**First Nations Schools Reopening
Considerations and Template**

Draft, Highlights Indicate Updates
 as of January 14, 2022

First Nations Education Steering Committee
and First Nations Schools Association

Find this document and further
resources at [www.fnesc.ca/covid19](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19) and
[www.fnsa.ca/covid19](http://www.fnsa.ca/covid19)



# Introduction

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) developed this resource to support BC First Nations planning to deliver in-person instruction during the 2021/2022 school year. It contains important health and safety guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and Ministry of Health as well as guidance developed by the BC Ministry of Education for public and non-First Nations independent schools. This resource also includes a planning template with suggestions that may be used and adapted by First Nations at their discretion.

This resource is based on guidelines that were developed for all school settings, whether delivering programs for school age or adult students. Please note that separate public health guidelines have been developed for [post-secondary institutions](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/studying-during-covid-19).

In providing this resource, our intention is to inform First Nations of the latest public health advice to facilitate and support planning at the local level. FNESC and FNSA will continue to support First Nations who choose to deliver educational services through a variety of alternative means, including remote/online learning or through a blended in-class/remote model.

***As noted above, this resource is based on the guidance in place for public and non-First Nations independent schools. FNESC and FNSA fully respect the authority of individual First Nations to make decisions about school operations in the best interests of their students, schools, and communities. We further recognize that a number of schools may opt to remain fully or partially closed or may implement more stringent protocols within their schools. First Nations are under no obligation to reopen their schools.***

***FNESC and FNSA recommend that BC First Nations develop a school plan if they decide to open their school facilities during the 2021/2022 school year, drawing from and applying provincial guidelines and the considerations within this resource to address the unique circumstances of their local community.***

This resource was most recently updated in January 2022. Public health has recommended time-limited enhancements to the BCCDC *Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools* due to the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in BC and the emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant. These can be found in the BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) (December 29, 2021).

The BC Ministry of Education also issued an [Addendum](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) for public schools and non-First Nations independent schools.

Yellow highlight indicates the latest additions.

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# Using this Resource

This resource includes health and safety considerations related to key areas of school operations that are important to address while planning for the reopening of a First Nations school. The resource is based primarily on information published in the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) and the BC Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf), as well as the December 29, 2021 [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) and [Ministry of Education](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) addendums to those documents. Those documents should be referred to directly as the authoritative sources of health and safety information when planning for the return to school. The Ministry of Health and BCCDC fully respect the authority of individual First Nations to make decisions about the operation of First Nations schools in the best interests of their students, schools, and communities. This includes their authority to decide if and how to use this guidance to inform planning and if and how to reopen their schools.

Note that the Ministry of Education’s provincial guidelines were established for the public and non-First Nation independent school system, where schools are often larger and include more students than BC First Nations schools. As such, First Nations and First Nations schools may need to adapt these guidelines to reflect their local context. It should also be noted that the available guidelines are intended to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and to facilitate contact tracing, not to eliminate transmission completely.

***First Nations and First Nations schools are advised to review and update their school reopening plan consistent with the latest available public health guidance. Please note that extensive updates have been made to this resource based on changes to public health guidance. First Nations and First Nations schools are advised to review this resource and the latest public health guidance to ensure school plans reflect the most up-to-date advice.***

Additional materials and information are available from the [WorkSafeBC website](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart) and the BCCDC [Indigenous Community Resources page](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/indigenous-community-resources) that First Nations schools may wish to consult. First Nations and First Nations schools are still advised to refer directly to the BCCDC and Ministry of Education guidelines as the authoritative sources of health and safety information when planning for in-class instruction.

Within each section of this resource you will find: 1) the latest available guidance to be considered in the development of a school reopening plan; and 2) a planning template to be populated with the standards and guidelines of individual First Nations and First Nations schools. The templates also include a number of suggested provisions that should be modified, adapted, and added to, consistent with the documents referenced above as well as the local circumstances and priorities of individual First Nations.

