

# Office of the Superintendent

*Shelley Green - Superintendent*

May 29, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

**Re: Monday Marks First Day of BC's K-12 Education Restart Plan - Stage 3**

We look forward to welcoming more of our students back to class on Monday as we enter into Phase 3 of BC's K-12 Education Restart Plan. We are thrilled to announce that approximately half of our student population will be returning on a part-time rotational basis after many weeks away.

We are mindful that there may be some concern but also excitement about what Monday may look like. We wish to take this opportunity to communicate a few important changes for families and to let them know what their children will experience when they return to our buildings, as well as our expectations around health and safety protocols.

The health and safety of our students and staff continues to be our top priority. To do our part in keeping our learning community safe, we have developed administrative controls in alignment with the BC Centre of Disease Control (BCCDC) Public Health Guidance for K-12 Settings. Our Exposure Control Plan directs all staff and students to follow measures that will prevent the spread of the virus.

Due to our safety measures, our schools will look different when your child or children return. There will be visible signage, markers and one-way direction arrows on the floor indicating how students can safely navigate the building. On the first day back, teachers will be instructing students on the safety measures in place and important safety practices, such as hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, physical distancing and no sharing of personal items. We will continue to educate students about our 'new normal' and answer any questions or concerns that they may have. We understand the importance of their social-emotional well being and we want our students to know our buildings are safe, as well as inform them on how to best protect themselves and their friends.

***Our Exposure Control Plan and the BCCDC Guidance for K-12 Settings are attached to this letter. Please review the documents and share the pertinent information with your child before Monday.***

We must emphasise that we all have a shared responsibility in keeping our children safe. Our staff will continue to follow strict guidelines around cleaning and disinfecting but we also need your help. We ask that you check for daily symptoms. If your child is not feeling well, please keep them at home. If they are experiencing a fever, a new cough or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.

*The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*

We are in a very fortunate position here in BC in comparison to other places in the world. We have had limited cases, especially on the island, but we must continue to work together to prevent a surge in transmission. We must move forward cautiously but have confidence in that we know about the virus and that we are taking all precautions so we can aim for a full time return to class in September.

If you have chosen to keep your child or children at home for now and later change your mind, please contact your school as each school has a tailored schedule to accommodate the needs of their families while maintaining safety protocols such as limited density requirements. To learn more about your school's schedule please visit your school's website.

As we navigate through the next four weeks, we understand that there will be learning opportunities that present themselves. We continue to thank you for your patience and understanding as this is a first for all of us. As we truly value parent and student voice, we will be connecting with you in mid-June to collect input on your child's experience. We will be launching an online engagement where you can provide feedback so we can continue to improve upon our students' learning experience.

In the meantime, we ask that you please stay safe and know that our schools are here to support you and your child through these uncertain times.

Sincerely,



Shelley Green  
Superintendent of Schools

**Resources for Families:**

[School District Exposure Control Plan](#)

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

[BC K-12 Education Restart Plan](#)

[Letter to Parents from Minister Fleming & BCCPAC President](#)

*The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*

One *Learning* Community



# COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan

## SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

May 28, 2020

Educators, administrators and support staff play a key role in protecting students and their families from, and minimizing the impact of, infection and illness. This is especially important at this time as we work to prevent and minimize the spread of the novel COVID-19 virus.

We have a shared responsibility in preventing the spread of the virus. We must continue to do our part by washing our hands, practicing safe physical distancing, and staying home if we feel sick.

The Greater Victoria School District is directing staff to follow these administrative controls in conjunction with the **BC Centre for Disease Control COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Settings**. All employees are expected to read, know and organize their work in accordance with the Exposure Control Plan and BC Centre for Disease Control COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Settings.

Additional resource: **Worksafe Preventing Exposure to COVID-19 in the Workplace**.

### COVID-19 Preventative Measures



- Stay home when you are sick. If you have a fever, a new cough or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.
- Practice social distancing by staying at least six feet/two metres away from any other individual while working.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If you have to cough or sneeze, try to do it into your elbow or a tissue, and then throw out the tissue if used and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- If you have questions about whether or not you should be tested for COVID-19, use the self-assessment tool at: [bc.thrive.health/covid19](https://bc.thrive.health/covid19).

### Entering/Leaving the Building

- Maintain safe social distancing guidelines of six feet/two metres between people when entering and leaving the building. **Do not enter or leave the building in groups.**
- Each school will identify the entrances and exits to be used by students and staff.
- Wash your hands after you enter the building and disinfect your workspace as needed.

### School Hours/Access

- The bell schedule has been disabled at each school.
- Only use the designated entrances and exits.
- Schools will lock their doors during the day to limit public access.
- Schools will not be used for community related events unless determined to be essential by the Board of Education.

## Daily Sanitizing Routines

- Wash your hands when you arrive at school.
- Disinfect your work area as needed.
- If you must meet in an alternate space (as identified by your administration), disinfect the used surfaces, furniture, equipment etc. after the meeting.
- Disinfect all shared surfaces, furniture, equipment etc. when finished.
- Do not share food or drinks.

## Physical Distancing Among Adults

- Follow safe social distancing guidelines by maintaining six feet or two metres distance between people.
- Work in your classroom, office or workspace as much as possible.
- If you need to talk to someone, make sure you **stay six feet or two metres away** or use your phone, email or Zoom to contact them.
- Ensure that you are in a space that allows for the six feet/two metre distance among people.

## Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact with Student

- Implement physical distancing strategies from the BCCDC COVID-19 Guidance for Schools, including:
  - » Organize students into smaller groups that stay together throughout the day.
  - » Consider different classroom and learning environment configurations to allow for distance between students and adults.
  - » Stagger pick-up and drop-off times.
  - » Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
  - » Take students outside more often.
  - » Large assemblies of staff and students will not be held.

Managing students with complex behaviours, on a delegated care plan or experiencing a health emergency may require staff to be in close proximity with the students. No additional personal protective equipment beyond normal universal precautions are required.

## Daily Communication Routines

- When you arrive at school, wash your hands and head straight to your classroom, office or work area.
- Call, email or verbally check in at the office (with the designated person) and let them know you are there.
- Check your email as your administrator may have sent out a plan for the day.
- Call or email your administrator with any questions throughout the day.
- Check your email regularly for updates.
- Staff who do not have individual computers will be assigned a computer to be used while in the building.
- Call, email or verbally check out at the office when you are leaving the building at the end of the day.

## Staff Washrooms

- Follow the plan for washroom use established by your administrator that includes washroom occupancy limits and which employees are assigned to which washroom.
- Make sure to wash your hands when you leave the washroom.
- Follow COVID-19 hand-washing guidelines as posted.

### How to Hand Wash



1 Wash hands with warm (not hot or cold) running water



2 Apply liquid or foam soap



3 Lather soap, covering all surfaces of hands, for 20-30 seconds



4 Rinse thoroughly under running water



5 Pat hands dry thoroughly with paper towel



6 Use paper towel to turn off tap

BC Centre For Disease Control:  
<http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

## Photocopier or Supply Room

- If you need to use the photocopier wash your hands before you begin.
- When you are done, disinfect the photocopier.
- Disinfect any shared surfaces or equipment at the photocopy area/room such as staplers, hole punches, etc. that you used.
- Only one person at a time allowed at the photocopier, in the photocopy room and in the supply room (if your school has one).
- When you are finished at the photocopier or in the supply room, wash your hands again before you go back to your office or workspace.

## Staffroom and Breaks

- Wash your hands before you go into the staffroom.
- Maintain a distance of six feet/two metres between each other.
- It can be used for food storage, accessing appliances, etc.
- Bring your own lunch. We are asking you not to leave the building for lunch to limit potential exposure. If you have to leave make sure you follow the same protocols that you did when you arrived.
- Bring a lunch/snack that does not require a lot of preparation (limit microwave use, surface use, utensil use, etc.).
- Disinfect the areas, surfaces, appliances, etc. that you use in the staffroom.
- When you are finished, wash your hands again before you go back to your classroom, office or workspace.
- Do not share food or drinks.

## Other Shared or Specialty Spaces

- Administrators will develop protocols for use of other shared spaces within their individual buildings (libraries, gyms, shops, etc.) and post signage.
- Protocols for these spaces must be in line with district protocols.
- Disinfect used surfaces, appliances, furniture, equipment, etc. before and after use.
- For shared resources such as books, learning materials and toys, please review BCCDC guidelines.
- Staff and students should not share personal items (devices, writing instruments, etc.)

## Illness

- If you are sick, stay home and log a sick leave.
- If you start to develop symptoms while at work, let your supervisor know via email or phone and go home.
- If you are not sure whether you should stay home, use the self-assessment tool at: [bc.thrive.health/covid19](https://bc.thrive.health/covid19) or call 811.
- If you are concerned you do not have adequate sick leave available for the absence recommended by 811 or your physician and you do not have a short term disability plan, contact your supervisor for approval to work from home or additional sick leave.
- Administrators are to communicate to parents/ caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.



## BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool

## Know the Facts

Using reliable sources of information will ensure that what you do learn is fact, not fear-based.

- **The BC Centre for Disease Control:** [covid-19.bccdc.ca](https://covid-19.bccdc.ca)
- **Health Link BC:** [www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19)
- **Health Canada:** [www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html)
- **The World Health Organization:** [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)

## Practice Self-care

Build self-care into your day. All the things you do to take care of yourself will help manage your stress. By taking good care of yourself, you'll be better prepared to take care of others.

Some self-care ideas:

- Set and maintain a routine
- Exercise regularly
- Aim to get seven to eight hours of sleep each night
- Take deep breaths and stretch
- Listen to music, read a book or reliable news sources
- Enjoy outdoor activities while following social distancing
- Acknowledge and appreciate what others are doing to help you and our community
- Practice regular hand washing to minimize your risks

**Call 1-888-COVID-19 or text 604-630-0300 for details, advice, and further information on the virus in British Columbia.**

Sited From:

[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/mental-health-addictions](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/mental-health-addictions)

**Additional Employee  
Information on our Staff Portal:  
[www.sd61.bc.ca/staff-support-portal/  
covid-19](http://www.sd61.bc.ca/staff-support-portal/covid-19)**

## WorkSafeBC Requirements

If a worker is injured as part of their workplace duties/tasks, follow the established procedures.

All documents should be sent to [MPledger@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:MPledger@sd61.bc.ca). Form 6A (Worker Report of Injury), Form 7 (Employer Report of Injury) and the SD61 Incident Investigation Form can be found on [www.sd61.bc.ca](http://www.sd61.bc.ca).

Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work. If you have reasonable cause to believe that performing a job or task puts you or someone else at risk, you must not perform the job or task. You must immediately notify your supervisor or employer, who will then take the appropriate steps to determine if the work is unsafe and remedy the situation. For more information about the steps to follow: [www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/rights-responsibilities/refusing-unsafe-work](http://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/rights-responsibilities/refusing-unsafe-work)

If workers are expected to follow special safety measures such as deep cleaning, working alone, or working from home, they should know and follow any "Safe Work Procedures" for those tasks. Contact Melissa Pledger ([MPledger@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:MPledger@sd61.bc.ca)), Brian Olohan ([BOlohan@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:BOlohan@sd61.bc.ca)), or the worker's supervisor/principal/vice-principal if you have any questions or concerns about work procedures.

Our partners at Morneau Shepell are continuing to work with the District through LifeWorks. They have developed tools to help with:

- **Working from home when you are not used to it**
- **Coping with COVID-19**
- **Emotional well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic** (webinar)

## Contact Information

### Melissa Pledger

HR-Occupational Health & Safety Advisor

250-475-4192

[MPledger@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:MPledger@sd61.bc.ca)

### Brian Olohan

Facilities' Department Health & Safety Advisor

250-920-3464

[BOlohan@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:BOlohan@sd61.bc.ca)

## COVID-19 PROTOCOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Creating a safe and healthy environment for all of our students and staff is our top priority. We all have an important role to play and a responsibility to maintain and ensure safe working conditions in our learning community, for ourselves and for all others involved.

### Employer (School District)

- Select, implement, and document risk assessments and appropriate site-specific control measures.
- Ensure that all resources and materials required to implement and maintain plan are reasonably made available as practical when required.
- Ensure that supervisors and workers are informed about the content of Exposure Control Plan.
- Conduct a periodic review of the effectiveness of the plan. This includes a review of the available control technologies to ensure that these are selected and used when practical.
- Maintain records of training and inspections.

### Supervisors (Principals & Vice Principals)

- Ensure that workers are knowledgeable regarding the controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Direct work in a manner that eliminates or minimizes the risk to workers.
- Post or relay educational and informational material in an accessible area for workers to review.

### Workers (Teachers, Education Assistants, Support Staff)

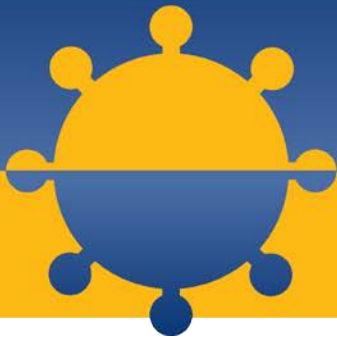
- Know the controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Participate in COVID-19 related training and instruction.
- Follow established work procedures and instructions as directed by the employer or supervisor.
- Report any unsafe conditions or acts to the supervisor.
- Know how and when to report exposure incidents.

### Facilities Managers

- Maintain an inventory of PPE for custodians, **cleaning and disinfectant products**, and well-maintained equipment used for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Provide adequate instruction to custodians on the hazards associated with cleaning work areas and on the safe work procedures specified in this Exposure Control Plan.
- Direct the work in a manner that ensures the risk to custodians is minimized and adequately controlled.
- Revise the work schedule to ensure priority of intensive cleaning of impacted work area surfaces and touch points.

### Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

- Make recommendations to the employer for the improvement and implementation of the COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan.
- Identify situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for workers, and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations.
- Consult with workers and the employer on issues related to the COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan.
- Make recommendations to the employer on orientation/training on COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan and to monitor their effectiveness.
- Complete weekly COVID-19 Protocol checklist and submit to District Occupational Health and Safety Committee.



# Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



## HOW YOU CAN SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

### Take care of others by taking care of yourself.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay home if you are sick.

### Stay at Home and Physically Distance

Stay at home whenever you can. Maintain 2 meters distance from those outside of your household.

## COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings

UPDATED: May 19, 2020

On the advice of the Provincial Health Officer, in-person instruction in public and independent K-12 schools was suspended effective March 17, 2020 as a precautionary measure in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning March 30, 2020, public and independent K-12 schools were asked to ensure ongoing school care and in-person learning opportunities for children of essential service workers requiring school care, those in remote locations, vulnerable students requiring in person support, and learners with diverse needs. As of May 19, school districts are expected to gradually resume regular operations and return to in-class instruction using a staged approach.

This guidance document is informed by [BC's Restart Plan: Next Steps to Move BC Through the Pandemic](#) and the [BC COVID-19 Go-Forward Management Strategy](#), and is also in keeping with [BC's COVID-19 Go-Forward Management Checklist](#) and information on [WorkSafe BC's COVID-19 Information and Resources](#) and [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#) websites. It provides guidance for educators, administrators and support staff at public, independent and First Nations K-12 schools to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, families and staff. This document identifies key infection prevention and control practices to implement, as well as actions to take if a student or staff member develops [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., and the fact that children are at a much lower risk of developing COVID-19, K-12 schools in British Columbia should begin increasing the number of students receiving in-class instruction within the school environment, while supporting the health and safety of children and adults. Schools should adapt as much as possible to implement public health and infection prevention and control measures, including staying home when ill, physical distancing, minimized physical contact, hand hygiene, frequent cleaning and disinfection, as described in this guidance. While remote and online learning options will continue to play a role in the education of our children, it is up to individual schools through their local planning processes to determine the optimal balance between virtual and face-to-face opportunities for students.

