

COVID-19

Safety Plan, Safe Work Instruction, and Protocols

As per BC Government COVID-19 K-12 Education Plan – Stage 2 (2021)

Acknowledgement:

This document is based on guidance provided by the Provincial Health Officer, BC Communicable Disease Control, Vancouver Coastal Health, the Ministry of Education, and *WorkSafeBC*. The VSB Medical Health Officer (Vancouver Coastal Health School Medical Health Officer SD 39) has reviewed this document in detail and provided guidance within. The focus of this document is on schools; however, the content also applies to other non-school worksites supervisors, and staff (where relevant).

**As COVID-19 information evolves, updates to this document may be needed.

VERSION 4 (Update April 4th, 2021)



Contents

BC Ministry of Education Priorities	4
WorkSafeBC	4
Hierarchy of Controls	5
Understanding COVID-19	5
Signs and Symptoms	5
Transmission Routes	5
Risk Assessment for K-12	6
Creating a Safe Physical and Emotional Environment	8
Health and Safety Committees	9
Staff Reporting COVID-19-Related Concerns	10
Keeping Staff and Parents/Caregivers Informed	10
Health and Safety Instructions for Staff	12
Prevention Measures and Controls	12
Gatherings and Events	12
Cohorts	13
Daily Health Assessments	16
Managing Staff and Students who Develop Symptoms of COVID-19	18
Controlling Access to the School/Site	22
Hand Hygiene	23
Coughing and Sneezing (Respiratory Etiquette)	24
Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact	24
The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	26
Limit Use of Shared Items	31
Cleaning and Disinfecting	32
Toys and Equipment	33
Behaviour Support Plans, Employee Safety Plans, & Personal Care Plans	34
Food	34
Additional Measures for Specific Shared Spaces and Activities	36
Emergency Procedures	48
Administering First Aid	49
Monitoring and Assessing	50
Other Resources and References	51
Appendix A: Hand Washing	52
Appendix B: Donning and Doffing Gloves Procedure	53
Appendix C: How to Wear a Face Mask	54

Appendix D: Daily Health Assessments..... 55
Appendix E – Current Public Health Orders and Direction 56
Appendix F – COVID-19 School Health and Safety Checklist 59

BC Ministry of Education Priorities

The goal of the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), and BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), is to provide a healthy and safe environment for staff and students, from kindergarten to graduation (K-12), in support of in-class instruction.

In-class instruction was suspended in response to a COVID-19 pandemic being declared in BC, the BC Ministry of Education discontinued in-school instruction in March 2020. The priorities identified when in-class instruction was suspended in March remain the current priorities as in-class instruction is re-introduced. These priorities are:

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

From March to June 2020, BC and the District operated in Stage 4 of the BC Restart Plan for K-12. This included remote learning and limited in-class learning opportunities for students with diverse needs and the children of essential service workers (ESW). In June 2020, BC and the District shifted to Stage 3 of the Plan, which included a combination of some in-class and remote learning at all grade levels, with limits set based on reduced student numbers/school density.

Stage 2 of the BC Restart Plan for K-12 began in September 2020 and continues. In Stage 2, 100% of students from K-12 will attend in-class instruction in Learning Groups/cohorts. See section on *Learning Groups/Cohorts*. **New PHO orders and guidelines are released from time to time and will be documented in [Appendix E](#).**

The Ministry of Education worked with Indigenous rights holders and K-12 partners to build on public health guidance to establish the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#). These guidelines must be followed by schools and school districts, including if there are any differences between them and this public health guidance.

K-12 Schools are in STAGE 2				
Remote learning for all	Remote learning with exceptions	In-class & remote learning	Learning groups: full-time in-class	Learning as usual: full-time in-class
Stage 5	Stage 4	Stage 3	Stage 2	Stage 1

WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC and the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations continue to apply during the COVID-19 pandemic. The District has considered WorkSafeBC's 6-step "Guide to Reducing the Risk of COVID-19", WorkSafeBC "K-12 Protocols for Returning to Operation" and other WorkSafeBC COVID-19 specific documents. This District Safety Plan will serve as a compliance guide for COVID-19 and for ease of reference the steps are included below:

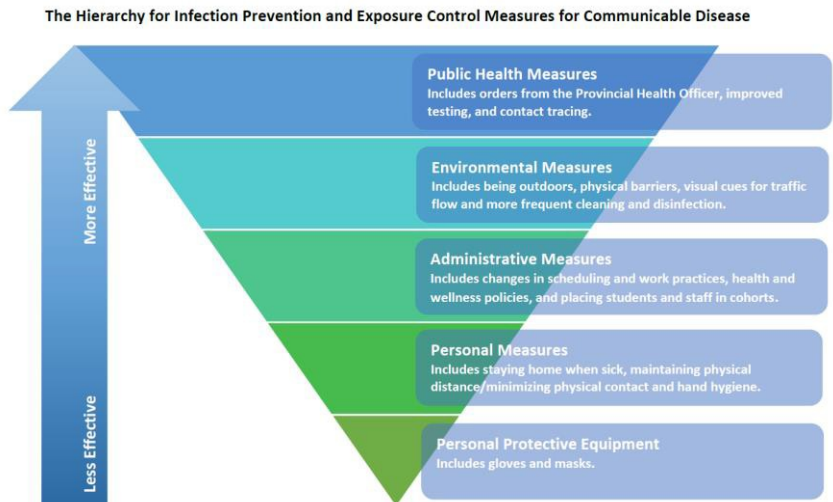
- Step 1: Assess the risk at your workplace
 - Risk assessment for COVID-19 is provided by public health
 - Identify risk requiring control by site supervisors working with the Site Health and Safety Committee
- Step 2: Implement measures to reduce the risk
- Step 3: Develop policies/procedures/practices
- Step 4: Develop communication plans and training
- Step 5: Monitor your workplace and update your plans as needed
- Step 6: Assess and address risks related to resuming operations

Responsibilities under WorkSafeBC remain unchanged. These are summarized below as related to COVID-19:

- District management/the employer is responsible for providing an overall healthy and safe workplace in accordance with the guidance of WorkSafeBC requirements, BCCDC, and the Provincial Health Officer.
- Supervisors (school administrators and managers) are responsible to ensure the health and safety of those who report to them and provide specific instruction and direction to staff relevant to their site and work tasks.
- Staff are responsible for participating in the District's health and safety program and working safely by following the District's implemented procedures and safety practices.

Hierarchy of Controls

Public health's *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. With the District, staff, students, and parents implementing and adhering to a combination of these control measures, the risk of COVID-19 will be reduced substantially in schools. **The layering of controls makes schools different than public places (e.g., stores, transit, etc.).** Note: Occupational safety controls as per *WorkSafeBC* are applied in a similar hierarchy with eliminating the hazard at the top of the hierarchy in place of public health.



Understanding COVID-19

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. The SARS-CoV-2 virus is a new strain of virus which first emerged in humans in 2019 and results in COVID-19 disease. COVID-19 resulted in a pandemic being declared globally, it can cause mild to serious illness and even death.

Signs and Symptoms

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the flu and common cold.

BCCDC advises that the key symptoms include:

- **Fever (above 38°C) or Chills**
- **Cough or worsening of chronic cough**
- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Loss of sense of smell or taste**

Other symptoms may also include:

- Sore throat
- Loss of appetite
- Extreme fatigue or tiredness
- Headache
- Body aches
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea

NOTE: Children have similar symptoms to adults, however, also may show symptoms differently than adults. For example, fatigue may show in children as poor feeding, decreased activity, or changes in behaviour. COVID-19 causes mild illness in the majority of cases in children. **COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe.**

Sometimes people with COVID-19 have mild illness, but their symptoms may suddenly worsen in a few days. For a complete and current list of symptoms refer to: www.bccdc.ca

Transmission Routes

COVID-19 is transmitted via liquid respiratory droplets and aerosols that are dispersed when an infected person coughs, sneezes, shouts, sings, or talks. Virus can enter the body through the:

- Eyes
- Nose
- Throat/mouth

Transmission of the virus from an infected person's respiratory droplets and aerosols to others can occur via:

1. Infectious droplets or aerosols coming into direct contact with the mucous membranes of another person's nose, mouth, or eyes, or they may be inhaled into their nose, mouth, airways, and lungs. This commonly occurs when a person spends longer durations in close proximity to another person who has COVID-19 or is a household contact of a person with COVID-19. Living in a household with someone with COVID-19 or having household-like contact with a COVID-19 case continues to be the most common route of community transmitted COVID-19.
2. The virus may also spread when a person touches another person (e.g., a handshake, hugs) or a surface or an object that has the virus on it, and then touches their mouth, nose, or eyes with unwashed hands.

Transmission by Droplets – How does it work? (adapted from BCCDC)

COVID-19 is mainly spread by liquid droplets that come out of the mouth and nose when a person with the virus breathes, coughs, sneezes, talks, or sings. Droplets come in a wide range of sizes, from smaller than the width of a hair to larger than a grain of sand. A few large droplets or many small droplets can contain enough virus to infect another person.

Larger droplets are heavier, and they usually fall to the ground within two meters. The majority of COVID-19 infections are spread from one person to another through larger droplets. This is why maintaining physical distance, adding physical barriers, wearing [masks](#), and hand hygiene are all important protective measures.

Smaller droplets (referred to as aerosols) come out of the mouth and nose at the same time as larger droplets. These smaller droplets are light, and they can float in the air for a longer time. Because of this, smaller droplets may collect in enclosed spaces unless they are diluted with clean air from the outdoors or from a ventilation system. If many people are sharing a space without enough clean air, it can lead to COVID-19 infections.

Risk Assessment for K-12

The assessment of risk with respect to COVID-19 pandemic is the jurisdiction of public health, specifically for the District this includes the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), BC Communicable Disease Control, and Vancouver Coastal Health. **The overall assessment of risk remains low for K-12. BC school districts are currently at Stage 2 in the BC Ministry of Education K-12 Education Restart Plan.**

The following is reproduced from the BCCDC - *COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings*:

COVID-19 and Children (ages 0-19 years)

- **COVID-19 virus has a relatively low infection rate in children (ages 0 to 19 years). In BC, from September 7 to December 31, 2020:**
 - ~3% of younger children (aged 5-12) and ~6% of older children (13-18) tested for COVID-19 were positive.
 - ~12% of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 were among children (0-18), despite this group making up ~20% of the general population.
 - Younger children (aged 5-12) comprise a smaller proportion of the total confirmed child cases compared to children between the ages of 13 and 18.
- To the end of December 2020, 47 children under 18 were admitted to hospital for COVID-19 in BC. There have been no deaths.
- Children do not appear to be the primary drivers of COVID-19 transmission in schools, community settings or households.

- Based on published literature to date, the majority of cases in children are the result of household transmission from an asymptomatic adult family member with COVID-19. Within households and family groupings, adults appear to be the primary drivers of transmission. Older children are more likely to transmit than younger children.
- Children can experience the same symptoms as adults but may show symptoms differently. For example, fatigue may show in children as poor feeding, decreased activity, or changes in behaviour.

Children with Immune Suppression or Medical Complexities

- Children under one year of age, and those who are immunocompromised or have pre-existing pulmonary conditions are at a higher risk of more severe illness from COVID-19 (visit [the BCCDC Children with Immune Suppression](#) page for further details).
- Children who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 can still receive in-person instruction. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to consult with their health-care provider to determine their child’s level of risk. Additional information at the BCCDC website listed in this section.
- Children who have health conditions that may place them at increased risk for more severe outcomes should speak to their health care provider to determine their individual level of risk.

COVID-19 and Adults (Staff and Parents)

- Most of the people infected with COVID-19 in B.C. from September 8 to December 31st were adults (19 years or above). Adults represented ~88% of the cases, though make up ~82% of the population.
- Some adults with specific health conditions are at an increased chance of developing severe illness or complications from COVID-19, including older people and those with chronic health conditions. Additional information is available from BCCDC.
- **Added Note:** There is no public health restriction on staff with asthma, diabetes, heart disease, compromised immune systems, or are age 65 or older (or who live with somebody who has any of these conditions) from working in the school environment in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Source: Vancouver Coastal Health). It is known that such pre-existing conditions may increase the risk of severity of illness should you acquire it. If an employee is at greater risk of more severe illness, they should consult with and follow the advice of their personal physicians or medical practitioners. They may consider extra precautions at work such as more frequent hand hygiene and maintaining physical distance at all times.

COVID-19 and Schools

- Schools do not appear to result in significant increases in community transmission of COVID-19.
 - The likelihood of a person attending school while infectious with COVID-19 reflects local community prevalence.
 - Increasing evidence supports that widespread asymptomatic transmission is not driving transmission in schools.
 - Internationally, transmission within schools’ accounts for a minority of all COVID-19 cases.
- Implementation of infection prevention and exposure control measures is critically important to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in schools.
 - The risk of transmission in school settings is low when infection prevention and exposure control measures are in place and adhered to.

- Internationally, in-person attendance at school in the two weeks preceding a positive test has not been associated with increased likelihood of infection, as people who tested positive were more likely to have attended social activities and gatherings with others outside of the household.
- Within BC:
 - School medical health officers note that most school exposures did not result in transmission within the school. When transmission occurred, it typically resulted in a small number of additional cases.
 - In [Vancouver Coastal Health](#), from September 10th to December 18th, approximately 700 students or staff (out of a total population of over 100 thousand), were diagnosed with COVID-19. Over 90 per cent of these cases did not result in any school-based transmission.
- For adults working within schools:
 - transmission from staff to staff is more likely than among staff to students, students to staff, or students to students.
 - There does not appear to be a higher risk of COVID-19 at school than in the community or in their household.
 - There does not appear to be a higher risk of COVID-19 than other occupations that involve contact with others.
- **The detection of multiple COVID-19 cases within a school does not mean that transmission occurred within the school setting; these can be related to exposure within the community and households.**
- Schools and childcare facility closures have significant negative mental health and socioeconomic impacts on children, including increased stress, and decreased educational outcomes, connectedness with peers and the broader community, and health behaviours. These outcomes disproportionately impact children with vulnerabilities.
- Prevention measures and mitigation strategies involving children must be commensurate with risk.

This information is based on the best evidence currently available and will continue to be updated.

For up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the [BC Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\) website](#).

Creating a Safe Physical and Emotional Environment

In Stage 2 of the K-12 Restart Plan, staff will have a vital role in creating a safe physical and emotional environment. To this end, staff are encouraged to practice the 3 Rs: *Reassurance, Routines, and Regulation*.

- **Reassurance:** Social emotional learning is always an important focus for educators. When needed, reassure students about their safety and their family’s safety. It is the role of adults to keep them safe.
- **Routines:** Establish and maintain routines to provide students with a sense of safety and predictability. Staff will also support students by modelling the prevention measures (e.g., hand hygiene, physical distancing, etc.).
- **Regulation:** Support self-regulation. When students are stressed, their bodies respond by activating stress response systems. To help them manage these reactions, it is important to both validate their feelings (e.g., “I understand how you might feel worried...”) and encourage them to engage in activities that help them self-regulate (e.g., exercise, deep breathing, mindfulness, regular eating and sleeping routines). Decreasing student anxiety and stress is an important role of the school at this time.

Trauma-Informed Practice

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

Trauma-informed practice includes:

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

Regular 'check-ins' with others can assist in gathering important information to inform the level of trauma response and recovery necessary to support the school community.

The North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has released a resource to assist the education sector in supporting the transition back to school called [Guidelines for Re-Entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic: Managing the Social-Emotional and Traumatic Impact](#). To support educators to develop compassionate learning communities through trauma-informed practice, the Ministry has created [trauma-informed practice resources](#) that are available on the [erase website](#).

School district and school staff should practice awareness and sensitivity regarding the complex and devastating history that pandemics have had on many Indigenous communities.

Administrators have been provided with resources and tools to share with school site staff related to trauma informed practice and emotional wellness.