A senior administrative or school staff member should be identified to take on a leadership role in the development, implementation, promotion, and evaluation of their plan in collaboration with other staff and community members, recognizing that the plan may need to evolve as the year progresses. To support this planning, FNESC and FNSA may update this resource as new information becomes available.

First Nations deciding to reopen their First Nations school(s) should develop any reopening plan in collaboration with Chief and Council, obtaining approval through the appropriate local processes and sharing the plan with parents/caregivers. First Nations may also wish to coordinate with some or all of the following bodies within their communities:

* other departments within your First Nation (e.g. Education, Health, Information Technology) or Education Authorities
* teachers and staff
* parents/caregivers
* local health authorities

***The information within this resource is not legal advice and should not be interpreted as such. First Nations are encouraged to seek independent legal advice, as required, to address their particular circumstances and concerns.***

# Current Context

On June 17, 2021, the Provincial Health Officer issued [a statement](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-letter-communicable-disease-plans.pdf) for employers on transitioning from a COVID-19 Safety Plan to communicable disease prevention. Appendix B of BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) includes a checklist that can be completed with your school’s health and safety committee to assess your school’s communicable disease plan. References to communicable disease plans within this planning resource reflect the shift from COVID-19 safety plans to communicable disease plans as described by the Provincial Health officer.

The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) and BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) emphasize that vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. Public health also considers vaccination status when investigating school exposures. Staff and students who are not at least 14 days past receiving their second dose (i.e., aren’t fully immunized) and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-isolate. Evidence-based immunization information and tools for BC residents are available from [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine) and [Immunize BC](https://immunizebc.ca/).

In addition to any provincial Public Health Orders and the guidance contained in the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf), Medical Health Officers may also put in place local Public Health Orders requiring additional health and safety measures. These may be put in place during times of increased community transmission of COVID-19, and within communities with low vaccination uptake. They are based on local epidemiology and are proportional to risk.

Local public health Orders may be placed for whole regions or communities, or for specific businesses or activities within a health authority region. For example, a health authority may issue a regional Gatherings & Events Order that limits indoor gatherings to a specific number of people or to a specific type of activity. Schools within that region would need to ensure extracurricular and social gatherings and events complied with the Order unless schools were specifically excluded.

For schools, the BCCDC indicates that the local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, for all schools within a health authority region, or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk.

# Public Health Guidance: Important Highlights

Important highlights or changes in public health guidance from the December 29, 2021 BCCDC and Ministry of Education addendums are noted below. First Nations and First Nations schools are advised to review this resource and the latest public health guidance to ensure that school plans reflect the most up-to-date advice.

**Space Arrangement, Classrooms and Traffic Flow:** Arrange rooms to maximize space between students and staff. Avoid face-to-face seating arrangements. Implement strategies to prevent crowding during transition times and in common staff spaces.

**School Gatherings and Events:** Schools should seek virtual alternatives when possible and minimize the size of in-person gatherings. Capacity for indoor gatherings and events facilitated by a school that involve community members should be limited to 50% of operative capacity and maximize available space.

**Extracurricular Sports Tournaments:** The Ministry of Education is advising public and non-First Nations independent schools that extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused.

**Daily Health Checks, Attendance, & Visitors:** Limit visitors to the school to those that are supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing. Ensure visitors follow the school communicable disease plan and complete a daily health check. Track daily attendance and compare rates to previous years.

**Managing School Exposures and Notifications:** The BCCDC and Ministry of Education have developed [updated protocols](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/covid-19-protocols-for-administrators.pdf). FNESC and FNSA have developed [an adaptation of the protocols](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19/updated-protocols-and-first-nations-schools-reopening-considerations-and-template/) for First Nations schools.

**Staff Specific Considerations:** Schools should seek virtual alternatives for staff meetings where possible and minimize the size of the gathering if a virtual alternative is not possible.

**[SCHOOL NAME]**

**Reopening Plan**

**[Date]**

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*Note: This is a table of contents for a potential school plan. First Nations are welcome to modify it or add sections to suit their particular needs and circumstances.*

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# 1.0 Introduction

The following sections contain guidance and considerations related to key areas of school operations based primarily on the latest available health and safety advice included in the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) and the BC Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf).