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

### COVID-19 and Children and Youth

- COVID-19 virus has a very low infection rate in children and youth. In BC, less than 1% of children and youth tested have been COVID-19 positive. Most children and youth are not at high risk for COVID-19 infection.
- Children under 1 year of age and those who are immunocompromised or have pre-existing pulmonary conditions are at a higher risk of severe disease (visit the [BCCDC Priority Populations](#) page for further details).



Ministry of Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

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





- Children who are considered more vulnerable can receive in-person instruction. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine if their child should attend in-person instruction if they are uncertain.
- Children and youth typically have much milder symptoms of COVID-19 most often presenting with low-grade fever and a dry cough. GI symptoms are more common over the course of disease, while skin changes and lesions, are less common.
- Many children have asymptomatic disease. However, there is no conclusive evidence that children who are asymptomatic pose a risk to other children or to adults.
- Evidence indicates transmission involving children is primarily limited to household settings, and from COVID-19 positive adults to children. Most cases in children have been linked to a symptomatic household member.
- Clusters and outbreaks involving children and youth are unusual and tend only to occur in areas where there are high levels of community spread.
- Children are not the primary drivers of COVID-19 spread in schools or in community settings.
- Schools and childcare facility closures have significant negative mental health and socioeconomic impacts on vulnerable children and youth.
- Prevention measures and mitigation strategies involving children and youth must be commensurate with risk.
- Adolescent children should physically distance themselves where possible when outside the family unit or household.
- For younger children maintaining physical distance is less practical and the focus should be on minimizing physical contact instead.

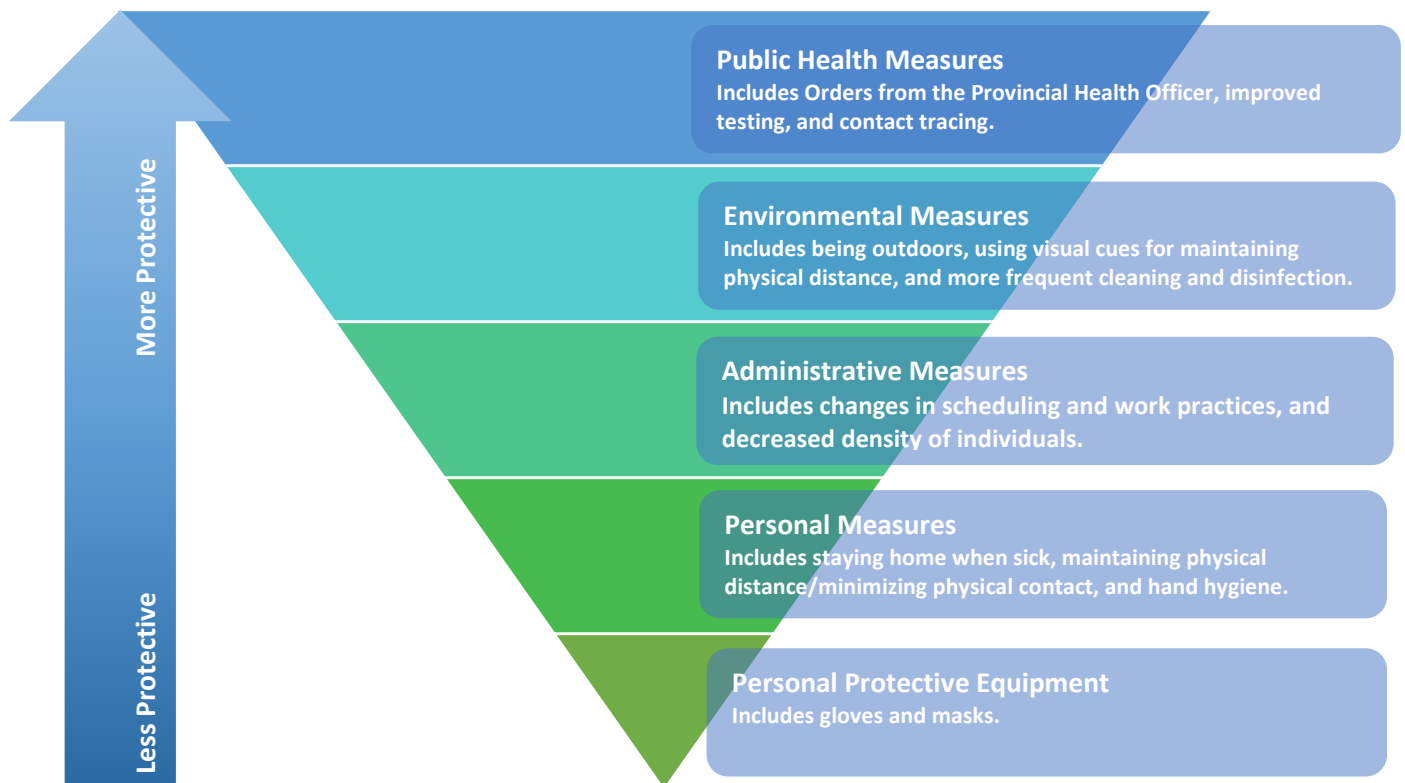
#### COVID-19 and Adults

- While COVID-19 impacts adults more than children, some adults with specific health circumstances are at an increased risk for more severe outcomes, including individuals:
  - Aged 65 and over,
  - With compromised immune systems, or
  - With underlying medical conditions.
- Most adults infected with COVID-19 will have mild symptoms that do not require care outside of the home.

## Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures

Infection prevention and exposure control measures help create a safe environment for students and staff. *Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease* describes measures that can be taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Control measures at the top are more effective and protective than those at the bottom. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

### The Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease



**Public Health Measures** are actions taken across society at the population level to limit the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and reduce the impact of COVID-19. The Provincial Health Officer has implemented public health measures, including: prohibiting mass gatherings, requiring travellers to self-isolate or quarantine upon arrival in B.C., effective case finding and contact tracing, and emphasizing the need for people to stay home when they are sick.

**Environmental Measures** are changes to your physical environment that reduce the risk of exposure. Examples include being in outdoor spaces, ensuring good ventilation and air exchange, using visual cues for maintaining physical distance, erecting physical barriers where appropriate and frequent cleaning and disinfection.

**Administrative Measures** are measures enabled through the implementation of policies, procedures, training and education. Examples of these include health and wellness policies, decreased density in classrooms, staggered schedules and using virtual learning opportunities.

**Personal Measures** are actions individuals can take to protect themselves and others. Examples include maintaining physical distance/minimizing physical contact, washing your hands frequently, coughing into your elbow and staying home from work if you are sick.

**Personal Protective Equipment** is the last and least effective of the infection prevention and exposure control measure and should only be considered after exploring all other measures. PPE is not effective as a stand-alone preventive measure, should be suited to the task, and must be worn and disposed of properly. Outside of the health care settings, the effectiveness of PPE is generally limited to protecting others should you be infected.

***Schools can implement a combination of measures at different levels, as described in this document. This document includes Environmental, Administrative, Personal Measures and the use of PPE. A summary of control measures relevant is included as Appendix A.***

## Public Health Measures

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### Mass Gatherings

The Provincial Health Officer's Order for Mass Gatherings continues to prohibit gatherings and events of people in excess of 50 people, however, this Order does not apply to regular school activities. As such, there can be more than 50 students and staff in a school at any given time if they are not all in one area and if they are actively engaged in physical distancing to the greatest extent possible. However, large assemblies of staff and students should not be held.

### Case Finding, Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

Active testing of people with mild COVID-19 like symptoms (case finding) helps us identify cases early in the course of their disease, determine whether others in close contact with them are at risk for infection (contact tracing), and ensure they get appropriate care and follow-up. Enhancing policies regarding reporting employee and student absenteeism to public health can be helpful in early identification of clusters and outbreaks.

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

### Self-isolation and Quarantine

Should children, youth and staff have common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms they should be encouraged to stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19. When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider. Self-isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness.

Quarantine is a term typically reserved for persons who return from travel outside the country are at risk of developing COVID-19

If a person is found to be a confirmed case of COVID-19, public health staff will ensure there is robust contact tracing and management of any clusters or outbreaks. They will also ensure that children, staff and parents have access to health care providers and that appropriate supports are in place.

## Environmental Measures

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### Cleaning and Disinfection

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Schools should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document.

This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises should occur at least **once a day**.
- Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least **twice a day**.
  - These include door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, keyboards and toys.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Use common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products and closely follow the instructions on the label.
- Limit items that are not easily cleaned (e.g., fabric or soft items);
- Empty garbage containers daily.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

## Administrative Measures

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### Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Physical distancing (i.e., maintaining a distance of 2 meters between two or more people) is challenging in a K-12 school setting, particularly with younger students. As such, it is reasonable to establish different expectations for varying age levels and activities. For example, younger students should be supported to have minimized physical contact with one another, while older students and adults should seek to maintain a safe physical distance whenever possible.

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

- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes). Regularly remind students about keeping their “hands to yourself”.
- Spread people out into different areas:
  - Consider different classroom and learning environment configurations to allow distance between students and adults (e.g., different desk and table formations).
- Organize students into smaller groups that stay together throughout the day.
- Strive to minimize the number of different teacher(s) and educational assistant(s) that interact with groups of students throughout the day (i.e. minimize the amount of mixing between students and different staff in the setting).
- Stagger pick-up and drop-off times.
- Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
- Take students outside more often.

- Organize learning activities outside including snack time, place-based learning and unstructured time.
- Take activities that involve movement, including those for physical health and education, outside. Group sports activities should be organized in a thoughtful way, taking into consideration personal measures.
- Reassure students and parents that playgrounds are a safe environment, and encourage appropriate hand hygiene practices before, during, after outdoor play.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff.
  - For younger students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items.
  - For adolescent students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways.
- Parents and Caregivers and other non-staff adults entering the school should be minimized as much as is practical to do so. They should also be reminded to practice diligent hand hygiene and maintain physical distance when they are in the school.
- Assemblies and other school-wide events should be held virtually to avoid a large number of people gathered in one space.

### Student Transportation on Buses

Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in the BCCDC's [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document.

Additional measures should be taken, including:

- Encouraging private vehicle use where possible to decrease transportation density.
- Consider installing a physical barrier between the driver and passengers (e.g., plexiglass).
- Have students sit in their own seat:
  - Students should be separated side to side and front to back .
  - Students from the same household can share seats if space is limited.

## Personal Measures

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### Stay Home When Sick

- All students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 **OR** travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate, including children of essential service workers who are ill.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school.
- Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school.
- School Administrators must ensure school staff are aware of their responsibility to assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school.
- School Administrators must:
  - Clearly communicate with parents and caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.

- Alternatively, conduct daily checks for respiratory illness at drop-off by asking parents and caregivers to confirm the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school to be sent home as soon as possible.
- Staff and students who are ill, including children of essential service workers, should not be permitted to attend school.
- Those unsure of if they or a student should self-isolate should be directed to use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).
  - If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.
  - They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.
- There is no role for screening students or staff for symptoms, checking temperatures, or COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals.