Supports are in place for all staff should they be struggling with excessive worry or anxiety due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff and their immediate families can contact the District's *Employee and Family Assistance Program*: <http://vsb.lifeworks.com>

Health and Safety Committees

Site Health and Safety Committees continue to function and play an important advisory and inspection role during the COVID-19 pandemic in schools. For example, in support of COVID-19 risk reduction controls and protocols, the site Health and Safety (H&S) Committees will:

- Review the District's *COVID-19 Safety Plan, Safe Work Instruction and Protocols, Stage 2* (e.g., this document).
- Conduct an assessment of the school safety plan against required prevention measures using the provincial *COVID-19 School Health and Safety Checklist* ([Appendix F](#)).
- Consult and share information with site staff on H&S issues, including COVID-19.
 - Reminder: H&S Committee members will continue to remind staff to report health or safety concerns in a timely fashion to their administrator/supervisor, including those regarding COVID-19.
- Conduct a meeting and site inspection of the school/site focusing on local COVID-19 controls in the first week of the school year prior to the arrival of students and as determined from time to time, based on new public health orders or guidelines that impact schools.
- Conduct monthly meetings while adhering to COVID-19 safety measures. For clarity, local workplace procedures or staff concerns as they relate to COVID-19 are in scope for the site H&S Committee. *Microsoft Teams* is also a way to meet safely, whether working in the building or remotely.
- Collaborate with and provide feedback to administration/management on local COVID-19 control measure

implementation and site-specific Safety Plans and safe work procedures. Examples: the specifics of your site's arrival areas, hallways, traffic flow, office access, other procedures or measures applied at the school/worksites, etc.

- Conduct site inspections as a tool to advise the administration/management and District of areas where COVID-19 risk reduction methods may be an issue or concern.
- Continue with other regular H&S Committee responsibilities.

Staff Reporting COVID-19-Related Concerns

As per the District's standard processes, with respect to reporting health and safety concerns, COVID-19 concerns must be reported to a staff member's administrator/supervisor in a timely fashion (*WorkSafeBC* requirement). The process and options for reporting COVID-19 concerns school administrators/supervisors are in person, in writing, via email, or via Microsoft Teams.

Note: The protocols in this document apply to schools and non-school worksites and staff across the district.

Concerns that cannot be addressed in a timely manner via the school administrator/supervisor or with support of the District Health and Safety department, should be referred to the Site Health and Safety Committee for consideration.

The VSB Health and Safety department is also a resource to address COVID-19 issues from any supervisor or staff member. To contact district H&S, [email](#) or call 604-713-5925.

Keeping Staff and Parents/Caregivers Informed

Clear and open lines of communications are critically important in times of uncertainty. In addition to regular communications, school administrators will keep staff and parents informed regarding control measures present in the school and in classrooms and any other extra precautions for COVID-19 in place at the school.

For current information on COVID-19 which is relevant to the school district, staff, parents, and the public should refer to the VSB website (www.vsb.bc.ca , *Important Links, COVID-19 Updates*).

Confidentiality of Medical Information

The Ministry of Health and BCCDC has advised all BC school districts that:

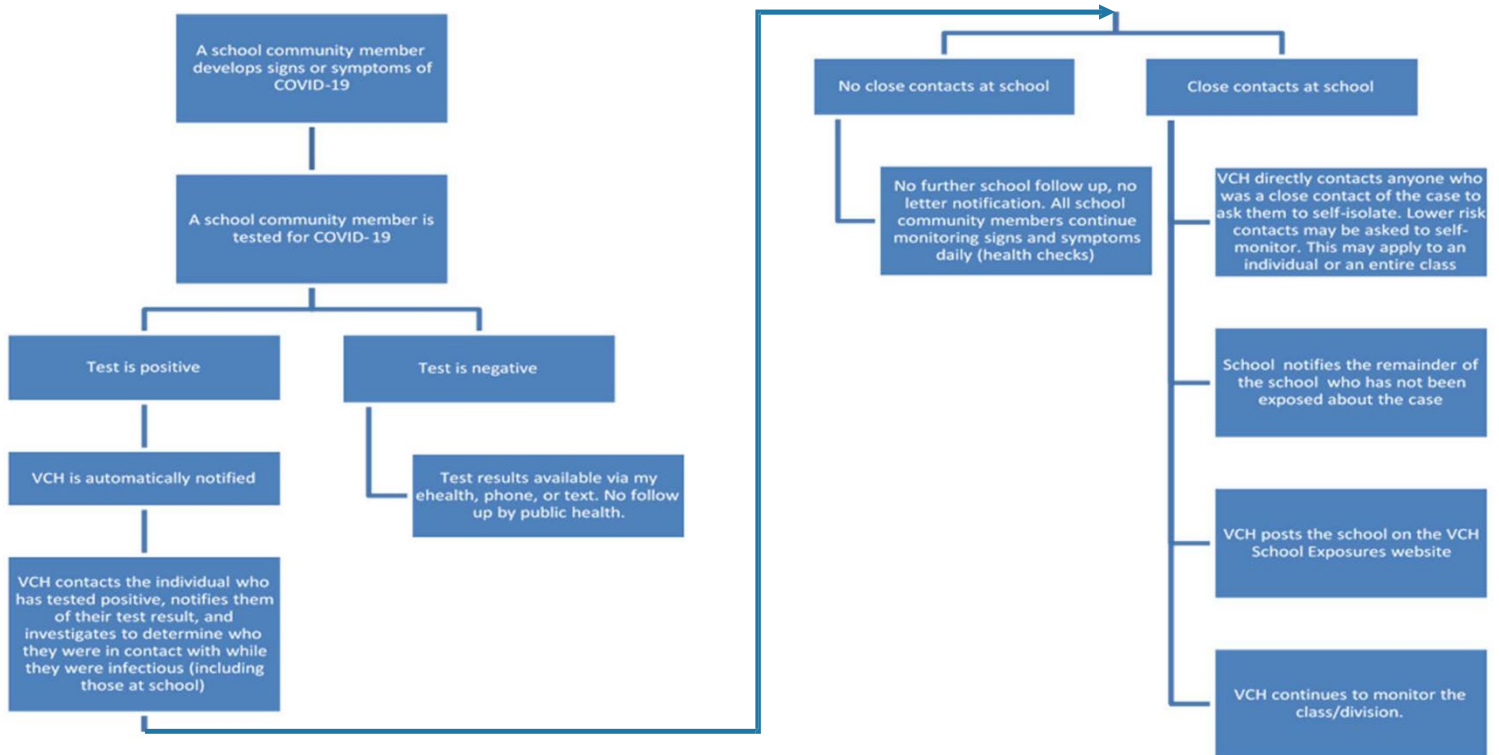
School administrators or staff should not provide notifications to staff or students' families about potential or confirmed COVID-19 cases unless the school administrator is directed to do so by the school medical health officer. School Administrators are to follow processes outlined in [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators – Management of Illness and Confirmed Cases](#). This is in keeping with best practices in public health and the *Personal Information Protection Act*.

Staff, parents, and students are asked to keep in mind that during COVID-19 there are many rumors and false reports of cases or exposures, and these understandably create anxiety and concern. However, VCH follows-up with all actual COVID-19 cases as well as any credible reports brought to VCH by the District or school administrators.

Public Health (VCH) Contact Tracing for COVID-19 Cases (Potential Exposures) in Schools

A potential **exposure** occurs when a person attends school when they may have been potentially infectious with COVID-19 and there is a risk of transmission to others. It is important that staff, parents, and students understand what communications will occur should someone in the school community be diagnosed by public health with COVID-19.

Understanding the VCH process of contact tracing and follow-up on each case of COVID-19, is key in understanding what school notices mean and when to expect them. The following flow-chart outlines the steps and decision points made by VCH when any person who attends or works at a school becomes symptomatic or ill due to COVID-19.



Self-Monitoring

To *self-monitor* is to actively assess your health, or the health of your child, for COVID-19 symptoms. Self-monitoring is what every citizen of BC is being asked to do continually and what the District requires both staff and parents/students to do daily as part of the Daily Health Assessment (See [Appendix D](#)).

A “self-monitoring” letter from VCH to a class(es) is advising of a **low-risk** situation. VCH issues self-monitoring letters to make specific families and classes aware that a person who was ill with COVID-19 was present for a short time while at school, but that the potential exposure is considered low risk by public health. As a result, the only action required is to continue with self-monitoring as per the routine in the Daily Health Assessment.

Self-Isolation

To *self-isolate* or self-isolation due to COVID-19 is to stay home and away from all others, ideally including others in your immediate family and home. Self-isolation is a tool used by public health to help limit the spread of COVID-19. VCH asks anyone who they assess as having close contact with a lab confirmed COVID-19 case to self-isolate. Typically, self-isolation is for 14 days from the last date of close contact with the confirmed COVID-19 case.

Note: Individual staff or students who, as determined by public health, had close contact with a COVID-19 case during that person’s infectious period, will be contacted directly by a VCH/public health staff member and advised to self-isolate at home by VCH/public health. Everyone with elevated risk due to close contact with a COVID-19 case is notified directly by VCH/public health.

A “self-isolation” letter from VCH to a school class or group is sent to advise that a person with COVID-19 had potential close contact with an entire class or group and that the group is an elevated risk of being exposed to

COVID-19 and/or transmission of COVID-19 within the class or group has been identified by public health. Only a public health Medical Health Officer (directly or via an order) can direct a person/people to self-isolate.

Note: The term quarantine is currently used by public health for isolation of international travelers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact VSB Leaves (leaves@vsb.bc.ca) for clarity if this applies to you and the section in this document *Employee Services – Leaves Related to COVID-19*.

Cluster of Cases

A **cluster** refers to two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 that occur among students and/or staff within a 14-day period, and isolated transmission is suspected or confirmed to have occurred within the school. When this occurs, public health, under the direction of a Medical Health Officer will investigate to determine if additional measures are required to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

NOTE: It is expected that multiple cases may occur within a 14-day period, especially when COVID-19 is circulating in the community. This does not necessarily mean that transmission occurred in the school, as they can also be the result of interactions outside of the school setting.

Outbreaks in Schools

An **outbreak** is when there is sustained, uncontrolled, widespread transmission of COVID-19 within a school, and a Medical Health Officer determines extraordinary public health measures are necessary to stop further transmission in the school or school community. Extraordinary public health measures are at the discretion of the Medical Health Officer and may include ordering the school to close for a certain amount of time or requiring testing of all potentially exposed individuals regardless of symptoms.

Health and Safety Instructions for Staff

All staff must review, understand, and follow the information and protocols and procedures provided in this document and through training, local work instruction, and/or additional information provided by their school administrators/supervisors. If staff have questions, they must discuss these without delay with their school administrator/supervisor, who will provide the information or can seek District or public health clarity if they do not have the answers.

Accompanying this document, updated instruction and training video plus posters, reminders, and work site-based information and protocols will be provided to staff by school administrators/supervisors. In some instances (such as Grounds, Maintenance, and others) additional detailed safe work procedures have been developed, shared with relevant staff, and can be accessed via the school administrator/supervisor and the VSB Health and Safety webpages.

Prevention Measures and Controls

The following prevention measures are in place in VSB schools to comply with the Stage 2 requirements and provincial guidance.

Gatherings and Events

The *Provincial Health Officer's Order for Gatherings and Events* prohibits the gathering of any size at a residence and only up to 10 people can gather outdoors. **This order does not apply to schools.** It also does not apply to workplaces such as office buildings, entire workshop facilities, etc. The Order is focused on events where people gather and where control measures may be hard to implement. As such, there can be more than 10 or 50 students and staff in a school or Cohort (see section on *Cohorts*) given the many control measures in place in school settings. It is important to note that the Gatherings and Events Order may be amended from time to time. Please refer to

[Appendix E](#) and for the most current public health orders, refer to the BC government website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus> .

School Gatherings

School gatherings should occur within the Cohort.

- Gatherings should not exceed the maximum Cohort size in the setting and include the minimum number of additional people required (e.g., school staff, visitors, etc.) to meet the gathering’s purpose and intended outcome.
 - Additional people should be limited and minimized as much as is practical to do so and remain physically distanced.
 - These gatherings should happen minimally.
- Schools should seek virtual alternatives for larger gatherings and assemblies, extra-curricular, etc.
- Assemblies of staff and students larger than the Cohort are not to be held in-person.
- Examinations or assessments are not considered school gatherings. They should be implemented in accordance with the guidance for within-cohort and multi-cohort learning in this document.

Gatherings of Staff for Essential Work Purposes

Business meetings are exempt from the *Gathering and Events Order* and this includes essential business meetings in the District.

- These meetings should be held by virtual means where practical.
- There are, however, district-level meetings that are essential to be held in-person and/or the purpose of the business meetings require that the meeting occurs in-person.
 - The number of attendees who may be present at an in-person business meeting will be based on the space allowing for all participants to maintain 2 metres physical distancing from each other while seated and there is sufficient space in aisles and elsewhere in the room to permit physical distancing at entry and exit.
 - Masks will be required to be worn by participants of in-person meetings unless there is a barrier between participants. All other COVID-19 safety measures must be followed.

Cohorts

A cohort/learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout the school quarter, semester, or year and who primarily interact with each other.

For example, a Cohort could be made up of:

- A single class of students
- Two classes (2) that sometimes join together for additional learning activities in elementary schools.
- A group of secondary school students with the same courses.

Cohorts also include staff who work exclusively within the Cohort such as:

- Teachers
- Student Support Workers
- Other staff as determined necessary at a school level

Important: Physical distancing within a cohort includes avoiding physical contact, minimizing close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible in the space. Young students may not be able to consistently reduce physical contact. Also see section on *Physical Distancing*.

Rationale for Cohorts

Cohorts provide a range of benefits for students including more in-class learning time, increased peer interaction and support, and decreased feelings of isolation.

Compared to other public settings, schools have a relatively consistent set of people accessing the building. By introducing learning groups, schools are further reducing the number of interactions between students and staff. The majority of people in a Cohort are children, who are at lower risk of COVID-19 infection. Finally, using Cohorts assists public health with contact tracing in the event of a potential COVID-19 case being identified at a school.

Schools also have a comprehensive set of safety measures in place, including enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols, frequent hand washing and/or sanitizing, and policies that require students and staff to stay home if they are ill.

Cohort Size

As per the *BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings*, there are set maximums for the number of people who can be in a Cohort. These are:

- Kindergarten to Grade 7: 60 people/Cohort (includes students and staff) per quarter, semester, or term
- Grade 8-12: 120 people/ Cohort (this includes students and staff) per quarter, semester, or term

Note: Cohorts maximums from BCCDC are smaller in elementary schools due to the recognition that younger children are less able to consistently implement personal measures such as hand hygiene, reducing physical contact and recognizing and articulating symptoms of illness.

School Schedule and Groups

Each school district in BC and school in the District, is required to develop a custom Cohort strategy and schedule. By necessity, the school calendar and individual school schedules will differ from the past.

Consistent seating should be arranged within a cohort.

Schools opened in September following a delay to allow staff have time to reintroduce themselves to the school and plan for changes such as working within Cohorts and new schedules. Students then were provided with an orientation on their first two days of attendance in September, prior to curricular activities beginning.

Multi-Cohort Learning

Multiple groups of students from different cohorts can be in the same learning space at the same time if physical distancing can be strictly practiced between people from different cohorts, and there is adequate space available to prevent crowding of those from within the same cohort.

Multi-Cohort Services

Students from different cohorts may need to be together to receive beneficial social supports, programs, or services (e.g., meal programs, after school clubs, etc.). Within these supports or services, it is expected that cohorts are maintained, and physical distancing is practiced as much as is practical to do so while still ensuring the support, program or service continues. This does not apply to extracurricular activities where physical distancing (2m) between cohorts should consistently be practiced.

In elementary schools

Each elementary school's plan will vary. In most cases the Cohort will be the student's class/division. Typical changes to the school day will include students remaining in their classroom, assigned seating, staggered breaks with other Cohorts while physical distance is maintained (e.g., older grades, play together but keep physically distanced, play on separate areas of the school grounds at the same time, etc.), staggered and scheduled use of common spaces (e.g., library, gyms, etc.).

In secondary schools

For secondary schools, the annual calendar is on a quarter system and courses will change every 10 weeks. The daily class schedule will be divided into three periods: one morning class, one mid-day flexible class/program, and one afternoon class. Students will attend a maximum of 2 classes in-person a day (either morning or afternoon class, plus flexible mid-day class/program (varies by student)). In-person class sizes will vary depending on the course or program. Most core/fundamental courses will have 50% of the regular student capacity, while other elective courses, such as those in flex time, many have more (e.g., up to 30 or more). Remote instruction will also be incorporated into the daily schedule and students will attend 1 remote class/day. For example, if a student attends in-person math class in the morning, they will attend remotely in the afternoon and vice versa.

This system will provide optimal health and safety of staff and students, including Cohorts as per provincial guidance, and providing the greatest number of course options for students (as deemed valuable by schools and families when surveyed by the district).

Breaks in the School Day and Interactions with Other Cohorts

Students

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

With elementary students, students can socialize with peers in different Cohorts if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact or if they are indoors and maintain physical distance. If time at a break is spent solely within their Cohort then the expectation is to minimize physical contact among students and staff as always.

- Elementary-aged students may be less able to consistently maintain physical distance. Outdoors is a lower-risk environment than indoors and will be encouraged in schools.