Senior administrative and school staff responsible for the development and promotion of the plan will continue to monitor provincial guidance as the year progresses, making updates to our plan consistent with the latest advice. The plan will be shared and discussed with school personnel and any other relevant staff to ensure our guidelines and standards are applied.

This plan was developed with input from the following bodies:

* [e.g. Chief and Council]
* [e.g. Local Health Authority]
* [e.g. Parents/Caregivers]

For questions or feedback relating to this plan, please contact:

[add contact name / position]

# 2.0 Space Arrangement, Classrooms, and Traffic Flow

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) advises arranging rooms to maximize space between students and staff. The Addendum also advises consideration of different common space, classroom, and learning environment configurations to allow space between students and adults (e.g., different desk and table formations).**Note that the BCCDC is no longer recommending cohorts/learning groups.** **The BCCDC also advises that physical barriers are no longer recommended for communicable disease prevention.** The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) includes the following recommendations for indoor spaces and activities:* People should have enough room to carry out the intended activity without involuntarily physical contact with another person. In indoor common spaces (e.g., hallways, cafeterias, etc.), schools may continue to use floor markings and posters to direct traffic flow.
* For indoor activities that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students in close proximity for a prolonged period of time (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing physical activity in a gym), schools should ensure that people are spread out within the available space. This is expected to be achievable within room capacity limits (where applicable).
* For breaks and other unstructured time in indoor settings, there should be enough space available to prevent involuntary physical contact.
* Taking students outside more often (when the weather allows) is encouraged due to its overall health benefits.

The Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) notes that all curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community-based programs/courses). Students and staff are also required to follow the safety protocols required by the off-campus facility. Where there is a conflict, the safety protocols required by the off-campus facility should be followed.The Ministry of Education also states that schools should continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.Additionally, the Ministry of Education states that school communicable disease plans should not include restricting access to water, washrooms or other spaces that support student learning and well-being (e.g. gymnasiums, libraries, support rooms, etc.). To see details relating to specific programs, such as music, physical education and culinary programs, please see the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf).***Personal Items & School Supplies***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that students and staff can continue to bring personal items and school supplies to school for their own use.Additionally, the Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) includes the following guidance for students and staff: * Staff and students are encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (food, drinks, utensils, etc.)
* Students can continue to use their lockers. Schools should implement strategies to manage the flow of students around lockers to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

***Physical Distancing*****Although the BCCDC** [**Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools**](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) **and the Ministry of Education** [**Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings**](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) **no longer recommend 2 meters physical distancing, there are a number of strategies that schools can consider to help create space between people.**The BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) advises that schools implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition times. This could include staggered start/stop times and staggered recess/snack, lunch, and class transition times. In addition, the BCCDC asks schools to consider ways to minimize crowding in common staff spaces, such as encouraging employees to use alternative spaces for lunch break.The Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) advises schools to consider creating space between people and support students and staff using a trauma-informed approach with the following strategies: * Remind students and staff about respecting others personal space. Visual support, signage, prompts, etc. may be used as necessary.
* Implement strategies to prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times with a focus on entry and exit areas (where crowding occurs).
* Use available space to spread people out where possible, both in learning environments and in gatherings and events.
* Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
* Take students outside more often, where and when possible.
* Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.
	+ Use floor markings and posters to address traffic flow throughout the school. This may include one-way hallways and designated entrance and exit doors. It is important not to reduce the number of exits and ensure the fire code is adhered to.