*An info sheet on what to do if a student or staff member becomes ill at work is included as Appendix B.*

### Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. Both students and staff can pick up and spread germs easily, from objects, surfaces, food and people. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene. Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst students.

#### **How to practice diligent hand hygiene:**

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
- If sinks are not available (e.g., students and staff are outdoors), use alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 60% alcohol.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the BCCDC's [hand washing poster](#).

#### **Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:**

- Encourage hand washing with water and soap upon arrival at school. Place hand washing stations in various locations including school entrances, hallways, and classrooms to encourage appropriate hand hygiene throughout the day.
- Consider alcohol-based hand rub dispensers where sinks are not available, and posters to promote the importance of regular hand washing.
- Regularly remind staff and students about the importance of diligent hand hygiene.
- Incorporate additional hand hygiene opportunities into the daily schedule.
- Ensure hand washing supplies are well stocked at all times including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.

*An info sheet on when students and staff should practice hand hygiene is included as Appendix C.*

## Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

Wearing cloth or homemade mask, particularly children, is not recommended. There is limited evidence outside of health care settings and only in uncontrolled situations where physical distancing between adults cannot be maintained for extended periods of time (greater than 15 minutes with a person who has probable or lab confirmed COVID-19). Wearing one is a personal choice. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices amongst students.

## Personal Protective Equipment

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Personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves are not needed, beyond those used by staff as part of regular precautions for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work. They should only be used when all other controls fail.

- Managing students with complex behaviours, on a delegated care plan or experiencing a health emergency may require staff to be in close physical proximity with the student. ***No additional personal protective equipment beyond normal universal precautions are required.***

There is no evidence to support the use of medical grade, cloth, or homemade masks in school settings at this time. Wearing one is a personal choice. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect. More information about COVID-related mask use is available [here](#).

## Supporting School Communities

The BC Centre for Disease Control is the source of information about COVID-19. Resources available there can be used to support learning and to respond to questions you may receive from members of your school community. More information is available [here](#).

## Appendix A: Summary of School-Based Control Measures



### 1. STAY HOME WHEN SICK

*All children and staff with common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory diseases must stay home and self-isolate.*



### 2. HAND HYGIENE

*Everyone should wash their hands more often!*

*Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.*



### 3. RESPIRATORY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

*Cover your coughs.*

*Do not touch your face.*

*No sharing of food, drinks, or personal items.*



### 4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND MINIMIZING PHYSICAL CONTACT

*Spread children out to different areas.*

*Take them outside more often.*

*Stagger lunch times. Incorporate individual activities.*

*Remind children, "Hands to Yourself!"*



### 5. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

*Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice a day.*

*General cleaning of the centre should occur at least once a day.*

*Use common cleaning and disinfectant products.*



## Appendix B: What to Do if a Student or Staff Member Develops Symptoms at School

<i>If a Student Develops Symptoms of COVID-19</i>	<i>If a Staff Member Develops Symptoms of COVID-19</i>
<p data-bbox="220 365 776 394"><b>IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</b></p> <p data-bbox="144 422 837 558"><b>Parents or caregivers must keep their child at home</b> until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, AND their symptoms have resolved.</p> <p data-bbox="211 600 789 630"><b>IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL:</b></p> <p data-bbox="144 657 578 686"><b>Staff must take the following steps:</b></p> <ol data-bbox="144 693 846 1434" style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.</li><li>2. Contact the student’s parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.</li><li>3. Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres from the ill student. If not possible, staff may wear a mask if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.</li><li>4. Provide the student with tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.</li><li>5. Avoid touching the student’s body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li><li>6. Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li><li>7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li><li>8. Contact 811 or the local public health unit to notify them of a potential case and seek further input.</li></ol> <p data-bbox="144 1476 824 1541"><b>Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.</b></p>	<p data-bbox="927 365 1446 394"><b>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT HOME:</b></p> <p data-bbox="878 422 1487 558"><b>Staff must be excluded from work and stay home</b> for a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</p> <p data-bbox="927 657 1446 686"><b>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT WORK:</b></p> <p data-bbox="878 714 1382 743"><b>Staff should go home as soon as possible.</b></p> <p data-bbox="878 785 1247 814">If unable to leave immediately:</p> <ol data-bbox="878 821 1487 1245" style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Symptomatic staff should separate themselves into an area away from others.</li><li>2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.</li><li>3. Use a tissue or mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait to be picked up.</li><li>4. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li><li>5. If concerned, contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.</li></ol>
<p data-bbox="177 1665 1463 1730"><b>If a student or staff member is assessed by their family physician or nurse practitioner and it is determined that they do NOT have COVID-19, they may return to school once symptoms resolve.</b></p>	

## Appendix C: When to Perform Hand Hygiene at School

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When they arrive at school and before they go home.</li><li>• Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).</li><li>• Between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom).</li><li>• Before and after eating and drinking.</li><li>• After using the toilet.</li><li>• After handling common resources/equipment/supplies or pets.</li><li>• After sneezing or coughing into hands.</li><li>• Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When they arrive at school and before they go home.</li><li>• Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).</li><li>• Between different learning environments (e.g. outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom).</li><li>• Before and after eating and drinking.</li><li>• Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.</li><li>• Before and after giving medication to a student or self.</li><li>• After using the toilet.</li><li>• After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).</li><li>• After cleaning tasks.</li><li>• After removing gloves.</li><li>• After handling garbage.</li><li>• Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</li></ul>