With secondary students and staff, students can socialize with peers in different Cohorts if they maintain physical distance. Students must maintain physical distance in these circumstances. If at break solely with those within their Cohort, they are to minimize physical contact.

- Secondary-school students are expected to be capable of consistently maintaining physical distance when it is required. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student should socialize within their Cohort only or where they can be supported to physically distance.
- The secondary school model being implemented will not have a scheduled lunch break for students on-site.

Staff

All staff are to maintain 2 m distance from other staff/adults during breaks in the school day and immediately before and after classes.

Itinerant and On-Call Staff Interacting with Cohorts

The following will vary based on the school, need, and On Call staff availability.

The District and schools will take steps to minimize the number of staff from outside the Cohort who interact with those within any Cohorts while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy, and safe environment. To help minimize the number of interactions between students and staff, where possible, the following will be implemented:

The District will:

- Review the needs of schools for On-Call staff within quadrants and/or Families of Schools within the District.
- Permanent continuing staff may be assigned to home schools as additional supports for staff absences.

School Administrators will:

- Assign student support workers (SSWs) to a Cohort, whenever possible.
- Deploy unassigned continuing staff to a school and/or Cohort.

Staff outside of a Cohort must practice physical distancing when interacting with the Cohort. For example, a Resource Teacher, Counsellor, Prep Teacher, Speech and Language Pathologist, Behaviour Consultant, SSW (who are outside of the Learning Group), or members of the Urgent Intervention Team, can work with students from multiple Learning Groups/Cohorts by maintaining physical distance.

In situations where staff outside a Cohort cannot practice physical distancing, other measures must be explored at the school level, such as reconfiguring rooms, securing an alternate space to allow for physical distancing, or providing virtual services where possible.

When staff are interacting with people outside of their Cohort and physical distance cannot be consistently maintained (and none of the strategies outlined above are viable options), consider virtual options, other spaces, plexiglass barriers, and/or opt for a face shield. Masks are required by all staff indoors, but do not replace physical distancing.

Daily Health Assessments

Staff, students, and any authorized visitors **must not attend a school/worksite** and must stay home if they:

- Are ill or have any symptoms of a cold, flu, or COVID-19.
- Have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days (PHO Order).
- Have been identified by public health as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.
- Live in a household with someone who has been tested and public health has confirmed is a COVID-19 case.

Staff Daily Health Self-Assessment

Staff must assess/check their own health daily for symptoms of cold, flu, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school or attending work. **If unwell with cold, flu, or COVID-19 symptoms, an employee must stay home.** If symptoms warrant, the employee should be tested for COVID-19 (see *What to Do if you Have Symptoms of COVID-19*). If off work or unwell for other reasons, staff must continue to report their absence in SFE (as per the District's usual procedure).

The Daily Health Self-Assessment (checklist) for all employees is provided in [Appendix D](#). A copy will be provided to all district employees. For ease of reference, it is recommended that a copy of this be kept in a convenient location at home.

Commitment to Daily Health Assessments - Staff: At start up, **all employees of the District** will be asked to submit one checklist to their supervisor confirming they understand: 1) how to conduct this daily self-assessment, 2) that this process must be completed daily, and most importantly 3) they must stay home if they have symptoms consistent with a cold, flu, or are ill and seek the advice of a healthcare professional, and if advised, get tested to exclude COVID-19 and self-isolate while awaiting the results. School administrators/supervisors will regularly reinforce with staff the importance of Daily Health Assessments and the need to stay home even if they have even mild symptoms. Reinforcement will take the form of posters of the Daily Health Assessment at staff entrances and sign in and reminders in meetings, emails, Microsoft Teams.

Students' Daily Health Assessment

Parents and guardians must assess/check their child's health daily for symptoms of cold, flu, or COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. This applies to elementary and secondary students. The Ministry of Education's K-12 Health Check app which parents may use to complete their child(ren)'s required Daily Health Assessment. The app is available at: [K-12 Health Check \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keep-well/health-check).

If not making daily use of the K-12 Health Check app, the Daily Health Assessment all parents must refer to when conducting a daily health check of their child(ren) is provided in [Appendix D](#). Prior to school in September, a copy is distributed to all families and it is recommended that a copy of this be kept in a convenient location at home for daily reference. **If unwell or symptomatic, the student must stay home and self-isolate** (see below) and, as always, the parent should call the school office to report the absence to the school.

Commitment to Daily Health Assessments – Students/Families: On a one-time basis for the school year, parents/guardians will be asked to submit one checklist to the school confirming they understand: 1) how to conduct the Daily Health Assessment and 2) that this health assessment/check must be conducted daily, 3) they must keep their child(ren) home if their child(ren) have symptoms or are ill, as per the Daily Health Assessment, and seek the advice of a healthcare professional or 8-1-1. School administrators/supervisors will regularly reinforce with families/older students the importance of Daily Health Assessments and the need for students to stay home even if they have only mild symptoms.

Allergies and People with Chronic Medical Conditions with COVID-19-like Symptoms

If an employee or student (or their parent) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they can continue to attend school. No assessment or note should be required from a health care provider. If they experience any change or worsening in symptoms, detailed in the Daily Health Assessment, they must seek assessment by a health-care provider. People with these conditions may consider generally sharing that they have such a condition to avoid inquiry from others and are to be treated with respect by others.

Managing Staff and Students who Develop Symptoms of COVID-19

The following are procedures for managing when either staff or students develop symptoms of COVID-19 at school/work.

Staff	Students
<p>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS <u>AT WORK</u>:</p> <p>Symptomatic employees must report their condition, leave the building/worksite immediately, and go home as soon as possible.</p> <p>If unable to leave the worksite immediately, staff must take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The symptomatic employee should separate/isolate themselves into an area away from others (e.g., outside, in the designated health/isolation room). 2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from all others. 3. The symptomatic employee will wear a non-medical face mask if tolerated (disposable masks are available in the school health/isolation room) or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth while waiting to be picked up. 4. Staff accompanying the symptomatic employee or providing first aid to them must wear a disposable non-medical mask and wear safety eyewear or a face shield to protect their eyes (available in health/isolation room). 5. Once the symptomatic employee is picked up/gone home, the building engineer/custodial staff must clean and disinfect the space where the employee was separated/isolated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas). 6. Once the symptomatic employee leaves the school, properly dispose of any used paper non-medical masks in a waste bin, or clean fabric masks, and practice diligent hand hygiene. 7. The symptomatic employee will notify their administrator/supervisor of their need to leave the site unexpectedly for medical reasons. Staff are under no obligation to reveal private medical information to their administrator/supervisor. 	<p>IF A STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS <u>AT SCHOOL</u>:</p> <p>Staff must take the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediately separate the symptomatic/ill student from others in the designated health/isolation room. 2. Contact the student’s parent/guardian to pick them up as soon as possible. 3. Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student. If it is not possible to maintain 2 metre distance from the ill student, staff should wear a disposable non-medical mask if available and tolerated or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth and wear safety eyewear or a face shield to protect your eyes (available in health/isolation room). 4. Provide the student with a disposable non-medical mask or tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene. 5. Avoid touching the student’s body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If staff do have contact with the student’s body fluids, practice diligent hand hygiene right away. 6. Once the student is picked up, properly dispose of paper non-medical masks in a waste bin, or clean fabric masks and practice diligent hand hygiene. 7. The building engineer/custodial staff will clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated/isolated and the student’s classroom. <p>Parents/guardians must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.</p>
<p>Students and staff should return to school according to the guidance under the “<i>What to do if you have COVID-19 Symptoms</i>” section below. A healthcare provider’s note is not required for return.</p>	

Additionally, staff and parents may wish to contact local public health unit or 8-1-1 to seek further advice. In BC and in the VCH region, testing is readily available to all people who are ill or who have symptoms of COVID-19. Results are available within 24-48 hours (subject to change).

What to Do if You have Symptoms of COVID-19

***Note: The following symptoms and action items are based on new information from the BCCDC. A NEW Daily Health Assessment form and information specific to K-12 staff and students is under development by BCCDC and the Ministry of Education and will be available shortly. This section and [Appendix D](#) will be updated at that time.**

The following applies to both staff/adults and students. Based on current evidence, some symptoms are more likely to be related to COVID-19 than others. These key symptoms include *fever, chills, cough or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, and loss of sense of smell or taste*. Do not dismiss or underestimate these symptoms.

For new or worsening symptoms that align with COVID-19 symptoms:

<u>SYMPTOMS</u>	<u>WHAT TO DO</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fever above 38°C▪ Chills▪ Cough or worsening chronic cough▪ Loss of sense of smell or taste▪ Difficulty breathing	<p>If you have 1 or more of these symptoms: <i>Get tested and stay home. Follow directions of public health.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sore throat▪ Loss of appetite▪ Headache▪ Body aches▪ Extreme fatigue or tiredness▪ Nausea or vomiting▪ Diarrhea	<p>If you have 1 of these symptoms: <i>Stay home until your symptoms improve or resolve. If your symptoms do not improve, contact a health care provider, or call 8-1-1</i></p> <p>If you have 2 or more of these symptoms: <i>Stay home and wait 24 hours to see if you feel better. Get tested if not better after 24 hours.</i></p>

If based on their symptoms a test was not recommended (e.g., the guidance is to ‘stay home until you feel better’), the person can return to school when their symptoms improve, and they feel well enough.

If based on their symptoms a test is recommended (e.g., the guidance includes ‘get tested’), the person must stay home until they receive their test result.

- If the test is **negative**, they can return to school when symptoms improve, and they feel well enough.
- If the test is **positive**, they must follow direction from public health on when they can return to school.

If staff, students, or families continue to have any questions, or the symptoms do not resolve contact a health care provider (e.g., family doctor) or call 8-1-1. **IMPORTANT:** Only a Medical Health Officer (MHO) with public health can put a staff member into isolation for COVID-19 and qualify a staff for isolation pay. While 8-1-1 is a resource, they are not MHOs, so **8-1-1 advice does not qualify staff for isolation pay**. Public health directly contacts anyone an MHO has self-isolated. When in doubt regarding any absence from work, please contact [VSB Leaves](#).

Children have similar but milder symptoms to adults.

Be sure to continue to seek care for other medical conditions as needed, even if it is not related to COVID-19.

Note: See the *Daily Health Assessment* for Students and Staff in [Appendix D](#).

COVID-19 Testing and What to Do After Receiving COVID-19 Test Results

In BC, COVID-19 tests are recommended for, and readily available to, anyone who has fever or persisting symptoms of COVID-19. Any person who receives a COVID-19 test must remain in self-isolation while awaiting their results.

After being tested for COVID-19 and receiving the test results:

- **If the COVID-19 test is positive**, staff and students should stay home and self-isolate until they are told by public health to end self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will directly contact everyone with a positive test.
- **If the COVID-19 test is negative**, staff and students can return to school/work once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless you develop a new or worsening illness.
- **If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment**, staff and students can return to school/work when symptoms improve, and they feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (e.g., not COVID-19).

Public Health Confirmed Close Contacts: If a staff member or student is a public health confirmed close contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19 (including living in the same household), they should self-isolate/not return to school/work for 14 days from the last date they had contact with the person with COVID-19. Use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool <https://bc.thrive.health/> to determine if they should seek testing for COVID-19.

Notes: A health-care provider's note (e.g., a doctor's note) is not required to confirm the health status of any individual returning to work or school and should not be asked for by a school administrator/supervisor.

See following section under *Employee Services – Leaves Related to COVID-19* regarding staff directed to self-isolate by public health.

Returning to School after Sickness

When a staff, student or other persons entering the school can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced as outlined in Daily Health Assessment ([Appendix D](#)).

If based on their symptoms a test was not recommended (e.g., the guidance is to 'stay home until you feel better'), the person can return to school when their symptoms improve, and they feel well enough.

If based on their symptoms a test is recommended (e.g., the guidance includes 'get tested'), **the person must stay home until they receive their test result.**

- If the test is **negative**, they can return to school when symptoms improve, and they feel well enough.
- If the test is **positive**, they must follow direction from public health on when they can return to school.

Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the BC Self-Assessment Tool app, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. **IMPORTANT:** Only a Medical Health Officer (MHO) with public health can put a staff member into isolation for COVID-19 and qualify staff for isolation pay. While 8-1-1 and the Thrive app are resources, they are not MHOs, so **their advice does not qualify staff for isolation pay.** Public health directly contacts anyone an MHO has self-isolated. When in doubt regarding any absence from work, please contact [VSB Leaves](#).

Family or Household Members of Staff or Students with COVID-19

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 themselves are well/asymptomatic. It is expected the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider. Staff and students who are close contacts (including household contacts) of a public health confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate (VCH) and not attend school.

COVID-19 – Space to Isolate Any Person Who Becomes Symptomatic While at School

A room with a door will be designated at each school as a health room for isolating a sick student (or staff member) while awaiting pick-up by the parent/guardian. An option for this is the first aid room. However, if

there is a reason the first aid room is a poor choice each site should identify another room in the school.

Features of the room will include:

- A sink for hand washing or hand sanitizer available in the room and a plastic lined waste receptacle.
- A sign that can be posted while the room is “in use”. All staff are to be advised of the room’s location.
- Large enough to maintain physical distancing from one or two students/people (e.g., 2 metres).
- A decluttered room to allow for ease of cleaning and disinfection.
- Located as close to the school entrance as possible, for efficient parent pick-up. Parents must NOT enter the school, rather staff will accompany the student to the closest entrance/exit for pick-up.

NOTE: If this room is used, the building engineer/head custodian will be notified and conduct enhanced cleaning of this room.

Self-Isolation for International Travelers Returning to B.C.

All students and staff who have travelled outside of Canada are required to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of return to Canada. This includes students who are attending school from abroad. Students from outside of Canada should plan to arrive in Canada at least two weeks before school begins to adhere to the self-isolation orders.

Note: It is not the jurisdiction of the school district or VCH/public health to oversee the federal Quarantine Act requirements for international travel. This is not the role of the school administrator. There are some exceptions to the federal Quarantine Act which permit families with cross-border custody arrangements in place to forego the quarantine period.

Fair Notice: All staff, students, or parents of students travelling internationally (including to the United States) for any reason or duration, must self-isolate for 14 days and cannot attend school or work. For students, teachers will not be expected to provide added supports during self-isolation for international travel. For staff, this self-isolation will be without pay, with the use of banked vacation as an option for those who have such time and choose to use it.

If someone in your household has to self-isolate due to international travel, the traveler needs to self-isolate, family members do not, and staff and students may attend work and school. See BCCDC website: [Travel \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca)

Employee Services – Leaves Related to COVID-19

Staff who have collective agreement terms regarding self-isolation or who intend to use any banked sick leave to cover for public health directed self-isolations are required to produce a public health document regarding their inability to report to work. These documents are routinely provided by VCH. Staff who are off awaiting a COVID-19 test result should call into the SFE system and book this time as sick days. Staff who test positive for COVID-19 and public health requires they self-isolate, should call VSB Leaves (leaves@vsb.bc.ca) to report their isolation leave and VSB Leaves will assist in determining the specifics of any compensation for their time away from work. This varies by collective agreement.

Elevated Absenteeism at Schools

The District has confirmed that school administrators are to advise VSB Health and Safety and their Director **when there is 10% absenteeism at the school above current in-person student/staffing levels or an unusual number of students and/or staff leave the school in a 24–48-hour period due to illness** with symptoms consistent with a cold, flu, or COVID-19. School administrators are asked to report the number and any trend in reasons for the absence (e.g., nausea and vomiting; fever and flu-like symptoms, other).

Controlling Access to the School/Site

School administrators and site supervisors will implement a system to manage access to the building for employees, students, and others.