In addition, the Ministry of Education [Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) suggests limiting and, whenever possible, avoiding face-to-face seating arrangements. The Addendum also recommends spreading out regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to space arrangement, classrooms, and traffic flow than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Space Arrangement, Classrooms and Traffic Flow: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *In classrooms, student seating will be spread out as much as possible within the available space. Unnecessary furnishings and equipment will be removed from classrooms to allow more space to spread students out. Face to face seating will be avoided.*
* *Recesses and class transition times will be staggered to prevent crowding.*
* *Staff and students will be encouraged to only bring personal items that are necessary (e.g. backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles) and to not share personal items with others.*
* *Personal items, including school supplies, will be labelled with student names.*
* *Physical education and sport activities will occur outside whenever possible.*
* *All people will enter the school through the school entrance located at [add location] Classes will gather outside while waiting to enter the school at locations that are marked using signage.*

***OR**** *Classes A and B will enter and exit the school through the door located at … Classes C and D will enter and exit the school through the door located at [add location]*

* *Parents, caregivers, and visitors will be asked to phone xxx-xxx-xxxx with questions or to request an appointment.*
* *A record will be kept of all visitors to the school, including their contact information.*

* *Students will be regularly reminded to keep their hands to themselves.*
* *Signage will be posted in halls and pick/up drop/off areas to remind staff and students to avoid crowding.*
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# 3.0 Ventilation and Air Circulation

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) recommends that schools continue to ensure that all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort of workers [(Part 4 of OHS Regulation)](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-04-general-conditions#SectionNumber:4.70), and that they are working properly. Open windows when the weather permits, if it doesn’t impact the functioning of ventilation systems. When using air conditioners and fans in ventilated spaces, the BCCDC advises that air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person’s breathing zone to another’s. Avoid horizontal cross breezes. The use of portable air conditioners in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided, except when necessary, during high or excessive heat events. More information on workplace ventilation and air circulation is available from [WorkSafe BC](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/prevent-spread-communicable-disease-ventilation-air-circulation?lang=en). The BCCDC further indicates that communicable disease prevention measures need to be balanced against the risk of excessive heat events in warmer months or poor air quality from wildfire smoke. Schools are encouraged to use BCCDC resources, including on [Heat Event Response Planning](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/heat-event-response-planning) and [Wildfire Smoke](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke) to support planning. Additionally, the Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) notes that school district and site-based safety plans should include provisions when a school/worksite’s ventilation system is temporarily compromised (e.g. partial power outage, ventilation break down). To enhance school ventilation, the Ministry states that schools should consider:* Moving activities outdoors when possible and consider moving classrooms outside when space and weather permit;
* Increasing air exchanges by adjusting the HVAC system; and
* Managing air distribution through building automation control systems.

The Ministry also states that school districts and independent school authorities should regularly maintain HVAC systems for proper operation and ensure that:* Schools with recycled/recirculated air systems upgrade their current filters to a minimum MERV 13 filter or higher if possible; and
* Schools with fresh air intake systems increase their average air exchanges as detailed on the [ASHRAE website](https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-reopening-schools-and-universities-c19-guidance.pdf) and the [Rocky Point Engineering Ltd website](http://rpeng.ca/School-ReOpenGuidelineSummaryMay2020.pdf).

***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to ventilation and air circulation than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Ventilation and Air Exchange: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Classroom windows will be open when weather permits, if it doesn’t impact the functioning of air conditioning systems.*
* *When fans or air conditioners are used, they will be positioned to avoid blowing air directly from one person’s breathing zone to another’s.*
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#  4.0 Student Transportation

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| Guidance and Considerations***School Buses***Regarding school bus transportation, the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) has the following guidance:* Schools can return to regular seating and onloading/offloading practices.
* Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least once per and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g. door handles, hand rails, etc.). Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g. seats) should be cleaned at least once per day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices.
* Schools should continue to emphasize the following measures:
	+ Encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene before and after trips and to practice respiratory etiquette as needed,
	+ Spread passengers out if space is available, and
	+ Open windows when the weather allows.
* All staff, other adults, and K-12 students should wear masks on school buses and put them on before loading. See Section 14.0, Personal Protective Equipment, for full details and exceptions.

***Carpooling***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that schools share the following guidance with staff and families who may be carpooling: * Continue to spread out as much as possible,
* Travel with the same people whenever possible,
* Set the vehicle’s ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and do not recirculate the air,
* Open the windows when the weather allows,
* Clean hands before and after trips, and
* Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.