# K-12 Education Restart Plan

Ministry of Education



The Ministry of Education has a five-stage approach for resuming in-class instruction in a measured way to align with [B.C.'s Restart Plan](#). Each stage will be guided by health and safety guidelines, measures, protocols and orders as well as the principles developed for continuity of learning during the pandemic:

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

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
SCHOOL DENSITY TARGETS 100%	SCHOOL DENSITY TARGETS K-7: 100% Grade 8-12: 40%	SCHOOL DENSITY TARGETS K-5: 50% Gr. 6-12: 20%	SCHOOL DENSITY TARGETS K-12: 20%	SCHOOL DENSITY TARGETS K-12: 0%
<b>In-class instruction:</b>  K-12: 5 day per week	<b>In-class instruction:</b>  K-7: 5 days per week  Grade 8-12: 2 days per week  ----- 5 days per week available for: ✓ Children of essential service workers ✓ Students with disabilities/ diverse abilities ✓ Students who require additional supports  ----- <b>Remote/online instruction:</b> Balance of learning	<b>In-class instruction:</b>  K-5: 2 to 3 days per week  Gr. 6-7: 1 day per week  Gr 8-12: 1 day per week  5 days per week available for: ✓ Children of essential service workers ✓ Students with disabilities/ diverse abilities ✓ Students who require additional supports  ----- <b>Remote/online instruction:</b>  Parent/Guardian choice to return to in-class instruction optional  Balance of learning	<b>In-class instruction:</b>  K-12: Limited  ----- 5 days per week available for: ✓ Children of essential service workers ✓ Students with disabilities/ diverse abilities ✓ Students who require additional supports  ----- <b>Remote/online instruction:</b> K-12: Majority of all students	<b>In-class instruction:</b>  K-12: None  ----- Suspend all in-class instruction for all grades and students  ----- <b>Remote/online instruction:</b> K-12: All Students

## Moving from Stage 4 to Stage 3 on June 1

As part of B.C.'s Restart Plan, the focus for the K-12 sector is to increase in-class instruction in a gradual and controlled manner while ensuring health and safety measures to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission are in place. School density targets have been established to ensure the number of students in the K-12 environment is manageable and aligns with public health guidance. Both the school density targets and the individual choices made by parents and guardians to send their children back to school will impact classroom schedules. Guidelines for days of in-class instruction have been established by the Ministry of Education for each stage of the K-12 Education Restart Plan to provide clarity to families, students and school districts about what to expect. This document is intended to provide a framework for what Stage 3 might look like in schools throughout the Province.

## Next Steps: Ministry, Boards of Education & Independent School Authorities

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### May 15th

- Release of K-12 Education Restart Plan and Planning & Reporting template.

### May 15th – 22nd

- School districts and independent schools will develop plans outlining their approach to delivering education during Stage 3.
- If school districts or independent schools anticipate they will not be able to move to Stage 3 due to local circumstances, they should contact the Ministry. First Nations independent schools do not need to develop or submit a plan.
- As a part of the plan, school districts and authorities will outline how:
  - ✓ *Measures will put in place to meet the requirements of Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.*
  - ✓ *In-person instruction will be offered within the school density targets and the recommended days per week (e.g. alternate days, half-days, blended model).*
    - *To accommodate health and safety measures including physical distancing and reducing physical contact, classes must be limited to a small number of students at any one time (e.g., be less than 50% of the normal class enrolment).*
  - ✓ *Children of ESWs and students requiring additional support will be supported full-time if requested.*
  - ✓ *Remote, online and in-person learning will be delivered and balanced over the school week.*
  - ✓ *Supports like meals and technology loans will continue.*
- School districts must ensure the teacher and support staff workloads between in-class and on-line delivery are balanced and manageable. Districts must also ensure the appropriate leadership is available and on-site at schools to ensure health and safety measures are in place.
- Prior to June 1, Boards of Education and local unions must facilitate a process with education partners to develop multiple suggested delivery models that do not increase current teacher workload and meet the needs of students during Stage 3. The decision regarding the model adopted by school districts will be done in collaboration with the local union.
- School districts/authorities should engage with parents/guardians to assess the number of students who are planning to return to in-class instruction.

### May 19th – 22nd

- Districts and FISA Member Associations will submit their plans to the Ministry for review.

### June 1st

- Stage 3 of the K-12 Restart Plan starts.

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## What can Parents and Students Expect in Stage 3?

### Regular Communication

- Contact from school or school district/authority to enquire about interest in resuming in-person instruction.
- Regular information updates on school and district websites.

### Options to Attend School In-Person

- Guidelines established for the K-12 sector:
  - *Grades K-5 (2-3 days per week)*
  - *Grades 6 – 12 (1 day per week)*
  - *5 days week available for children of Essential Service Workers, students with disabilities/ diverse abilities, and students requiring additional supports.*
  - **Note: teachers, administrators and support staff should be considered ESWs.**
- School districts and independent schools will organize their daily and weekly schedules based on school density targets and the number of children who are choosing to return to in-class instruction. This means children may not have their regular classroom teacher or classmates.
- Bussing and transportation services to be implemented in accordance with operation plans.