Schools and most sites remain closed to the general public. Each school and site will consider the following access items/practices:

- Restrict non-VSB adults from entering the school building except for **essential business only**.
- **Access by parents is by appointment only** when approved directly by the school administrator and for **essential school business or on an emergency basis only**. Office administrative staff are to be advised of visitor appointments in advance. All other communication and business should occur via the phone, virtual meeting, or email.
- Ensure all parents and guardians are aware that they **must remain outside of the school during drop off and pick up**.
- Assess reception and service desks to ensure physical distancing is maintained and plan local alternatives if physical distancing is not possible at that location.
- Limit the number of people in the office at a time based on the office size and configuration to maintain physical distancing.
- Ensure all staff that are present onsite have signed in.
- All approved non-school staff entering a building, including parents, must:
 - Complete a Daily Health Self-Assessment of their health before entering and not enter if ill or symptomatic.
 - Wash their hands/practice diligent hand hygiene immediately upon entry.
 - Maintain physical distance (2 metres) from staff and students when they enter and are in the school.
 - Limit their travel and access inside the school to essential areas only (e.g., the school administrator's office and/or a designated meeting area outside of the school office)
 - Wear a mask as required indoors including in hallways and when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Be accompanied by an administrator (or designate) while in the building.
- Ensure all essential visitors – including parents, contractors, and District employees – sign in giving their name, phone number, date, in-time, out-time, and areas/people visiting, and they **MUST** check a box on the sign-in log indicating that they have completed a Daily Health Assessment. Post the Daily Health Assessment outside/at the designated visitors' entrance and at staff sign-in.
 - Sign-in records will be kept for at least one month.
- Ensure contractors schedule essential onsite work in advance and advise the school administrator, school office as well as the building engineer/head custodian (emergency work or access is the only exception) and follow the prevention strategies as outlined by the District (in this document and district Safe Work Procedures).
- Manage drop off and pick up to:
 - Parents must not enter the school at drop off/pick-up.
 - Receive students on the field or in the play area, where feasible.
 - Use the external door to the class to receive students, where feasible.
 - Have students go outside to a defined pick-up area / drop-off area.
- Late arrivals and early departures:
 - Each school will establish its own practice with respect to late arrivals/early departures.
- Parents are expected to remain outside the school for both late arrivals and early departures.
- Support physical distancing and arrival/departure needs of parents of learners with diverse needs can be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the school administrator and the specific staff who work with and are responsible for the student involved.

Hand Hygiene

As per public health guidelines ready access to hand hygiene facilities is important and will be provided by the District. This will be achieved by staff and students having ready access to operating sinks, soap and paper towels or hand sanitizer. To support this, the District has made a concerted effort to upgrade faucets in student washrooms to metered faucets.

Hand Hygiene Facilities and Supplies

All classes will have a hand washing/hand sanitizing station within the room.

Classrooms and spaces with sinks within them will be checked daily to ensure supplies (soap and paper towel) are available. Also, as high-touch surfaces, these will be cleaned twice within 24 hours and at least once during the school day by the building engineer/custodial staff.

When multiple sinks exist in student washrooms, hand hygiene is prioritized over physical distancing. However, minimizing physical contact while washing hands will be reinforced by staff.

It is advised that where possible and privacy is maintained, multiple user washrooms should have the door propped open to diminish the need to touch the door on entering/exiting.

Hand Washing

Thoroughly washing hands with soap and water is the best protection against illness.

Staff will be advised of their responsibility to wash their hands and reinforce hand washing among students as per the K-12 provincial guidelines and instruction on this topic. Posters and reminders will be located throughout the site, at sinks and hand sanitizer stations.

Step-by-Step procedure to effectively wash your hands:

- Wet hands with running water.
 - Temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water.
- Apply a small amount of liquid soap. Antibacterial soap is not required.
- Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds (sing the ABC's or happy birthday twice). Rub palms, backs of hands, between and backs of fingers, thumbs, and under nails/creating lather.
- Rinse off all soap with running water.
- Dry hands with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off taps, using the paper towel – if required.
- Discard the used towel in the waste container.

Hand Sanitizer

Use of hand sanitizer is an acceptable alternative to hand washing when access to a sink is not available.

Hand sanitizer will be readily accessible in or at:

- School entrance(s)
- School main office
- All classrooms without a sink in the room will be provided with hand sanitizer.
- Other locations as recommended by the site H&S Committee and approved by the principal/supervisor.

For hand sanitizer to be as effective as hand washing, hand sanitizer must be applied using the same procedure as hand washing (see Hand Washing section above), minus the use of water and a paper towel, and hand hygiene is to be practiced on the same occasions (table above).

- Note: If hands are soiled with visible dirt or grease, they must be washed with soap and water as hand sanitizer is not effective on soiled hands.

Perform hand hygiene procedures as per the following table and the provincial K-12 H&S guidelines (all Stages):

Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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). • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When they arrive at school or work and before they go home. • 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 (e.g., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood). • After cleaning tasks. • After removing gloves. • After handling garbage. • Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

- Resource: W.H.O. [Hand Washing Video](#); or [Appendix A: Hand Washing](#)

A summary of how to properly hand wash or use hand sanitizer is in [Appendix A](#). A video on diligent hand washing from the W. H. O. is available here: [Hand Washing Video](#);

Coughing and Sneezing (Respiratory Etiquette)

Staff and students should practice proper respiratory etiquette and reinforce it among their peers. Diligent respiratory etiquette involves:

- Coughing or sneezing into the crease of the elbow, sleeve, or a tissue.
- Disposing of used tissue into a lined waste bin.
- Performing hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- While strongly discouraged by public health and the VSB, as well as being prohibited on any school property, diligent respiratory etiquette also requires people refrain from sharing cigarettes and vaping devices.

NOTE: Although, we all sneeze, cough or clear our throats on occasion, but it is important to understand that new or worsening coughing or sneezing not explained by a chronic health condition, requires prompt action and for the individual to be separated from others. Those with allergies or other conditions which result in such symptoms may attend school and work. See section above under *Daily Health Assessment* and information on *Allergies and People with Chronic Medical Conditions with COVID-19-like Symptoms*.

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Physical distancing can be supported through a combination of classroom design, scheduling, monitoring and supervision. The following practices will be implemented as practical to promote and reinforce required/recommended physical distancing (default definition: maintaining 2 metres distance between one person to another) and minimizing physical contact with others:

Physical Distancing and Learning Groups

Implementing Stage 2 Learning Groups/Cohorts.

- Within Cohort, physical distancing includes avoiding physical contact with others, minimizing close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the available space (maximizing distance between people).

- Outside of a Cohort, physical distancing includes avoiding physical contact with others and close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the available space AND ensuring there is 2 metres of space between people from different cohorts. Secondary students and all staff must practice physical distancing of two metres (2m).
- For situations where members of different cohorts interact:
 - If people will be in the same space for an extended period of time (e.g., beyond 15 minutes), the space should be sufficiently large, and/or should have limits posted on the number of people so that 2 meters of space is available between people from different cohorts.
 - 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.
- Extracurricular activities, that typically have less structure than classrooms, involve students interacting with others outside of their Learning Groups/Cohorts require physical distancing (2 meters) to be maintained.

Physical Distancing and In-School Traffic Flow

Physical Distancing strategies by staff and students will be implemented locally as per each site plan and will include:

- Holding assemblies and other school-wide events virtually will avoid a large number of people or people from several Learning Groups/Cohorts from gathering.
- Avoiding common close contact greetings, such as handshakes, handholding, hugs, etc.
- Keeping a distance of 2 metres from others as much as practical, however, this is only an expectation outside of a Cohort.
- Facilitate physical distancing will be reinforced by:
 - Minimizing congestion at entrances and planning arrival and departure routines or arrangements (e.g., a separate staff entrance from student entrance, the number of entrances used will align with the size of the student population, Learning Groups/Cohorts, etc.).
 - Important: **The number of exit doors from a school remains unchanged as per Vancouver Fire Bylaw.** Schools must not block or otherwise impede external exit doors from the school. However, signage such as “Emergency Exit Only” is acceptable.
 - Propping open high use doors, such as washroom doors, classroom doors, is recommended as long as privacy and educational needs are also met, and the door can quickly be closed by the occupant(s) if needed in an emergency. Note: do not prop open internal fire separation doors.
 - Utilize directional signage to reinforce internal traffic flow (as needed).
 - Implementing physical distancing floor markings or other equivalent means where needed.
 - VSB issued signage, vinyl floor posters, etc. are available to schools/sites.
 - The use of signage and markings should be used with moderation, focusing on high congestion areas or hallway intersections. Overuse of directional signage may have the effect to elevate anxiety versus reinforce safe practices.
 - Identifying narrow stairwells as going up levels or down levels only.
 - Plan and schedule work and breaks according to the school-specific schedule and Learning Groups/cohorts.
 - Assess the proximity of workers in workspaces and change seating arrangements by moving workers, as necessary, to achieve physical distancing.
 - Inform and reinforce that occupants, especially in adult/office environments, stay to the right when transitioning between classes/workspaces, rather than installing prescriptive signage.

The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Although, personal protective equipment (PPE) is low on the Hierarchy of Controls, PPE can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, however, it is not sufficient as a stand-alone preventative measure. It should be suited to the task and worn and disposed of properly.

Face Masks

Face masks do not prevent the spread of COVID-19 on their own. Non-medical face masks must not be used in place of physical distancing or other preventative measures.

General: Non-Medical Face Masks

A non-medical face mask (“mask”) is comprised of a minimum of 2-3 layers of tightly woven fabric, such as linen. Additionally, non-medical masks have loops or bands to hold the mask in place and the mask covers the chin to the bridge of the nose in order to capture respiratory droplets from the nose and mouth and offer some protection to the wearer’s breathing zone. These masks provide some level of protection to the wearer and to those around them.

Note: Medical-grade masks are not recommended in school settings for general use.

Unacceptable Masks

The following masks and face coverings are NOT acceptable within schools and workplaces and do not meet the definition of a “non-medical mask” as described in this district document or where indicated by public health or WorkSafeBC:

- Face masks with exhalation valves. Masks with valves can be more comfortable as they permit unresisted/unfiltered exhalation and, therefore, do not capture droplets and instead they permit the spread of respiratory droplets. These masks protect the wearer only, not others, and are designed to provide that protection for very short periods of time. See the *Health Canada* website for more information on this topic.
- Single layer masks, bandanas, buffs, or other fabric items. A single layer is insufficient to capture respiratory droplets and prevent the transmission of COVID-19.
- Poorly fitted or worn masks (too loose or too tight, masks that do not cover both the nose and mouth), damaged, cut, or visibly soiled masks.

Non-Medical Mask Distribution

The District has been provided funding from the Ministry of Education for the purpose of supplying masks. The District distributed reusable non-medical masks to all staff and students in September 2020 and again in February 2021. Disposable masks are available for anyone who becomes ill while at school and for first aid attendant.

Reusable non-medical masks were distributed as follows prior to the spring break:

- Staff - 2 masks and are responsible for the care and maintenance of their masks.
- Students - 2 masks. Staff will reinforce proper care. Parents are responsible for the daily care and maintenance of student masks.
- Upon receipt, it is recommended that staff and students write their initials on the outside of their masks (small letters on the upper outside corner) in order to ensure they can identify their own mask from others. Do not wear a mask that has been worn by someone else.

IMPORTANT:

Wearing a non-medical face mask does not replace the requirement to physically distance (2m) from others.

The Vancouver Board of Education passed a motion (2020) encouraging the wearing of non-medical face masks by all students and staff at all times while in school. Signage encouraging mask wearing is posted in schools and non-school sites.

Public Health Guidance

A mask can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission; however, it is not sufficient as a stand-alone preventive measure. Wearing non-medical masks is required in schools for K-12 staff and students in grades 4-12 when indoors. However, masks do not replace other effective infection prevention and exposure control measures also in place. The following measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission:

- Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are symptomatic, sick, or required to self-isolate by public health, including ensuring everyone entering the school performs a Daily Health Assessment.
- Frequent and proper hand hygiene.
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
- Placing students and staff into consistent groupings of people (Learning Groups/Cohorts).
- Adapting learning environments to maximize the use of space; and
- Increasing ventilation (e.g., opening windows where practical).
- Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between Learning Groups/Cohorts.

Mask Requirements by the District, Ministry of Education, and/or BCCDC

Outdoors

Generally, masks do not need to be worn by either school staff or students outdoors. Wearing a mask outdoors is a staff member's, student's, or student's parent/caregiver's choice.

Masks must be worn outdoors when staff are:

- In close proximity (within 2 m) to other staff while outdoors.
 - Staff are expected to maintain 2 m distance from each other staff outdoors and wearing a mask does not replace this requirement for physical distancing.
 - Example: Some grounds and trades staff may have need to work in close proximity outdoors, and therefore, masks would be required.
- Working where close-proximity or physical contact is likely with students.
 - E.g., Supervision of elementary students on multi-cohort breaks outdoors (lunch/recess), Support Staff supporting students in close proximity/physical contact.

Indoors

Staff and Visitors

- All staff and visitors are to wear a mask whenever indoors at school or work except when:
 - There is a barrier in place.
 - Eating or drinking.
 - Note: all staff who are eating or drinking must be 2 m minimum from others.
 - On buses or in vehicles with others: put on a mask before entering a bus/vehicle. See *Transportation section*.
 - During the provision of first aid or when supervising a person who is unwell. See *First Aid section*.
 - See sections on *Physical Education, Sport, and Music* for mask specific guidance during these activities.

Students

Public health advises that masks may safely be worn by school aged children.

Grades 4-12

- Students Grade 4-12 are to wear a mask whenever indoors at school except when:
 - There is a barrier in place.
 - Eating or drinking.
 - On buses – masks are to be put on a mask before entering a bus. See *Transportation section*.

- See sections on *Physical Education, Sport, and Music* for mask specific guidance during these activities.

Grades K-3 students

- Mask use is encouraged as required for other students, however, should be based on the student’s or family/caregiver’s choice.

IMPORTANT MASK EXCEPTIONS:

Staff, students and visitors should not be required to wear a mask and are exempt under the following conditions:

- They cannot tolerate it for health or behavioural reasons.
- They are unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.

Those staff, students, or visitors who can wear masks can also remove them temporarily in the following circumstances:

- For the purposes of identification;
- 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.);
- While eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier; or
- While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

NOTES:

Staff, students, and visitors are not required to present a health-care provider note (e.g., a doctor’s note) to determine if they cannot tolerate a mask.

Staff are encouraged to support student mask use through positive and inclusive approaches, and not punitive measures or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma.

Table: Summary of General Mask Requirements

The following is a summary of public health requirements for wearing a non-medical mask. *

Note: This does not include certain specific applications where a job duty requires masks/other PPE (see additional Safe Work Procedures on H&S website).

Context	K-3 students	Grades 4-12 students	Staff
INDOORS Including in buses/vehicles	Encouraged, Not required Parental Choice	Required At all times except: behind barrier, eating/drinking Required on buses, singing indoors	Required At all times except: behind barrier, eating/drinking Required on buses, singing indoors
OUTDOORS	Not required Personal/ Parent Choice	Not required Personal/Parent Choice	Not required Except when: Working within 2m of other staff Working where close proximity/contact is likely

***The Board of Education encourages all staff and students to wear masks at school at all times.**

Regardless of whether they are wearing a mask, all staff and students (grades 4-12) are required to maintain physical distancing (2m) when outside of their Cohort.

For directions on wearing and caring for a mask refer to the section below *Safety Procedures for Donning and Doffing and Caring for a Non-Medical Face Mask* as well as [Appendix C: How to Wear a Mask](#) to wear a non-medical mask or face covering:

- 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.

Safety Procedures for Donning and Doffing and Caring for a Non-Medical Face Mask

Putting your mask on

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer for diligent hand hygiene.
2. Pick up your mask by the ties or loops ONLY to place the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it.
3. Adjust the mask if needed to make sure your nose and mouth are covered. You want the mask to be comfortable, but also tight enough that there are no gaps.
4. While wearing the mask avoid touching your mask or face or the mask, and practice hand hygiene if you do.

Removing your mask:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
2. Remove it by the ties or loops without touching the front of the mask.
3. Fold the outer part of the mask together and place it inside a clean paper bag.
4. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Storing your Mask:

When you are not using your mask, staff and students are to place it in a paper bag (ideally) or envelope or plastic sandwich bag. This keeps your mask clean until you wear it again, or until you are able to wash it.

- Do not store masks unprotected in pockets, backpacks, drawers, or purses.

Washing your mask:

Cloth masks should be washed at least once a day, or whenever they become damp or soiled. To clean masks:

- Put it directly into the washing machine, using a hot cycle, and then drying thoroughly.
- Alternatively, wash it thoroughly by hand using soap and hot water. Allow it to dry completely before wearing again.

Note: For disposable single use masks, follow the above procedures for putting your mask on and removing your mask. In addition, proper disposal of these masks is required. The masks may be disposed on in regular waste (lined garbage bin). *Never dispose of a mask down the toilet.*

Watch the following video on how to properly handle a mask: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvLA--hGU70&feature=youtu.be>

Other PPE

The use of other PPE by some staff continues to be required as always, for protection from hazards they encounter during their regular course of work (e.g., personal care of student, first aid, some custodial and maintenance work, etc.). Additional PPE, such as gloves and eye goggles, are not needed for most staff beyond that used as part of routine practices for the hazards normally encountered in their regular work.

