consider:

moving activities outdoors when possible (for example, lunch, classes, physical activity) and consider moving classrooms outside when space and weather permit opening windows when possible and if weather permits

## **School Based Requirements**

### Water Fountains

- Water fountains will not be in use during this time
- Bottle filling stations will remain open to provide drinking water source where needed, but students and staff are encouraged to bring the necessary water for the day with them.

### Lockers

- Lockers will not be in use during Stage 2.

## **Arrival and Departure Procedures**

### School Staff

- School staff should avoid congregating and socializing in groups.
- Time your arrival and departure to promote physical distancing and avoid congestion.

### Students

- Consider staggering start and dismissal times for students to reduce the congestion.
- Consider using multiple doors for entry and exit.
- Consider assigning areas of playground to different cohorts.
- Continuously remind and reinforce physical distancing requirements among students who are outside of their learning group.

## **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.
- Staffs will develop a plan for the disinfecting of 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 like tablets, remotes, keyboards, mice and gaming consoles can carry germs. These electronics should be cleaned and disinfected when shared.

- Use the district provided isopropyl based cleaning product to clean the device.
- Do this by spraying the black cloth first with the solution and then wipe the piece of equipment until it is clean and the product has mostly evaporated away.
- Never spray directly onto the device.
- Do not immerse devices in liquids and do not use alternated cleaning products such as hydrogen peroxide or vinegar as they do not work and may damage screens.
- Ideally, check with the manufacturer of your device for the best cleaning methods (e.g. did you know that you're not supposed to clean the tip of an Apple Pencil?).
- Turn off any electronics and unplug all connections before cleaning.

## Playgrounds

There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. Playgrounds are a safe environment. 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](#).

## Field Trips

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

Field trip locations must provide supervisors with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with the school's plan. The field trip supervisor should then share the plan with parents and school administration.

- For transportation, see guidance in the Transportation section in this document.
- Use of parent volunteers for driving groups of students is not permitted.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines.
- Ensure field trip numbers align with the PHO guidance on mass gatherings (i.e. 50 people).
- Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable.
- Conduct a risk assessment considering the field trip location - science exploration vs. exploring at the beach.
- No overnight field trips should occur.
- International Field Trips - cancelled until further notice.



## Communication and Training/Orientation

All school district personnel are required to:

- Review health and safety documents and all periodic updates as distributed by the District
- Review Orientation Video and PowerPoint prior to resuming regular attendance at their worksite
- Participate in any 'hands-on' training or education sessions as required to operationalize health and safety guidelines

## Curriculum, Programs and Activities

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines. Electives (e.g. Fine Arts education, etc.) are important to student health and well-being.

- All classes, programs and activities can continue to occur where:
  - physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group;
  - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for middle and 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 and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in classes and after equipment use.

In-person inter-school events including competitions, tournaments and festivals should not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format

## Food/Culinary Programs

Schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. The following guidelines should be applied:

## Food Safety

- In the case of food and culinary programs, where food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the students who prepared it, the following health and safety measures should apply:
  - Continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements.
  - Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in classes and after equipment use.

## Textiles Programs

Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:

- at the beginning and at the end of the class;
- before and after handling shared tools or equipment; and
- whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible.
  - Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
  - Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in classes and after equipment use.
  - When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations. If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.
- For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section.

## Music Programs

No in-person inter-school competitions/events should occur. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.

Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.

Staff should refer to 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. for additional information.

## Physical and Health Education/Outdoor Programs

- Encourage outdoor programs as much as possible.
- Teachers should plan physical activities that limit the use of shared equipment and:
  - Minimize physical contact inside learning groups; or
  - Support physical distancing outside of learning groups.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use.
- Refer to Physical and Health Education ([PHE](#)) Canada guide lines:
- Include more individual pursuits than traditional team activities such as dance, alternative environment and land-based activities, exercises without equipment, fitness, mindfulness, gymnastics, and target games.
- Explore local parks and green spaces to promote outdoor learning and activity.
- Focus on activities that do not use equipment.
  - If equipment must be used:
    - Avoid sharing equipment by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies
    - Assemble individualized PE kits that can be assigned to students
- Have students create their own PE kits to use at home or school and set aside budget for additional kits to be purchased

- Anticipate equipment hygiene compromises and keep extra equipment on hand so that instructional time is not lost to re-cleaning equipment
- Disinfect teaching aids (e.g., clipboards, white boards, pens, plastic bins for transporting materials etc.)
- Encourage students to come to school in clothing that is appropriate for PE and the weather conditions to eliminate the use of change rooms
  - When transitioning to/from outside remind students to use designated areas for changing into jackets and winter clothing if moving outdoors, such as in designated desk area or a marked side of the hallway

## Sports

Programs, activities and sports academies can occur if:

- physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group;
- physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for middle and 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.

No in-person inter-school competitions/events. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year.

See the [Memorandum from BC School Sports](#) for addition information.

## Science Labs

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.) Students and staff should wash their hands:
  - before and after handling shared tools or equipment;
  - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible
- Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.

- Clean and disinfect shared equipment.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
  - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

### Shop Classes & Trades in Training Programs

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.) Students and staff should wash their hands:
  - before and after handling shared tools or equipment;
  - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible
- Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
- Clean and disinfect shared equipment.
- When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
  - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.
- Ongoing collaboration and communication with post-secondary institutions for Trades in Training or other pre-trades apprenticeship programs is crucial.
- Ensure that staff and students in the K-12 school and the post-secondary institution are aware of health and safety measures in place.
- Diligent student self-assessment of health when transitioning between the secondary school and post-secondary institution.
- Given the unique structure of Trades Training Programs and oversight by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), new information on assessments and programming for these courses is [available on line](#).

- Information for workers is available on the [WorkSafeBC COVID-19](#) web page.

## Arts Education

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
  - at the beginning and at the end of the class;
  - before and after handling shared equipment; and
  - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible.
  - Avoid sharing equipment by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
  - Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section.
  - When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
  - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

## Theatre, Film and Dance Programs

- No in-person inter-school festivals/events should occur. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.
- Dance and drama classes should minimize contact by reorganizing warmups, exercises and performance work into smaller groups allowing for physical distancing to occur as per individual space limitations.
  - This could mean that portions of the class act as an audience and audit work.
  - This could mean that portions of the class work in alternate areas on their own small group or individual exercises.
- Blocking of scenes and dance numbers should be choreographed in ways that limit physical touch and face-to-face interactions, and instead seek

- creative solutions to dynamic storytelling and expressive movement.
- Shared equipment such as set pieces, props, cameras etc. should be cleaned and disinfected and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in drama, film or dance classes.
  - Costume items should be limited in their shared use at this time. For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of these guidelines.
  - Where possible, make use of outdoor and site-specific performance spaces that allow for physical distancing for drama, film and dance, especially if working in theatres, green rooms and studios that have no windows.
  - Consider alternatives for audience engagement such as online streaming, in class or family-oriented presentations.
  - The Association of BC Drama Educators (ABCDE) is currently developing additional guidelines for teaching drama during COVID-19. Staff should refer to the [ABCDE website](#) for more information.