The BCCDC also encourages all school aged children and adults to wear masks while carpooling, with exceptions described in Section 14.0, Personal Protective Equipment. Additionally, masks are not suggested if carpooling with members of the same household.***Mass Transit***For people taking mass transit (e.g. municipal buses, the SkyTrain, ferries, etc.), the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that hand hygiene be practiced before and after trips. Riders should follow any other safety guidance (including mask guidance) issued by the relevant transit authority. Other methods of active transportation (e.g. walking, biking, skateboarding, etc.) should continue to be encouraged wherever possible due to its overall health benefits.The BCCDC recommends adapting its guidance to what is most suitable for modes of transportation not mentioned here.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to student transportation than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Student Transportation: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Students and parents will be encouraged to consider alternate transportation to school (biking, walking, driving) when it is reasonable and safe to do so.*
* *For travel by bus, parents and guardians will be asked to ensure that their children will abide by the following guidelines:*
	+ *Perform hand hygiene before they leave home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home.*
	+ *All staff, other adults and K-12 students, with exceptions outlined by BCCDC, will wear a non-medical mask that is put on before loading, worn on the bus, and taken off after offloading. Staff and students may wear a face shield in addition, but must wear a mask under the face shield.*
* *Bus drivers will practice* hand *hygiene before and after trips and practice respiratory etiquette as needed.*
* *Windows on the bus will be open at all times, weather permitting.*
* *Students will be spread out on the bus when possible and bus line up areas will be set up to prevent crowding.*
* *The bus’s frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected daily, according to BCCDC guidelines.*
* *Students will not take the bus to school if they are sick.*
* *The expectations that apply to school buses regarding mask wearing, hand hygiene, spreading out when possible, and not travelling to school while sick apply to all school transportation, including water taxi.*
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# 5.0 School Gatherings and Events

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) advises that schools should seek virtual alternatives for in-person gatherings, including for assemblies and staff meetings. If a virtual alternative is not possible, the size of the gathering should be minimized as much as possible The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) states that school extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools) should occur in line with the guidance in the BCCDC [Addendum](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) as well as any applicable local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders. For example, a health authority may issue a regional Gatherings & Events Order that limits indoor gatherings to a specific number of people or to a specific type of activity. Schools within that region would need to ensure extracurricular and social gatherings and events complied with the Order unless schools were specifically excluded.The BCCDC advises that capacity for indoor gatherings and events facilitated by a school that involve members of the community beyond staff, students and necessary volunteers, or that occur within and between schools, should be limited to 50% operating capacity and maximise use of available space. At this time, schools are discouraged from hosting indoor events where spectators from the community are invited to attend in person.The BCCDC also advises that gatherings and events requiring international travel (e.g., between Canada and the United States) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for international travel and community gatherings and events. According to the BCCDC, all educational activities, including extracurricular, and before, during or after-school programs led by a school should not require proof of vaccination unless otherwise specified in local, regional, or provincial recommendations and public health Orders.Additionally, the Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) and [Addendum](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) advise that school planning include consideration of the following: * Holding school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) virtually.
* Respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
* Using space available to spread people out as much as possible, respecting room occupancy limits, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntarily physical contact between attendees (i.e. overcrowding);
* Gradual transitions to larger gatherings (e.g. school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc.; and
* Protocols apply for visitors, as per Visitor Access/Community Use section of the Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf).