- **Gloves** are not being provided for the purposes of COVID-19 protection as per public health advice. There are, however, other practices which routinely require gloves and these practices should continue (e.g., universal precautions, first aid, personal care, custodial duties, etc.). Donning and doffing instruction of gloves and the need to wash your hands after removing gloves by staff is provided in See [Appendix B](#). Remember that vinyl, nitrile, and latex gloves are single use only and must be disposed of properly.
- **Safety eyewear/eyeglasses** are provided for First Aid Attendants and to others that normally and routinely require them (e.g., trades and grounds work, work in school shops, etc.). A face shield (see below) may be used as an alternative or in addition to safety eyewear for the purposes of COVID-19 protection by First Aid Attendants and are provided in health/isolation rooms where symptomatic students or staff await pick-up to leave the school.
- **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 are not a replacement for a non-medical face mask. See sections below on *PPE When Providing Student Support* as well as *Behaviour Plans, Employee Safety Plans and Personal Care Plans*.
- Face shields (in addition to wearing a non-medical face mask), will be available to specific *itinerant roles* where staff routinely are required to work in multiple Learning Groups/Cohorts, where maintaining physical distancing (2m) is not possible, and where minimizing physical contact is also not possible. These specific itinerant roles include speech and language pathologists (SLP), deaf and hard of hearing resource teachers, psychologists, itinerant SSA and SSB's (as relevant to their assignment), UIP team members, and identified Learning Service district-level staff. All other itinerant staff are expected to maintain physical distance.

Additionally, face shields may be used (in addition to a mask):

- By in-cohort SSAs or SSBs (as relevant to their assignment) who cannot avoid being within 2 metres of a specific student for durations longer than 15 minutes.
- Other school-based staff who, in the conduct of their work, cannot avoid working within 2 metres of a specific student for durations longer than 15 minutes.

Face shields are also used during activities where established practices and procedures call for them (e.g., managing severe spitting behaviour). If/when being considered for this purpose, Learning Services District Principals must be consulted in advance.

Other staff and students may wear personal face shields as is their personal preference.

Face shields are to be cleaned and disinfected by the user with the district provided cleaner/disinfectant and paper towel after use or as needed.

PPE When Providing Student Services

Students with Medical Complexity, Immune Suppression and/or Receiving Delegated Care

Supporting students with medical complexities, immune suppression, or receiving delegated care may require those providing health services (e.g., staff providing delegated care or other healthcare providers) to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune compromised student for an extended period of time. Those providing health services in schools must wear a mask (surgical/disposable or non-medical) when providing services when those services cannot be provided from behind a barrier. Additional PPE over and above what is needed for routine practices is not necessary.

While implementation of infection prevention and exposure control measures help create a safe

environment by helping to significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, it does not eliminate the risk entirely. Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their health-care provider to determine their child's level of risk. Additional information is available from BCCDC.

Supporting Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities

Supporting students with disabilities and diverse abilities may require those providing services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student for an extended period of time. Those providing these services must wear a non-medical mask when providing services when the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier.

Masks with a transparent section can be worn when communicating using lip-reading, or when visual facial cues are essential. Face-shields are to be worn when staff are unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition.

Those providing services to students with medical complexity, immune suppression, receiving delegated care, or with disabilities and diverse abilities should follow their standard risk assessment methods to determine if additional PPE is needed, in accordance with routine practices.

No health services should be provided to a student in school who is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 (see section *Managing Staff and Students who Develop Symptoms of COVID-19*).

Additional PPE

Additional PPE, such as gloves and eye goggles, are not needed for most staff beyond that used as part of routine practices for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work.

Note see [Appendix E](#) for current BCCDC and PHO guidelines on PPE.

Plexiglass Barriers

Plexiglass barriers can be installed in places where physical distancing cannot regularly be practiced, and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a cohort. This may include the front reception desk where visitors check in or in the cafeteria where food is distributed. It may also include itinerant staff working across cohorts.

- School administrators are to contact VSB Health and Safety (Tel: 604.713.5271) should the Site H&S Committee assess that physical distancing is not a viable option and a plexiglass barrier is recommended. These recommendations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- If plexiglass barriers are added to a workplace, they must be cleaned and disinfected daily by the user. See section on *Cleaning and Disinfecting*.

Limit Use of Shared Items

Some shared items are required for education and cleaning requirements should not keep these from being used. However, to ensure the number of items exchanged between multiple individuals is limited, staff are asked to:

- Limit the use of items shared by multiple staff and students to those that are essential for education.
- Limit the use of shared items that are not easily cleaned.
 - Note that shared items must be cleaned by the staff who introduced the item(s) for use.
- Limit the use of shared electronics and keyboards.
- Limit the sharing of pens, pencils and other school supplies including electronic devices.
 - Assign students a set of pencils/crayons, small toys etc. for their individual use.
- Limit the use of shared manipulatives, however, manipulatives are permitted.

- Limit the use of plush or porous toys/equipment.
- Advise parents/guardians to only send essential objects to school. Items sent from home are not to be shared and will not be cleaned or disinfected at school.
- Continue to use essential items, however, be thoughtful in determining what is essential. These must be cleaned by the staff who introduced the item(s). At secondary, supervised secondary students may assist with cleaning.
- Encourage individual activities among students.
- Enforce “no food sharing” policies.
 - No staff or students are to share water bottles, dishes, utensils and are encouraged to bring their own. Water bottles are to be filled at water bottle filling stations or kitchen sinks, not in washroom sinks.

See the sections below on *Toys and Sports Equipment* as well as further detail under specific activities covered under Additional Measures for Specific Shared Spaces and Activities.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Schools are cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the *BCCDC’s Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings* document and the *BCCDC COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Settings*.

Staff must not bring cleaning supplies from home. Only use district provided cleaning/disinfecting products on district surfaces/items. The district used PCS cleaning and disinfecting products and VSB Operations has cleaning procedures in place that is approved by *Health Canada* as effective in killing COVID-19 virus and has been confirmed to meet the BCCDC requirements, product, and concentration for all tasks.

Cleaning and disinfecting supplies are provided via the Building Engineer to classrooms and common work areas to facilitate staff in conducting spot cleaning as they deem necessary and in addition to the above.

Building Engineers and Custodial Staff

Building engineers and custodial staff during school/workdays as well as evening shifts will carry out required cleaning services as per the PHO/K-12 provincial guidelines, which include:

All school/site Facilities:

- Empty garbage containers daily.
- General cleaning and disinfecting of schools and workplaces should occur at least **once in a 24-hour period**.
 - In addition to routine facility items, this includes desks used by 1-2 people.
 - Any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected **twice in 24 hours**.
 - At least one of these cleanings should occur during the school day.

Frequently touched surfaces include items or surfaces touched/shared by multiple people, such as:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| ○ Doorknobs | ○ Handrails |
| ○ Light switches | ○ Desks, tables, chairs |
| ○ Toilet handles | ○ Water fountains |
| ○ Faucet handles | |

IMPORTANT NOTE: BCCDC advises that “There are no additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures beyond those that are normally implemented and those noted in this document. This includes when different cohorts use the same space (e.g., a classroom, gym, arts room, home economics or science lab, etc.).”

Classroom Based-Staff - Cleaning of In-Class Equipment and Toys

Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected twice in 24 hours by staff who put them into use by students. At least one of these cleanings should occur during the school day. This includes any

equipment shared among multiple students/users. Including:

- Manipulatives
- Toys
- Sports equipment
- Shared electronics

For items shared between classes, it is more practical to require items be cleaned after each class, unless another local system agreeable to all is set up to achieve twice daily cleaning/disinfection.

Cleaning Basics for Equipment and Other Surfaces

Cleaning surfaces is done most efficiently when **the spray cleaner/disinfectant is applied to a microfiber cloth and then this is used to wipe the item. DO NOT spray electronic equipment or other items and then wipe them off.** Do not immerse electronic devices in water or cleaner.

Other practices to support cleaning and disinfection include:

- Clean then disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Only use cleaning and disinfecting supplies provided by the District.
- Practice Universal Precautions - Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.

First Aid Cot and Related Equipment

- Clean and disinfect cots and mattresses prior to use and after they are used or soiled.
- Pillowcases and blankets are single use only and disposable (by design), therefore dispose immediately after single use.
- Use single use tissues and paper towel or towelettes and dispose accordingly.
- Store linens in clean dry areas to prevent mold and mildew growth and keep them out of the way of everyday activities.

Keyboards, Photocopiers, and Electronic Devices

Shared keyboards, tablets, keyboards, and mice are deemed high-touch (shared by multiple people), it is required to be cleaned/disinfected after each use by the staff member using the device or issuing the device for use by students. Secondary students may clean/disinfect devices when supervised by staff. If cleaning and disinfecting our keyboard or other electronic device, read and follow the manufacturer's instructions on cleaning before proceeding. Put cleaner on a cloth and wipe versus spraying the equipment or letting cleaner pool on the equipment. The VSB provided cleaner can be used on keyboards and mice surfaces. District issued hand sanitizer can be used on tablets and phones. Apply it to a cloth, then wipe.

For **photocopiers**, use the standard cleaner that was used prior to COVID-19. Again, NEVER spray the cleaning solution on controls. Apply (spray) a small amount of microfiber cloth and wipe the controls (touch points) down. Be sure not to wet cloth too much as excess liquid will damage photocopiers (and other electronics). Avoid using ammonia, acetone, and benzene as well as avoid using paper towel for cleaning glass, use a clean or dedicated microfiber cloth. Do not apply hand sanitizer glass. Also avoid using general products such as Windex, Lysol wipes, etc. which can damage the glass and devices.

Toys and Equipment

The following control measures should be applied to the use of toys and equipment:

- Consider assigning sets of individual toys where feasible.
- Shared toys are to be minimized due to cleaning requirements.
- If shared toys are used by multiple users, staff overseeing the activity will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the used toys **twice a day**. This will include washing with soap and water if soiled and then, applying District provided cleaning/disinfecting product to a microfibre cloth and wiping the toys thoroughly and letting dry.
- Utilize plasticized toys and equipment that are solid and made up of hard surfaces that are easily cleaned and disinfected.

- Students should use the same pencils, crayons, etc. each day and these should not be shared.
- Manipulatives are to be cleaned twice per day.
 - Note: Some frequently touched items like toys or manipulatives may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g., fabrics) or at all (e.g., sand, foam, playdough, etc.). These items can continue to be used if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.

Note: See section on *Limiting Use of Shared Items*.

Behaviour Support Plans, Employee Safety Plans, & Personal Care Plans

Staff working with students that have Positive Behaviour Support Plans, Employee Safety Plans, /or Personal Care Plans should review these plans to refresh their memories or inform their safety and work practices prior to working with a student.

Some common issues are covered here:

Spitting Recommendations

When the student is asymptomatic and healthy, the risk of transmission is low, especially if the behaviour is paired with handwashing and cleaning.

- Wipe down any area with saliva with approved sanitizer or disinfectant wipes.
- If in contact with saliva, wash hands and/or affected areas.
- Review needs for face shield for non-COVID-19 related reasons with Learning Services, District Principal. Face shields are available if deemed necessary.

Biting/Saliva Recommendations

- If in contact with saliva (but no injury/broken skin), wash hands and/or affected areas. If injured seek first aid.

Assisting Students with Feeding

For students who require support for eating and drinking, staff are to practice hand hygiene before and after, use good hygiene practices when handling food (e.g., use utensils, deli napkins, etc. to handle food), and follow the existing care plan. Frequently wash your hands to reduce risk of transmission if you are handling foods.

Enlist the help of *District Principals, Student Support* to assist with Positive Behaviour Support Plans, Employee Safety Plans, Personal Care Plans, visual supports, or other child or student-centred needs that may need to be adapted due to other COVID-19 protocols.

If you are having difficulty implementing any of the recommended strategies, please contact the school administrator.

Food

All food-related activities require staff and students follow diligent hand hygiene (See Hand hygiene section) and cleaning and disinfecting protocols (see Cleaning and Disinfecting and relevant staff to refer to and follow FoodSafe guidelines).

Food Brought from Home

Staff and students will be required to bring any food/drinks they need or wish to eat at school and follow these practices:

- No food sharing, drinks, or utensils among either staff or students is permitted.
- Food should be brought in brown bags or clean containers (reusable or recyclable are ideal).

- Food containers, utensils, and water bottles must be individually labelled with the user’s name. (Including division will be helpful in elementary.) This is required for all staff and students.
- All staff should keep their food with them at their workspace.
- Students and staff are asked to take any uneaten food home with them each day. Do not leave food in staff or classroom fridges.
- Students will be required to store food separate from other students (in their backpack, at their workspace).
- **IMPORTANT:** Schools must not allow homemade food items to be made available to other students or staff at this time (e.g., birthday treats, bake sale items, PAC lunches, potluck staff lunches, etc.). Individually prepared and packaged commercial items are acceptable.

Food Services – Cafeterias

Cafeterias will remain closed for food services and food sales and student seating at this time. They may be used for Culinary Arts (without food sales) if such use has already been established at the school and all health and safety protocols can be followed. Seating areas may be used for other purposes when approved by the school administrator.

Food-Related Curriculum – Culinary Arts and Home Economics

Food may be prepared as part of Culinary Arts, Home Economics, Life Skills, or specialized school programs and may be consumed **only** by the student(s) who prepared it, with the following normal food safety measures in place. These safety measures include:

- Teaching or supervising staff being trained and certified in FoodSafe and follow FoodSafe guidelines in schools.

School Food Events

Schools distributing food for sale (e.g., school fundraising) or providing food at school events (e.g., class party) are required to use food prepared by suppliers following the *WorkSafe BC Restaurants, cafes, pubs, and nightclubs: Protocols for returning to operation* as appropriate and as relevant to the school setting. This includes using individually packaged food items (e.g., individually boxed pizza, or packaged “grab & go” serving containers). This is an additional requirement to normally implemented food safety measures and requirements (e.g., FoodSafe trained staff, a Food Safety Plan, etc.)

Meal Programs

The procedures implemented in Stage 3 (June 2020) for students participating in VSB Meal Programs will continue and individually packaged lunches and snacks will be distributed daily to their classroom by school-based staff. Physical distancing will be maintained by staff distributing food to classrooms.

Classroom teachers will be advised who within their class will be receiving the packaged lunches and snacks.

Food Safe Plans

VSB has a Food Safe Plan for each Food Premise operation in coordination with permit requirements with *Vancouver Coastal Health, Environmental Health*. Effective September 2020, the only active VSB Food Premises are *VSB District Distribution Centres (DDS)* and resides at the centre and with VSB Food Services.

Additional Measures for Specific Shared Spaces and Activities

General Note:

Adaptations to school/work routines and activities are required during this time. The following represents the application of guidance from the Provincial Medical Health Officer, BCCDC, Ministry of Education, WorkSafeBC, and the District. Compliance with the following is required.

Student Transportation on Buses

- Active transportation (e.g., biking, walking, etc.) should be encouraged by students and staff where possible to decrease bus use/density.
- Students should clean their hands before they leave home to get on the bus, when they leave school prior to getting on the bus, and when they get home or arrive at school.
- For all staff and students grade 4-12, a face mask must be put on before loading onto the bus and remain on until exiting the bus. For students K-3 a mask is encouraged to be worn on a bus, but not required.
- COVID-19 related protections for the driver will be put in place by the bus company. These include but are not limited to:
 - 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 are required to clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips, and it is recommended they regularly use hand sanitizer 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 while driving.
- To reduce the number of close, in-person interactions, the following strategies are recommended:
 - Use consistent and assigned seating arrangements.
 - Consider the order students typically onboard and offload to support buses being loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
 - Prioritize students sharing a seat with a member of their household or cohort.
 - 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.). It is recommended that such students be loaded onto the bus loading other students and taken off after others.
- If space is available, students should each have their own seat.
 - Students should sit beside the window.
- Schools will keep up-to-date passenger lists to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur. These will be updated on an as needed basis.
- A bus with students from more than one Cohort will sit together and a row will be left empty between different Learning Groups/Cohorts.

Non-Medical Masks on Buses

- Grades 4-12: Students from grades 4-12 are to wear non-medical masks on school buses. These should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading.
- Grades K-3: Non-medical masks are encouraged but not required on buses. Wearing a mask, a student/parental choice.
- Staff are required to wear masks on a bus.
- All students: No student is required to wear a non-medical mask if they do not tolerate it, cannot remove the mask themselves, or have a health or behavioural reason.
- All staff must wear a mask when on a bus.
 - NOTE: Non-medical masks are required by public health for K-12 staff and grade 4-12 students when indoors and outside for staff K-12 in situations where physical distance cannot be maintained, and the person is from outside of their regular contacts/cohort. This includes riding

the bus to school where a student may be sitting next to a person outside of their cohort or household. All staff must wear a mask when on a bus.