### Increased Health & Safety Measures

- Parents will be asked to monitor their children daily for symptoms and not to send them to school if they are sick. People who are sick will not be allowed in school.
- Students will be asked to wash their hands frequently, including before coming to school. They will have access to hand sanitizer when hand washing is not available.
- Schools will be cleaned more frequently, including classrooms and high touch areas.
- Schools may implement staggered drop-off and pick up times and modify lunch and recess hours.
- School and classrooms might look different:
  - *Increased spacing between students in classrooms and smaller group activities*
  - *No physical contact sports but more time outside with classmates*
  - *Limitations on assemblies and other large gatherings*
- Wearing non-medical masks will be a personal choice for students and teachers.
- Students will be asked to label their personal items and not to share them.
- Parents may need to remind children to minimize physical contact with their friends.

### On-Going Learning & Supports

- Continuation of online/remote learning opportunities to supplement in-school instruction.
- Focus on mental health supports for students returning to school and those who continue to learn remotely.

- Meal programs available with additional health and safety, physical distancing and hygiene measures in place. Meal pick up will continue for students not in attendance.



BC Confederation of  
Parent Advisory Councils

Ref: 220893

May 28, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

Over the past two months, we have all been working together - but apart – to stop the spread of COVID-19. All our sacrifices are paying off as we are flattening the curve in B.C.

We recognize you and your families have faced many challenges through these uncertain times; we also know how much your children have been missing their teachers, school staff and their friends.

As you've heard, our government, under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), will offer a safe and gradual return to part-time, in-class instruction.

#### YOU CHOOSE WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR FAMILY

You will have the choice whether you would like to send your child to school part-time for the remainder of the school year. If you choose to send your child to school, it will not be the same as before. In order to meet the guidelines, set out by the (PHO), Dr. Bonnie Henry, we will need to limit the number of students in schools during a normal day.

Kindergarten to Grade 5 students will have the option to attend half-time (for example: 2 or 3 days a week). The school population will be limited to 50% of its normal capacity to lower density and increase safety for students and staff.

Grades 6 to 12 students will have the option to attend school approximately one day a week.

Children of essential service workers and students who require additional support will have the option to attend class full-time.

Each school district and independent school authority has been given the flexibility to set weekly schedules and plans that work best for their school community.



BC Confederation of  
Parent Advisory Councils

## STUDENT & STAFF SAFETY COMES FIRST

All boards of education and independent school authorities will be required to implement measures in accordance with Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC health and safety guidelines to reduce the risk COVID-19 transmission, including:

- Students will be spaced apart and groups or gatherings of students in hallways or other common areas will be avoided.
- Regular cleaning of high-contact surfaces like door knobs, toilet seats, keyboards and desks at least twice a day, and cleaning the school building at least once a day.
- Students, educators and staff will be required to clean their hands before entering school property. And there will be more hand-sanitizing and cleaning stations available.
- There will be staggered drop-offs, lunch and recess breaks, with increased outside time.
- Staff and students (or their parents/guardians) will be asked to assess themselves daily for symptoms of COVID-19. If any student or staff member has even mild symptoms, arrangements will be made for that person to be returned home.
- Students or employees will be asked not to share food or personal items like phones, pens or pencils, and clear protocols will be in place for the safe and healthy handling of all food items.
- Learn more about PHO and WorkSafeBC guidelines at [www.gov.bc.ca/SafeSchools](http://www.gov.bc.ca/SafeSchools)

We know the gradual return to school will be stressful for some children and families. Please connect with your child's teacher or school leadership if you have concerns. There are programs and services available and we must work together to identify and offer extra support to children who are having a difficult time under these challenging circumstances.

Our goal is to return to full in-class learning in September, as part of [B.C.'s Restart Plan](#) announced by Premier Horgan on May 6. It's a cautious and measured approach to safely get kids back to school and to help parents/guardians return to work.

Throughout this health crisis, we have been working with all 60 school districts, independent school authorities, First Nations schools, teachers, school leaders, support staff, public health officials and all our education partners to coordinate and collaborate as plans unfolded.

We have appreciated our other vital partners in education – you – parents and guardians. You have been helping with remote learning, many of you while working from home. You have been keeping kids active and engaged and safe and calm. Your efforts are noted and appreciated.

If you choose not to send your children to school, there will still be options to continue with remote learning. Plus, the Ministry has developed a web-based parent resource called Keep





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Learning BC at [www.openschool.bc.ca/KeepLearning](http://www.openschool.bc.ca/KeepLearning) with free, educational activities for every age, designed to support the B.C. curriculum.

If you haven't yet heard from your school about plans and schedules yet, please contact your child's principal.

Each school district and independent school authority must have their health and safety plans posted on their websites for families to access before June 1.

Remember, schools aren't going to look the same as they did the last time your children were there, so we still need to be kind and be calm as we find our new normal. We are in this together, and we **are** getting through this.

Sincerely,

Rob Fleming,  
Minister of Education

Andrea Sinclair, President  
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

### More Information

- Accurate, timely information about schools, programs and educational services, including regularly updated frequently asked questions in multiple languages, is available at: [www.gov.bc.ca/SafeSchools](http://www.gov.bc.ca/SafeSchools)
- For the provincial health officer's orders, notices and guidance, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/phoguidance](http://www.gov.bc.ca/phoguidance)
- The best source of COVID-19 health information can be found at the BC Centre for Disease Control website <http://www.bccdc.ca/>
- For mental health and online safety support, all families have access to ERASE – Expect Respect and a Safe Education – available here: [www.erase.gov.bc.ca](http://www.erase.gov.bc.ca)
- If your child is struggling with a problem big or small, they can also call the Kids Help Line, a free resource available to them at: 1-800-668-6868.