***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to school gatherings and events than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| School Gatherings and Events: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *School gathering size will be kept to a minimum and people will be spread out as much as possible in the available space to prevent overcrowding. When feasible, virtual alternatives for in-person gatherings will be used.*
* *The number of people in attendance for in-person events will be limited to 50% of operating capacity.*
* *Full contact details will be collected for visitors at school gatherings.*
* *School gatherings will be planned in alignment with local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders and in alignment with direction from First Nations leadership.*
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# 6.0 Extracurricular Activities and Community Use of School Facilities

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| Guidance and Considerations***Extracurricular Activities***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that school extracurricular activities should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders. For music and physical education extracurricular activities, the BCCDC recommends that schools should continue to implement universal communicable disease prevention practices specific to the activity. For example, equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., water bottles, instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in-between use. Hands should be cleaned before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball).When planning overnight trips that include group accommodation, schools should consider guidance provided from the [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/childcare-schools/camps) and the [BC Camps Association](http://bccamping.org/).The BCCDC recommends that staff and student attendance records relating to extracurricular activities should be kept for at least 45 days.The BC Ministry of Education [Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) notes that extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused. Details are provided on page 3 of the Addendum.***Community Use of School Facilities***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that schools can continue to allow community use of school facilities. Community use of school facilities should be approved by local First Nations leadership and aligned with applicable public health guidance, recommendations and Orders. In addition to this advice, the Ministry of Education’s [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) for public and non-First Nations independent schools indicates that after hours use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures that include diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, ensuring participants stay home if they are feeling ill, and where possible, limiting building access to only those areas required for the purpose of the activity. The Ministry of Education also indicates that community users are responsible for collecting names and contact information of participants to support contact tracing activities by the local health authority.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to extracurricular activities and community use of school facilities than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Extracurricular Activities and Community Use of School Facilities: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Extracurricular activities and community use of school facilities will proceed in alignment with relevant local, regional, Provincial and Federal public health recommendations and Orders and in alignment with direction from First Nations leadership.*
* *Attendance records for extracurricular and community use activities will be maintained for 45 days. In the case of community users, the community users are responsible for collecting the names and contact information of participants.*
* *Community users will be advised of the school’s communicable disease plan, including the requirement for people to complete a daily health check and not enter the school if they are sick and to clean hands before and after using frequently touched items.*
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# 7.0 Food Services

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) indicates that food services (e.g. meal programs, cafeterias, fundraisers, etc.) can return to regular operational and food safety practices. [FOODSAFE Level 1](http://www.foodsafe.ca/index.html) covers important food safety and worker safety information including foodborne illness, receiving and storing food, preparing food, serving food, and cleaning and sanitizing. The BCCDC also advises that students involved in food preparation and distribution be taught and supported to practice relevant food safety practices, including hand hygiene.Additionally, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) for public and non-First Nations independent schools advises the following:* Schools can continue to provide food services, including for sale.
* For food contact surfaces, schools should ensure any sanitizers or disinfectants used are approved for use in a food service application and are appropriate for use against COVID-19. These may be different than the products noted in this document for general cleaning and disinfection. Additional information is available on the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/employers-businesses/food-businesses).
* Schools can continue to accept food donations to support learning and the delivery of meal programs, breakfast clubs and other food access initiatives.
* Schools should continue to emphasize that food and beverages should not be shared.
* School meal programs should follow regular operating practices.

Furthermore, the Ministry outlines that schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. See more details within the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf).***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to food services than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Food Services: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *The school will emphasize to students, teachers and parents/caregivers that food and beverages should not be shared.*
* *The school will ensure any sanitizers or disinfectants used on food contact surfaces are approved for use in a food service application and are appropriate for use against COVID-19.*
* *Students involved in food preparation and distribution as part of their learning will be taught and supported to practice relevant food safety practices, including hand hygiene*.
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# 8.0 Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette

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| Guidance and Considerations***Hand Hygiene***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) encourages rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water to reduce the spread of illness. To practice diligent hand hygiene, the BCCDC provides the following guidance:* Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
	+ Temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water, though warm water is preferred for personal comfort.
* If sinks are not available (e.g., students and staff are outdoors), use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (also called alcohol-based hand rub) containing at least 60% alcohol.
	+ See the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html) for products that have met Health Canada’s requirements and are authorized for sale in Canada.
* If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating microbes. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If it is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.
* To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the BCCDC [hand hygiene poster](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_Handwashing%20Poster_MD%20offices.pdf).