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 (ref. *WorkSafeBC*). **Good indoor ventilation alone cannot protect people from exposure to the virus; however, it may reduce risk when used in addition to other preventive measures.** All VSB schools and work sites meet all requirements for ventilation of indoor spaces and schools. VCH Medical Health Officers have advised that, thus far, ventilation systems have not been a significant transmission route for the virus in VSB schools. However, with outdoors being associated with lower transmission than indoors, and growing evidence of the potential for aerosols, logically bringing in more outdoor air, where practical, is encouraged.

The District will ensure that the *heating, ventilation, and air conditioning* (HVAC) systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort for workers (as per Part 4 of the BC OH&S Regulation).

In order to enhance the ventilation in classrooms, schools, and other office/work areas:

- Classroom, other school-based staff, and other district staff can augment ventilation in the following ways:
 - Move activities outdoors when possible (for example, lunch, classes, physical activity, classes) when appropriate and time, space, and weather permits.
 - Open exterior windows to allow in outside air. Even opening a window by 3 to 10 cm can significantly increase the outdoor air in a room, as evident by the temperature change indoors on cooler days. Opening windows is not a requirement, but a recommendation and under occupant control. Opening windows too much may impact the proper function of the ventilation system.
 - Ensure air vents are unimpeded (e.g., clear unvents of any clutter, do not block, cover, or blank off vents in classrooms.).
 - If portable fans units are used, set them up to avoid blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to other occupants of a room. Introducing horizontal cross breezes should be avoided. Ideally place devices so that air flow moves downward, for example from a cabinet top.
- Operations and/or Building Engineers will:
 - Inspect the local HVAC systems dampers and ensure that the ventilation system operates properly.
 - Continue to operate the HVAC system:
 - With increased proportion of outside air (less recirculation of air)
 - With increased air exchanges per hour in classrooms/schools.
 - Run the HVAC system from 2 hours before the school day commences and well after the school day ends.
 - Note: No special cleaning or disinfecting of the HVAC system for COVID-19 is necessary when operating normally.
 - Retrofit and replace current filters on existing HVAC systems with MERV 13 filters.
- Staff who travel in District vehicles, during work in their personal vehicles, or any other vehicles for work should:
 - Turn on the vents or air conditioning controls to allow outdoor air to flow in. Do not set the vents to recirculate.
 - Leave windows partially open to allow as much outdoor air as possible into the vehicle. Avoid recirculating air and turn any recirculation functions off.
 - Note: The above is in addition to maximizing distance, wearing non-medical masks, and practicing other protective measures, such as traveling in consistent crews, hand hygiene, diligent cleaning, etc.

Classroom Spaces

- Use consistent seating arrangements where possible.

- Desks and essential furniture should be moved to maximize distance between each student desk, however, 2 meters distance between student desks is not a requirement.
 - Secondary classes should keep all existing student desks in place and use: half (15) for A.M. classes and the other half (15) for P.M. classes.
 - Elementary classes have the greatest opportunity to remove non-essential furniture and bulky items and should do so to maximize distance between desks and students, even though physical distancing of 2m is not required.
- **IMPORTANT:** The teacher's desk should be located to permit physical distancing of 2 meters distance from the closest student desk (where possible) and ideally at the front of the classroom (where possible).
 - This will assist teaching/support staff outside the Cohort to maintain physical distancing when assigned to a classroom (other subject matter teachers, TTOCs, EOCs, Resource Teachers, etc.).
- Arrange desks/tables to maximize space between students. Seating arrangements where students directly face one another should be avoided, particularly in secondary schools.
- Avoid activities that require close face-to-face contact during school activities.
- Remove non-essential furniture and bulky items from learning spaces to increase space for students and staff to occupy and maximize distance from one another.
- School-based staff and H&S Committees should:
 - Identify and recommend to school administrators any items for permanent removal or disposal, such as all furniture personally owned by classroom staff, large plush furniture, non-essential furniture that takes up floor space.
 - Couches and other plush/donated residential chairs or similar items that cannot be appropriately disinfected and are communal in nature should be removed or disposed of.
 - NOTE: School administration can arrange for disposal of furniture as deemed necessary via a School Dude to Material Services. Such removals are funded by the District (e.g., not a school repayable).
- Doors should be left open or ajar as much as reasonably practicable so that they do not require use of hands to open.
- Classrooms are to be decluttered to facilitate cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
- **All desk and table surfaces must be kept clear at the end of the day (and during times when students are not in the room) to facilitate cleaning.**
 - Avoid demonstrations that required the class to gather closely around to view (where practical and does not interfere with learning goals and other safety concerns)

Technical Studies, STEM/STEAM, Science Labs, Art/Textiles

- Due to the inherent challenges of cleaning every shared item touched in a shop or lab, STRICT staff and students hand hygiene should be reinforced and must be a particular focus to account for this cleaning challenge.
- Students and staff will practice diligent hand hygiene:
 - Before and after handling shared tools or equipment.
 - Whenever hands are visibly dirty (wash hand).
- Set up personal spaces and tools for students, as best as possible.
- Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies (as feasible).
- Machine controls and touch points will be treated as high touch surfaces and cleaned and disinfected twice a day by supervising staff or by supervised student users after each use. It is important to spray the cleaner/disinfectant onto a cloth or paper towel and then wipe the control. To spray the control or machine directly could damage it. Materials such as cloths or paper towel and spray cleaner/disinfectant will be supplied.
- Encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items when entering classroom spaces, 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.

- Collaboration and communication with post-secondary institutions (e.g., for Trades in Training or other pre-trades apprenticeship programs) should continue.
- Ensure that staff and students in the K-12 school and the post-secondary institution are aware of this VSB Safety Plan (this document), the local Site Safety Plan, and local site health and safety measures in place.
 - Reinforce diligent student Daily Health Assessment when transitioning between the secondary school and a post-secondary institution.
- All labs, shops, and studios must be decluttered and unnecessary items taking up floor space removed/disposed of to allow for physical distancing, more efficient cleaning, and safety.
 - Organize materials, supplies, and all tools to maximize floor space; this includes shop floors not being used for storage of portable tools, equipment, or parts/materials. The Site Health and Safety Committee is to inspect and make safety recommendations on this issue within labs, shops, studios, and other specialty spaces.
 - Note: These areas should be reviewed with the school administrator and subject/space specific staff as areas of unique concern. This is in addition to H&S Committee inspections.

Theatre, Film and Dance

- No in-person inter-school festivals/events or gatherings should occur with others outside of the class/cohort.
- No non-cohort spectators are permitted during demonstrations, performances, etc.
- 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 and require physical distancing (2m) between all individuals.
 - 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 in 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 within 2 m, and instead seek creative solutions to dynamic storytelling and expressive movement.
- K-12 staff are required to wear masks during these programs when they are indoors, and a barrier is not present.
- Students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear masks during these programs when they are indoors, except during high-intensity physical activity.
- Shared equipment such as set pieces, props, cameras etc. should be cleaned and disinfected as per cleaning and disinfecting guidelines in this document and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in drama, film, or dance classes.
- Shared costume items should be limited at this time.
- 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 cohort 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.

Culinary Arts and Home Economics

- Schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning experiences, including in Culinary Arts, Home Economics, Lifeskills classes, and other specialized school programs.
- Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Students and staff should wash their hands:

- at the beginning and at the end of the class
 - before and after handling food
 - before and after eating and drinking
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty
- If food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the student(s) who prepared it, staff must be FoodSafe trained. Food prepared by students is not to be shared with others.
 - Refer to the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document and to FoodSafe guidelines.
 - No additional COVID-19 specific safety measures are required.
 - IMPORTANT: See *Food* section (p. 27) for more details.

LAUNDRY

Follow these procedures when doing laundry (Home Economics, Physical and Health Education, Life Skills Programs, feeder elementary schools, etc.):

- Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner.
 - Do not shake dirty items.
- Wearing gloves is optional if diligent hand hygiene is practiced. If choosing to wear gloves, ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after use. No other PPE is required for this specific task, although non-medical masks are to be worn by all school staff while indoors (except when eating/drinking, working at their designated desk/workstation, a barrier is in place).
 - Clean hands with soap and water immediately after removing gloves.
 - Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).

Computers and Shared Technology

- Elementary computer labs may be used when the supervising teacher conducts the keyboard and mice cleaning/disinfection after use by their class.
- When a computer lab is used at secondary, students will be responsible for cleaning/disinfecting the keyboard and mouse before and after use.
- For cleaning in computer labs: Use PCS cleaner/disinfectant sprayed onto a microfibre cloth (NEVER spray the device). Wipe to disinfect them.
- The use of personal devices is permitted and cleaning and disinfecting of these devices is the responsibility of the owner/user. Regular cleaning of these high-touch personal devices is encouraged once a day.

Counselling

- Maintain physical distancing (2 m) from students unless assigned to a Cohort.
- Use empty classrooms, outdoor spaces, or meeting rooms for sessions as needed.
- Counselling offices may be used if large enough.

Main Office/Reception

- School offices are treated as other workplace offices and fall under WorkSafeBC requirements.
- Limit the entry and number of staff (who do not work within the school office) and students. Office sizes and layouts vary, however, the number can reasonably be determined considering that each person must be 2 m from each other person. This applies to staff accessing their mailboxes and photocopiers. Markings for lining up may be useful.
- Physical distancing of two (2) metres must be maintained in the school office. Signage and markers reinforcing this should be used.
- Re-arrange waiting areas to allow for physical distancing and minimize the number of people entering the office. For example, move chairs into the hall outside of the school office, properly spaced, or use markers/signage.
- Plexiglass barriers are not required in school offices at reception/service desks when physical distancing is option as multiple other layers of controls are in place. Such as:

- Restricting parents and non-essential visitors and district staff from entering schools.
- 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.
- Frequent hand hygiene.
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
- Limiting the numbers of staff and students who may enter the office at one time and relocating waiting area seats into the hallway/outside the office.
- School administrators are to contact VSB Health and Safety (Tel: 604.713.5271) should the Site H&S Committee assess that physical distancing is not a viable option and a plexiglass barrier is recommended. These recommendations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
 - If plexiglass barriers are added to a workplace, they must be cleaned and disinfected daily by the user. See section on *Cleaning and Disinfecting*.

Physical Education

- Physical Education should occur outdoors whenever possible.
- Hand hygiene should be encouraged before and after physical activity.
- Students and staff are to spread out as far as possible during physical activity.
- Activities should be adapted wherever possible to reduce physical contact.
 - Note: There should be no activities that include prolonged physical contact (e.g., physical contact beyond a brief moment) or crowding. For example, activities like tag or touch football are lower-risk, whereas activities like wrestling or partner dancing should be avoided.
- Due to the challenges of cleaning shared equipment and potential for physical contact, students and staff will practice STRICT hand hygiene before and after the use of shared equipment as well as participating in physical activity.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected **twice a day** by the staff who opted to use the equipment as per the section *Cleaning and Disinfecting* in this document or cleaning may be appropriate for secondary students to complete.
 - Teachers are encouraged to plan physical activities that limit the use of shared equipment due to the cleaning requirement.
- K-12 staff are required to wear a mask during PE and physical activities when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.
- For grades 4-12:
 - During low-intensity activities/exercise, (e.g. yoga, walking) students are required to wear masks when they are indoors, and a barrier is not present (e.g., between stationary equipment).
 - High intensity exercise activities are those that significantly increased respiration rates.
 - **High intensity activity should be moved/take place outdoors or be replaced with low-intensity activity.**
 - If high intensity activities need to occur indoors and the activity is stationary (e.g., weights, stationary equipment) have students spread out as much as possible (minimum 2 metres apart). If the activity involves movement, ensure there is ample space available to reduce the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
 - Wearing masks during high intensity exercise activities (indoors or outdoors) is based on personal choice but is not to replace the need for physical distancing.
 - Note: The reason for this is that masks worn under these circumstances quickly become wet and become ineffective.
 - Guidance for high-intensity exercise activities applies within and between cohorts.
- As per *Physical and Health Education (PHE) Canada* guidelines, staff are encouraged to:
 - 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, consider the following preventative options:
 - Avoid sharing equipment by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies.
 - Assemble individualized PE kits that can be assigned to students.
 - Assist students create their own PE kits to use at home or school.
 - Discuss any additional equipment needs with the school administrator.
 - Keep extra equipment on hand (where available) 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.
 - Designate an area (as necessary) and/or direct students on where they should store and change into/out of their jackets or winter clothing as moving indoors and outdoors is encouraged routinely.

Sports

- All district school sports (secondary and elementary) follow direction from the Ministry of Education and *BC School Sports* (BCSS) and the [Return to School Sports](#) document and use their guidelines and stages as these align with the MOE Restart Plan:
 - Important: *Via Sport* regulations **do not** apply to school sports, however, coaches are advised to use the *Via Sport* website to familiarize themselves with some examples of sport specific planning <https://www.viasport.ca/sport-specific-guidelines>
- Elementary school sports may proceed and must follow the same guidelines as secondary school sports as outlined in the BC School Sports COVID-19 guide and as per district protocols.
- Sport activities should be held outside whenever possible.
- No in-person inter-school competitions/events should occur at this time.
- Student-athletes are required to wash their hands before, during (including breaks), and after any school sport activities. Staff and students are to focus on hand washing/sanitizing stations where sports occur. Washing/sanitizing hands is recommended whenever touching common surfaces or shared equipment.
- Programs and activities (e.g., sports team practices, drills, and skills) can occur if:
 - Within a cohort/learning group minimizing physical contact, between cohorts maintaining physical distancing.
 - Activities do not involve prolonged physical contact (i.e., physical contact beyond a brief moment). For example, activities such as soccer and touch football are low-risk, whereas activities like wrestling should be avoided.
 - Staff are encouraged to adapt activities/sports as needed to reduce physical contact.
 - No spectators may attend – aside from participants, only the minimum number of individuals required to run the activity should be present.
 - Masks are to be worn by K-12 staff and other adults when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.
 - For students grades K-3: Masks are encouraged, but not required.
 - For students grades 4-12: Masks are required. See exceptions in *PPE section*.

NOTES

- **Students within the same learning group** are not required to maintain physical distancing, but activities must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
- **Students from different learning groups** are required to maintain physical distancing (2M) when indoors. When outdoors, activities must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
- In secondary schools:

- For high intensity activities (that result in significantly increased respiration rates):
 - High intensity activities should take place outdoors, or be replaced with low-intensity activities, if the conditions above cannot be met.
 - 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.
- Wearing masks during high-intensity sport activities (indoors or outdoors) is left to personal choice, however, masks cannot replace the need for 2 metres between students and/or exercise equipment during high intensity stationary activities indoors.
 - Note: The reason for this is that masks worn under these circumstances quickly become wet and become ineffective.
- Masks must be worn by grade 4-12 students during low-intensity indoor physical activities when a barrier is not present.
- Physical distancing (2m) is to be maintained between cohorts/learning groups (indoors and outdoors)
- Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in this document.
 - Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in sport activities and equipment use.
 - Disinfect teaching aids (e.g., clipboards, white boards, pens, plastic bins for transporting materials etc.)
- See the Return to School Sports Plan from BC School Sports for additional information. In the case of any discrepancy in guidance, schools and school districts are expected to follow the guidance in this document.
- Scrimmages or contests between cohorts, even in the same school are also prohibited.
- No in-person inter-school or regional sports leagues, competitions, or events will be held. Similarly, no inter-regional travel for school sports is to occur at this time.
- Students should bring their own water bottles and must not share these with others. Access to water should not be limited.
- Total group size in athletics is not to exceed 50 people.
- Locker rooms and showers are not accessible to students or staff at this time.
- Gym and other rooms where physical activity occurs indoors are encouraged to open windows and/or doors to increase air flow; weather permitting.
- Weight rooms/fitness rooms must be inspected by the Site H&S Committee to confirm distancing of equipment, occupancy limits are set, added ventilation options are in place (e.g., open exterior doors/windows, fans, etc.), and that use of the space is supervised by staff at all times. No unsupervised use of weight rooms is permitted. Equipment used in weight rooms must be cleaned and disinfected by the user before and after each use.

Playgrounds

- Playgrounds are a safe environment.
 - BCCDC: There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments.
- Use of playgrounds and playground structures (e.g., swings, slides, adventure playgrounds, etc.) are permitted.
- The following measures should be taken when using playgrounds:

- Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play. After play on playgrounds where hands may be soiled (are visibly dirty) it **is essential that hand washing be practiced over the use of hand sanitizer.**
- Attempt to minimize direct physical contact between students in the same Cohort.
- Note: Sand and water outdoors 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 COVID-19 survives on sand or water.

Fundraisers

- Schools may continue to offer fundraisers if they can comply with the requirements in this document.

Paper, Textbooks, and Books

- Public health advises there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g., children’s books or magazines) and items with plastic covers (e.g., DVDs) can be contaminated if handled by a person with COVID-19; however, the risk is low. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or “quarantined” for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

Music Programs

- All classes, programs, and activities (e.g., Band, Choir) can continue to occur where:
 - K-12 staff and students in Grades 4 to 12 wear masks when indoors. Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.
 - Students and staff will be spaced as far apart as possible; with 2m being a minimum.
 - Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.
- Teachers will be responsible for supervising students to ensure that they follow procedures diligently.
- Staff in music programs/classes 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, however, must comply with the protocols outlined here.
- No in-person inter-school performances, competitions, or 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.
 - No in-person audiences are permitted unless other students in the same class.

Choir and Singing

- Singing may occur at all grades as long as a minimum of physical distancing (2 m) is maintained between participants.
- Non-medical masks are required to be worn by K-12 staff and grade 4-12 students while singing indoors. Staff leading choir, should also wear a mask and may opt to wear a face shield.
- **In cohort:**
 - Physical contact must be minimized for those withing the same cohort, and students and staff are spaced as far apart as possible.
- **Outside of cohort:**

- Physical distancing (2m) can be maintained for K-12 staff and grade 4-12 students when interacting outside of their cohort.
- Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside of their cohort indoors.
- Students should be arranged so as not singing face to face (e.g., keep to rows, not in the round) and the teacher should be a minimum 2 metres distanced from the closest student.
- Consider singing outdoors or in rooms large enough to accommodate greater than 2m physical distancing. In rooms where singing is occurring, ideally windows should be open.
- Consider options to share performances virtually through Teams.

Instruments General

- Students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before handling their instrument, case, or mouthpiece as well as at the conclusion of playing their instrument.
- Students should refrain from handling the instruments, cases, or mouthpieces of other students.
- While cleaning must meet the protocols in this document it is understood that bleach-based products may be damaging long-term to some instruments. See the *B.C. Music Educators' Association* and the *Coalition for Music Education in B.C.* for additional information on cleaning.

Non-wind Instruments Specifics

- Staff should carefully supervise students cleaning instruments using standard practices and cleaning and disinfecting products (e.g., sterisol, isopropyl alcohol, etc.).
- Assigned or individual student instruments are encouraged and ideal. Shared instruments should be limited as they will require cleaning after use by the teacher or by students in secondary if supervised.

Wind Instruments Specifics

- Wind instruments are permitted in schools at this time.
- Maintaining physical distance (2m) is the goal for all students when playing wind instruments, students should not face one another, and the teacher should be a minimum 2 metres distanced from the closest student and may opt for a face shield.
- Individual/personal wind instruments are ideal.
- Shared wind instruments are strongly discouraged. If essential that these be used, shared instruments are required to be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly before and after use. This cleaning/disinfection must be supervised by the music or band teacher.
- Music and band teachers must allocate time at the beginning and end of any class where wind instruments are used in order to guide and supervise the safe assembly/disassembly, care, and cleaning of instruments used by students.
- Before and after, each assembly/disassembly and cleaning phase of every class, each student must practice hand hygiene.
- Cleaning with standard wind instrument disinfectants (e.g., Sterisol, etc.) can be conducted by students of their wind instruments and must be supervised by an experienced music or band staff.
 - If shared wind instruments must be used, mouthpieces must not be shared, and staff must carefully supervise cleaning and disinfection with standard disinfectants **before and after** each use; to give everyone confidence that the instrument is clean and safe. (VCH)
 - Cloths in woodwind instruments must be keep with the instrument.
 - Common towels or cloths for drying instruments are not permitted.
- All water keys of brass instruments must be emptied onto paper towel thick enough to catch all moisture (located next to the student). No water keys are to be emptied straight onto the floor. Used paper towel must be disposed of by the musician into regular garbage such as a plastic lined waste bin. Diligent hand hygiene must be performed before leaving the classroom. Staff and students are reminded to consider the environment when using paper towel in this way and use only as much

paper towel as needed.

Extracurricular Activities

- **Important:** Intra-school events that are not an educational activity (e.g., are not offered specifically for student learning, health and development or mental well-being and inclusion) are considered “events” as defined by the Provincial Health Officer Order on *Gatherings and Events*. For that reason, they must comply with this Order. This includes events like student dances, music, theatrical or dance performances, parties, services, ceremonies, or other occasions where large groups of people may gather.
 - Note: These are not supported by the district at this time.
- School-based extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if they can be implemented in line with the guidance for within- and outside-of-cohort interactions noted in this document.
- Inter-school events including competitions, tournaments, and festivals, should not occur at this time.
- Extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if:
 - Physical distance can be maintained between members of different Cohorts;
or
 - Minimized physical contact is practiced by those within the same Cohort, participants are spaced out, and adequate space to avoid crowding is provided.
- In-person inter-school events including competitions, tournaments, events, and festivals must not occur at this time.

Field Trips and Camps

- Overnight camps are not permitted at this time.
- International Field Trips are cancelled until further notice.
- Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable.
 - Staff must conduct a risk assessment considering the field trip location, potential contact with others, hand hygiene options, etc.
 - Minimize interactions with people outside of Learning Groups/Cohorts.
- Out of school activities should be local outdoor activities that support physical distancing and do not require use of a school bus or public transportation.
- When planning field trips, staff must follow existing policies and procedures as well as this Safety Plan and its procedures and protocols.
- 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 staff or parent volunteers for driving students is not permitted at this time.
 - 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 (e.g., 50 people). See [Appendix E](#) for current Orders.

Photocopier rooms

- Minimize the use or need for printed materials to minimize access to photocopiers.
- Only one person should be at a copier at a time and 2m distancing is required by all staff and students.
- Plan or schedule large photocopier jobs.
- The user is to clean and disinfect the control panel after each use.
- Note: Do not clean glass with the VSB PCS cleaner. Use the cleaner that was in use for this purpose prior to COVID-19. (Important: See section above on *Cleaning and Disinfection: Keyboards, Photocopiers, and*

Staff Rooms and Break Areas

- Masks are required in all staff rooms or break rooms except while seated and eating or drinking.
- Staff room kitchen access and access to any other amenities (e.g., photocopier, etc.) or use of space for other purposes is generally permitted with 2 m physical distancing required, however, this is determined by the school administrator/supervisor.
 - Use floor markings, posters, visual cues to keep staff 2 m apart in kitchen areas/break rooms.
- Staff rooms seating must be set up at and maintain 2m physical distancing. This applies to all other rooms used as break rooms. Staff must remain a minimum of 2 m from the next person. Should the school administrator/supervisor or Site Health and Safety Committee observe that this rule is not being complied with, the room may be closed to staff seating by the school administrator/supervisor or by the VSB Health and Safety department.
- Staff are encouraged to eat in their classrooms, outdoors, or other spaces their Cohort occupy daily.
- All staff must bring their own packaged lunch daily as well as any snacks and beverages.
- Do not share food (including condiments), beverages, utensils, dishes, or containers.
- All lunch and snack food must be eaten or properly disposed of by the end of each day. Food should not be stored over multiple days in the staff room or classrooms. This will aid in cleaning and pest control. Exceptions to this are Home Economics and Culinary Arts teaching spaces.
- Staff room doors should be propped open.
- Any staff choosing to use appliances/counters must clean the areas, surfaces, appliances, etc. immediately after use. Supplies are provided by the school.
- Physical distancing of 2m is required in all areas of the staffroom, including the kitchen area.
- Wash your hands before and after you use items in the staffroom and before leaving the staffroom.
- Wash your hands before and after you eat.
- Other rooms where staff may congregate with other staff require occupancy limits be posted and to follow the general guidance here and elsewhere in this document including remaining 2 m physically distant and wearing a non-medical mask (except: eating or drinking, or a barrier is in place). Informal congregations of staff are also discouraged and require physical distancing (2m) and non-medical masks are required indoors. Spaces where this may occur include, but are not limited to elevators, lobbies, hallways, stairwells, corridors, bathrooms. Staff are not to have informal meetings/social gatherings of any size in these spaces.

Work Experience

- The District and school staff will assess and determine if it is safe for their students to continue with existing work placements or to begin new placements, considering Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC guidance regarding COVID-19.
- Schools must obtain parent/guardian sign-off for all new and continuing placements during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Students can still engage in work placements in accordance with the following guidance:
 - The District must ensure students are covered with the required, valid workplace insurance for placements at standard worksites and follow WorkSafeBC guidelines.
 - Information for work experience students is the same as for workers and is available on the WorkSafeBC COVID-19 web page, including:
 - What workers should do
 - Staying safe at work
 - Information specific to various industries
- For current and any new placements, standards in the ministry *Work Experience Program Guide* must

be followed. (Note: As part of setup and monitoring, worksite visits can now be conducted virtually if needed.)

- Students and support workers who accompany special needs students to work sites, life skills course and locations, etc., will adhere to the health and safety guidelines of the District and the workplace (follow whichever is more stringent) including wearing PPE if required.

Temporary Storage Area

- If temporary storage is required during this time, it will be designated by the school administrator in the school specific plan and used according to the school administrators' direction.
- Boiler rooms, electrical and mechanical rooms, service tunnels, confined spaces, attics, and other specialized spaces which may pose a hazard **must not be used for storage**.

Emergency Procedures

The Site H&S Committee is to review the emergency procedures and assembly areas for physical distancing and the maintenance of separation of Learning Groups/Cohorts during drills.

With few exceptions, mostly to do with conducting drills and assembly sites, district-wide emergency procedures remain unchanged as a result of COVID-19.

- All drills – staff should be notified of all drills (e.g., no surprise drills)
- Evacuation
 - Staff focus should remain on protecting other staff and students from the hazard/life safety issue that prompted the evacuation in the first place.
 - BC Fire Code and Vancouver Fire Bylaw requires schools to conduct “total evacuation fire drills: involving all occupants of the building. Partial evacuations **do not comply**.
 - Total evacuations may be achieved in stages **during drills only** as it is important to not crowd the hallways and evacuation routes.
 - Emergency evacuation assembly areas may need to be altered to maintain physical distancing, especially for drills.
NOTE:
 - This change in Evacuation procedure is also part of Lockdown and Drop, Cover and Hold On procedures.
- Room Clear
 - Staff must review their plans for Room Clear to ensure that the designated area is within the same Cohort. If not check that the designated area can accommodate the Learning Groups/Cohorts physically distanced from one another (and keep students within their Cohort).
- Lockdown – remains the same, however, during drills only the students should not crowd together on the floor and physical contact must be avoided. Simply gather on the floor as out of view as feasible without crowding in a small space. Again, this is for drills only. During an actual Lockdown, life safety is prioritized over physical distancing, and it is important for staff and students to get out of sight.
- Hold and Secure – remains the same.
- Shelter in Place – remains the same.
- Drop, Cover, and Hold On – remains the same, however, during drills only it is important that students are not crowded together on the floor and physical contact is to be avoided. Again, this is for drills only. During an actual earthquake Drop, Cover and Hold On is a life safety procedure and is prioritized over physical distancing.

Administering First Aid

General

IMPORTANT: Standard First Aid procedures and protocols will be used during this time and the following is in addition to standard procedures and protocols:

- Recall that with Daily Health Assessments and associated protocols for staff and students to go home immediately if they develop any symptoms, it is highly unlikely that a person requiring first aid also happens to have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Assess the injured person from a distance (2 m minimum).
- Encourage, supervise, and support self-care for minor injuries if appropriate and the person is both capable and able (e.g., provide the person the supplies and have them hold their own ice pack in place, compress their own nosebleed, clean their own scrape, apply their own band aid, etc.).
- If self-care and/or waiting for an ambulance or parent pick-up, remain 2 metres from the injured/ill employee or student.
- If providing direct care to the injured person, before treating the patient, wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds prior to putting on the appropriate PPE (gloves, safety eyewear/face shield, and disposable non-medical mask). FYI – hand sanitizer can also be used, but it must have evaporated completely before donning gloves and this may create delay.
- After treating the person, dispose of all single-use supplies that were used in a waste bin and conduct hand hygiene.
- Document the treatment in the student First Aid Record and First Aid Log as per WorkSafeBC and District protocol.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces that were used during first aid treatment with the district provided cleaner and clean and disinfect safety eyewear. If the clean-up is not minor (i.e., blood or body fluids on the floor, etc.), contact the building engineer to complete cleaning and disinfecting.
- Fill in the staff or student First Aid Record and First Aid log as per WorkSafeBC and District protocol.
- OFA's should review carefully:
 - Section on Daily Health Assessment, procedure table for Managing Staff or Students with Symptoms
 - *VSB COVID-19 First Aid Procedures* available on the VSB H&S webpage.

Staff – Additional Detail

- A point of care assessment is conducted by the OFA on the situation and injured/ill person to assess the risks and the injuries.
 - If self-care and/or waiting for an ambulance, remain 2 metres from the injured/ill staff member.
 - If providing direct care within 2 metres of a staff member/adult, don the appropriate PPE for the situations. PPE in such instances when treating co-workers/adults includes: Gloves, safety eyewear/face shield, and a disposable non-medical mask.
 - If able, available, and appropriate, direct the worker to don a disposable mask and safety eyewear.

Students – Additional Detail

- A point of care assessment is conducted by the OFA on the situation and injured/ill person to assess the risks and the injuries.
 - If self-care and/or waiting for an ambulance, remain 2 metres from the injured/ill staff member.
 - If treating children/students who require very brief treatment for minor injury, such as scraped knees, minor cuts, etc. (not COVID-19 related symptoms), don typical PPE such as gloves.
 - Note: OFAs/staff are to wear a disposable non-medical mask in such circumstances even though the risk of COVID-19 transmission is low. Eye protection/face shields

are optional.

- See section on *Risk Assessment for K-12, COVID-19, and Children (ages 0-19 years)*.
- If a student/child's injuries are major or long duration care is required within 2 metres, don gloves, safety eyewear and a disposable non-medical mask.

CPR

- Call 911 as soon as you are told or assess a medical emergency.
- Upon approaching the scene, the OFA will conduct a point of care assessment.
- Don appropriate PPE (gloves, safety eyewear, disposable non-medical mask)
 - Note: *Do not delay care if PPE is not immediately available.*
- With PPE on, approach the person who is not breathing and begin compression only CPR. If no air movement is detected, begin continuous chest compression CPR at a rate of 100/minute. **No breaths or mouth to mouth contact is required.**
- Continue CPR until someone else takes over from you (another person trained in CPR or a paramedic).
- Wash your hands and face with soap and water for 20 seconds immediately after completing CPR.


Monitoring and Assessing

Knowledge about COVID-19 continues to evolve. Health and safety protocols, procedures, and control measures put in place for COVID-19 will be monitored to confirm continued effectiveness. Site H&S Committees play a key role in this process. As the BC K-12 Restart Plan moves from Stage to Stage, the measures and resources in place will need to be reviewed locally at the site and by District Health and Safety.

District monitoring and assessment will be conducted as Stages change or at least annually.


Other Resources and References

- [BCCDC and Ministry of Health - COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [Ministry of Education K-12 COVID-19 H&S Guidelines](#)
- [BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfecting of Public Settings – including schools](#)
- [WorkSafeBC K-12 Education \(K-12\) Protocols for Returning to Operation](#)
- [WorkSafeBC - OFAA protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic](#): A guide for employers and occupational first aid attendants
- [B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C.](#)
- BCCDC – [Illness and Medical Care](#)
- BCCDC – [Children with immune suppression or medical complexities](#)
- [NACTAR](#) - Managing the Social Emotional and Traumatic Impact SCHOOL VERSION
- [BC School Sports](#)
- [VSB, COVID-19 In-School Instruction Safety Plan, Safe Work Procedures and Protocols](#) – Stage 2 (August 2020 and January 2021). Archived.
- [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators](#) – Management of Illness and Confirmed Cases
- BC Ministry of Education [K-12 Daily Health Check](#) app





Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health












Hand Hygiene


SOAP OR ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUB: Which is best?  **Either will clean your hands: use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled.**






Remove hand and wrist jewellery

HOW TO HAND WASH		HOW TO USE HAND RUB
 <p>1 Wet hands with warm (not hot or cold) running water</p>	 <p>2 Apply liquid or foam soap</p>	 <p>1 Ensure hands are visibly clean (if soiled, follow hand washing steps)</p>
 <p>3 Lather soap covering all surfaces of hands for 20-30 seconds</p>	 <p>4 Rinse thoroughly under running water</p>	 <p>2 Apply about a loonie-sized amount to your hands</p>
 <p>5 Pat hands dry thoroughly with paper towel</p>	 <p>6 Use paper towel to turn off the tap</p>	 <p>3 Rub all surfaces of your hand and wrist until completely dry (15-20 seconds)</p>

COVID19_HH_001



   **BC Centre for Disease Control**

If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.

Appendix B: Donning and Doffing Gloves Procedure

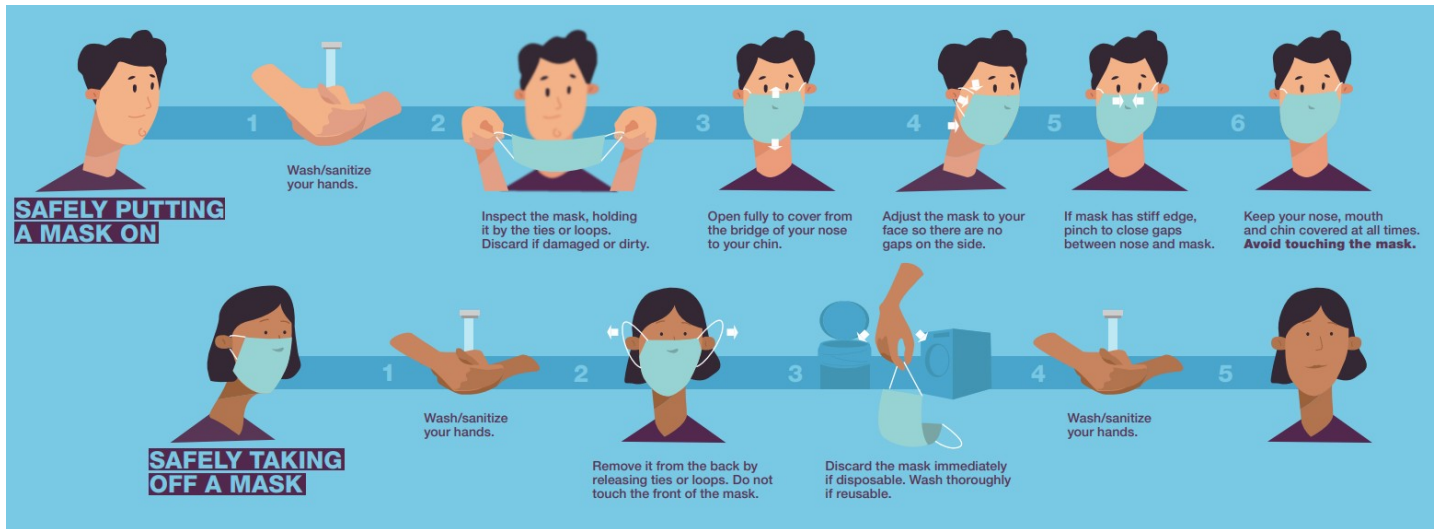
For First Aid attendants, personal care, or custodial/maintenance work.



Appendix C: How to Wear a Face Mask

Procedure for Donning, Doffing and Caring for a Non-Medical Mask (if required or you choose to wear one)

- 6 Steps to Putting on a Mask
- 5 Steps to Taking Off a Mask



IMPORTANT:

Additional Protocols for Safely Wearing and Caring for a Face Mask

DO:

- Make sure your mask isn't damaged, and it's clean and dry before wearing
- Replace your mask whenever it becomes damp or dirty
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer before and after touching the mask
- Use the ear loops or ties to put on and remove your mask
- Make sure your nose and mouth are fully covered, it fits securely, and there are no gaps on the sides
- Store your mask in a clean paper bag when it is not in use
- Wash your mask with hot soapy water and let it dry completely before using it again

DON'T:

- Wear masks that are damaged, dirty, or moist
- Touch the mask while wearing it
- Wear a loose mask
- Hang the mask from your neck or ears
- Remove the mask to talk to someone
- Share your mask with anyone
- Store your mask where it may easily become soiled (e.g., unprotected in a purse, pocket, backpack, etc.)

Sources: open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-help-prevent-the-spread-poster; [Health Canada.ca](https://www.healthcanada.ca) wearing a face mask

Appendix D: Daily Health Assessments

COVID-19 Daily Health Assessment

All parents, guardians, and/or caregivers have the responsibility to conduct a Daily Health Assessment of your child(ren) each day before sending them to school.

Similarly, all VSB staff must complete a Daily Health Assessment and confirm completion each day at sign-in or with their supervisor. *Do not return this form to your school/supervisor.*

Keep a copy of this Daily Health Assessment in a handy area at home (such as in your kitchen) and incorporate this Daily Health Assessment into your morning routine, before leaving for school or work.

Daily Health Assessment			
1. COVID-19 Symptoms		Do you have any of the following symptoms?	
Fever (over 38°C)		YES	NO
Chills		YES	NO
Cough or worsening of chronic cough		YES	NO
Difficulty breathing		YES	NO
Loss of sense of smell or taste		YES	NO
Sore throat		YES	NO
Loss of appetite		YES	NO
Extreme fatigue or tiredness		YES	NO
Headache		YES	NO
Body aches		YES	NO
Nausea and vomiting		YES	NO
Diarrhea		YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Close Contact	Have you had contact with a person who has COVID-19? You would have been advised of this by Public Health.	YES	NO
4. Isolate	Have you been told to isolate by Public Health?	YES	NO

WHAT TO DO NEXT

If you answered "No" to all of the above (1-4), the student or staff member is welcome to attend school or work.

1. If you answered "Yes" to any of the above symptoms, follow the instructions below:

SYMPTOMS		WHAT TO DO
Fever (above 38°C) Chills Cough	Loss of sense of smell or taste Difficulty breathing	1 or more of these symptoms: Get tested and stay home.
Sore throat Loss of appetite Headache Body aches	Extreme fatigue or tiredness Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea	If you have 1 symptom: Stay home until you feel better. If you have 2 or more of these symptoms: Stay home and wait 24 hours to see if you feel better. Get tested if not better after 24 hours.

2. If you answered "Yes" to travelling internationally within the last 14 days,

Self-quarantine for 14 days at home from the date that you arrived back in Canada.

3. If you answered "Yes" to being a Public Health confirmed close contact of someone who has COVID-19,

Self-isolate at home for 14 days. If you also have any symptoms or develop any, get tested for COVID-19.

Note: People who are close contacts are notified by Public Health.

4. If you answered "Yes" to having been told to isolate, you must stay home until Public Health says it is safe to return

Access the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) anytime to determine if you/your child should seek testing for COVID-19.

Version: February 2021

Appendix E – Current Public Health Orders and Direction

From time to time, the BC Provincial Health Officer or government of BC issues additional Orders or guidance that overlap or supersede other PHO or public health directions. This Appendix contains these Orders and directions and will be updated frequently, however, for current Orders and public health directives, see:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus#orders>

The District and this document (“*COVID-19 Safety Plan, Safe Work Instruction, and Protocols As per BC Government COVID-19 K-12 Education Plan – Stage 2 (2021)*”) will adopt and adhere to any PHO or BC government public health orders directed at K-12. In the event of delay in edits to this document, see the link above.

COVID-19 orders related to K-12 and the school District are summarized and paraphrased here for ease of access, however, refer to the link above for actual language and the most recent Public Health Orders in BC.

Summary Only

March 30th 2021

- BCCDC and the Ministry of Health issued an update to the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#).
- K-12 mask addendum is issue and masks are required indoors for all K-12 staff and grades 4-12 students except when outdoors, a barrier is in place, or eating or drinking. Grade K-3 students are encouraged to wear masks indoors.

March 29, 2021

- PHO announces a “circuit breaker” until April 19th, 2021 and an addendum to the K-12 Guidelines making masks required by K-12 staff and grades 4-12 students while indoors at school.
- The focus of the circuit breaker is to limit indoor group activities (ex. Restaurant patio and take out only, etc), pause permitted group activities, and keep travel to only that which is essential, and retracted it is okay to have 10 people get together outdoors.

February 4th, 2021

- BCCDC and the Ministry of Health issued an update to the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#).
- Masks are required indoors by all K-12 staff, middle and secondary school students except when outdoors, a barrier is in place, eating or drinking, or sitting or standing in place/at workstation.
- Physical distancing changed from simply 2m to a multi-dimensional definition.
- A provincial Health and Safety Checklist ([Appendix F](#)) is provided at the recommendation of medical health officers for identifying gaps in a site’s COVID-19 safety plan. This checklist is to be completed by site Health and Safety Committees.
- Music and physical education received further clarifications, including masks for singing indoors and for low intensity physical activities where physical distancing cannot consistently be maintained.
- The Ministry of Education issued the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#). This document expands on the above released K-12 Public Health Guidance.

December 4, 2020 – January 8, 2021 (extended to February 5th, 2021)

- The [Use of Face Coverings in Indoor Public Spaces \(COVID-19\) Order](#), issued by the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, requires individuals 12 years of age and older to wear a mask or face covering in designated indoor public spaces (e.g. reception areas, lobbies).

- Exemptions to the provincial mask requirements apply to people who are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition or a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment, and to people who are unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.
- The order is directed to public spaces rather than workplaces and does not specifically reference schools. However, the existing [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 \(p.24\)](#), which have been in place since September 2020, require staff in all K-12 schools and students in middle/secondary schools to wear 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.
- The **Gathering and Events Order**, issued by the PHO, suspends all social events and gatherings to significantly reduce COVID-19 transmission related to social interactions and travel.
- At this time, all non-essential travel should be avoided. This includes travel into and out of B.C. and between regions of the province. For example:
 - Do not travel for a vacation
 - Do not travel to visit friends or family outside of your household or core bubble.

Note: See November 7th, 2020 direction as this was an expansion and extension of the direction given on November 7, 2020.

December 24, 2020

Note: All K-12 activities are exempt from the following orders.

- All in-person events and community-based gatherings as defined in the [PHO order – Gatherings and Events \(PDF\)](#) are suspended, with the exception of [weddings, funerals, baptisms, support group meetings and business meetings](#).

December 17, 2020

The PHO issued a [Workplace Safety order](#) that includes a number of requirements for all employers, including:

- Employers must review their [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) to ensure that the plan adequately protects workers from the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace and is consistent with WorkSafeBC requirements.
- Employers must ensure that workers are prohibited from entering the workplace if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a potential exposure through a [health check](#).
- Employers must encourage workers to work from their private residence wherever possible unless there is a preference on the part of the worker or the employer for the worker to work at the workplace.
- COVID-19 Safety Plans must include measures to prevent workers from congregating or crowding in indoor common areas, such as elevators, lobbies, hallways, stairwells, corridors, bathrooms, meeting rooms, break rooms, and kitchens.

November 24, 2020

Note: All K-12 activities are exempt from the following orders.

- An order requiring face masks in public indoor areas is issued for all of BC for all persons 12 years and older.
- K-12 guidance requires students grade 6 and up and all staff to wear non-medical face masks when in high traffic areas within the school, such as hallways and common areas. Similarly, all staff, contractors, and visitors were already required to wear a face mask while in indoor common areas or high traffic areas. Exemptions for tolerance and medical reasons are included in the order.

November 19 - December 7, 2020

Note: All K-12 activities are exempt from the following orders.

- All in-person events and community-based gatherings as defined in the [PHO order – Gatherings and Events \(PDF\)](#) are suspended, with the exception of [weddings, funerals, baptisms, support group meetings and business meetings](#).

- All non-essential travel should be avoided. This includes travel into and out of B.C. and between regions of the province. For example:
 - Do not travel for a vacation
 - Do not travel to visit friends or family outside of your household or core bubble
- Employers to review their COVID-19 safety plan to ensure robust health and safety protocols (including mask use, physical distancing, barriers, and cleaning/disinfecting procedures) are in place for these sites. School and school district safety plans must be in alignment with existing guidance from WorkSafeBC and the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.
- Face shield or mouth shield are not adequate substitutes for a non-medical mask as they do not fully cover the nose and mouth.
- Physical distancing must continue to be practiced, even when masks are being worn. Masks are not an effective substitute for physical distancing.
- There must be no social gathering/congregating of employees in any areas.
- Virtual meetings between adults are strongly encouraged wherever possible.

November 19, 2020

- A verbal order was issued by the PHO reinforced the importance of daily health checks as part of employers' COVID-19 health and safety plans and includes a requirement for all employers to ensure that every employee conducts a daily health check prior to entering the workplace.
- The verbal order also requires health check processes be "active" in that employees must confirm with their employer that they have reviewed the complete list of entry requirements and that none of the prohibited criteria apply to them.
- Daily health checks must be completed by visitors (e.g., volunteers, parents, teacher candidates) as per the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 (p.17).
- Students (and parents, on behalf of the student) are not required to complete active daily health checks under the order, but parents should continue to assess their children daily for symptoms of illness before sending them to school.
- WorkSafeBC guidelines for office spaces state that, where possible, employers should consider remote work options for workers who do not require office attendance. Work from home options are at the employer's discretion based on their respective safety plan.
- School-based programs such as *StrongStart*, childcare, school meal programs etc. are considered essential and can continue to operate.
- Extracurricular activities and special interest clubs can continue in schools as they are not impacted by the provincial orders.
- School sport activities (e.g., games, practices) may still proceed provided that the school follows the *BCSS Phase 2 of the Return to School Sport* document requirements including minimizing physical contact within learning groups and maintaining physical distance (2M) between students from different learning groups.
- Schools and school districts can continue to allow after hours use of school facilities as long as they are in alignment with the updated Gathering and Events Order.
- Schools cannot host a dinner, dance, or other community events.
- All school-based programs, extracurricular activities, special interest clubs and school sports activities must continue to operate in accordance with the health and safety requirements outlined in the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12.

November 7 – November 23, 2020 (was extended and expanded to all of BC on December 4th (See above))

- Travel into and out of the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley should be limited to essential travel only.
 - Travel for work between regions and health authorities is deemed essential travel.

Appendix F – COVID-19 School Health and Safety Checklist

COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools

Health and Safety Checklist



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Complete this checklist with your school's health and safety committee to assess your school's safety plan with the [Ministry of Education's Health and Safety Guidelines](#). Measures that are only sometimes or never in place represent areas where more attention and action may be needed.

SCHOOL: _____

DATE: _____

Administrative Measures		
Entrance and Exits	Staff and students are not crowded when they enter and leave the school. This includes spaces like hallways, coat rooms and bus waiting areas.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Common Spaces	Staff and students can move through common spaces - hallways, washrooms, cafeteria, bus stops - without crowding or physical contact.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Physical Distancing Within Learning Groups	Physical contact and close, face-to-face interactions are minimized. People are spread out as much as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Physical Distancing Outside of Learning Groups	There is 2 meters of space available between people from different learning groups when together for extended periods of time (when indoors for elementary, and at all times for middle and secondary).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Staff Only Spaces (e.g. Administrative Officers, Staff Rooms, Copy Rooms, etc.)	Physical distancing is practiced. Masks are not used in place of physical distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Visual cues (floor markings, posters, etc.) are in place to promote physical distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Masks are worn in accordance with the Health and Safety Guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Itinerant Staff, Temporary Teachers on Call and Other Visitors	Process in place to ensure itinerant staff, Teachers On-Call and visitors are aware of the school's health and safety measures and their responsibility to follow them at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Gatherings	Student gatherings (e.g. events that bring staff and students together outside of regular learning activities) only occur within learning groups and as minimally as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Staff gatherings (e.g. meetings, professional development activities, etc.) occur virtually whenever possible. If not possible, staff are able to be physically distanced during the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Extracurricular Activities	Activities are implemented in line with the guidance for within- and outside-of-learning group interactions, including 2 meters of space available between people from different learning groups (when indoors for elementary, and at all times for middle and secondary).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Administrative Measures		
Hand Hygiene	Hand cleaning facilities available and accessible throughout the school and well maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Signage to remind students staff to practice regular hand hygiene and good cough etiquette.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Environmental Measures		
Learning Space Configuration	Learning spaces are arranged to maximize the space available and to minimize people directly facing one another (where possible).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Increased Cleaning and Disinfecting	General cleaning and disinfecting is done every 24 hours, with frequently-touched surfaces cleaned an additional time (including once during the school day).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Ventilation and Air Exchange	The school's ventilation system is serviced and operating to specifications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Personal Measures		
Daily Health Checks	Staff complete an active Daily Health Check.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Parents and students are made aware of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Stay Home When Sick	Staff and students are reminded to stay home when they are sick.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Personal Protective Equipment		
Masks	Staff, itinerant staff, and visitors (who are able to), wear masks in accordance with the K-12 Health and Safety Guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Students (who are able to), wear non-medical masks in accordance with the Health and Safety Guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Masks are available for those who have forgotten theirs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Additional Notes		