The BCCDC also describes the following strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:* Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene.
	+ Use portable hand-washing sites or alcohol-based hand rub dispensers where sinks are not available.
* Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly.
	+ Use posters and other methods of promotion.
		- Consider student-friendly posters on [how to wash your hands](http://www.dobugsneeddrugs.org/wp-content/uploads/handwashing-sign.pdf).
		- Show [handwashing videos](http://www.dobugsneeddrugs.org/educational-resources/handwashing-videos/).
* 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 information sheet on when students and staff should practice hand hygiene is included as Appendix C in the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf). Details of the Appendix are as follows:*Students should perform hand hygiene:** when they arrive at school;
* before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch);
* before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student’s desk or locker);
* before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.);
* after using the toilet;
* after sneezing or coughing into hands; and
* whenever hands are visibly dirty.

*Staff should perform hand hygiene:** when they arrive at school;
* before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch);
* before and after eating and drinking;
* before and after handling food or assisting students with eating;
* before and after giving medication to a student or self;
* after using the toilet;
* after contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood);
* after cleaning tasks;
* after removing gloves;
* after handling garbage; and
* whenever hands are visibly dirty.

***Respiratory Etiquette***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that everyone should do the following: * Cough or sneeze into their elbow 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.

***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *The school will post signage to communicate hand hygiene measures and respiratory etiquette to students and staff.*
* *Students will be advised by signage and class instruction to perform hand hygiene:*
	+ when they arrive at school;
	+ before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch);
	+ before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student’s desk or locker);
	+ before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.);
	+ after using the toilet;
	+ after sneezing or coughing into hands; and
	+ whenever hands are visibly dirty.
* *Staff will be advised by signage and through meetings to perform hand hygiene:*
	+ *when they arrive at school;*
	+ *before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch);*
	+ *before and after eating and drinking;*
	+ *before and after handling food or assisting students with eating;*
	+ *before and after giving medication to a student or self;*
	+ *after using the toilet;*
	+ *after contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood);*
	+ *after cleaning tasks;*
	+ *after removing gloves;*
	+ *after handling garbage; and*
	+ *whenever hands are visibly dirty.*
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# 9.0 Daily Health Checks, Attendance, & Visitors

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| **Guidance and Considerations*****Daily Health Checks***The BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) advises limiting school visitors to those who are supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.). Ensure visitors follow school communicable disease plan and complete a daily health check before entering the school.The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) states that school administrators should ensure that staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick. School administrators can support this practice by regularly communicating the importance of everyone doing a daily health check.A daily health check is defined by the BCCDC as a person checking daily to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) before coming to school. Daily health checks can be supported by the BCCDC resource on [when to get tested for COVID-19](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/When_to_get_tested.pdf) or the Ministry of Education [K-12 Health Check](https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1). Schools do not need to confirm a daily health check has been done or monitor students and staff for symptoms of illness. The BCCDC advises that no one should come to school if they are sick or otherwise directed to self-isolate by public health. The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) recommends that school administrators encourage staff and families to go to the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19) to find information about what to do when they are sick with COVID-19 symptoms. Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the [BC Self-Assessment Tool](https://bc.thrive.health/) app, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. Information on region-specific services (e.g., testing and vaccination sites) is available on [health authority websites](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities). Staff and families can also be encouraged to visit [HealthLink BC](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/) or call 8-1-1 for support on what to do when sick with any symptoms of illness, including non-COVID-19 symptoms.***Attendance***The BCCDC and Ministry of Education advise schools to track daily attendance and compare attendance rates to previous years to determine if there are potential COVID-19 activity signals. For further details, see the FNESC and FNSA [adapted COVID-19 protocols](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19/updated-protocols-and-first-nations-schools-reopening-considerations-and-template/).  The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) states thatschools should continue to maintain daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors (including itinerant staff, teachers on call, parents/caregivers, and volunteers), and keep accurate class and bus lists to assist with contact tracing if necessary. This includes maintaining attendance records for all school-supported activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips. Daily attendance records should be kept for at least 45 days to assist with contact tracing and retrospective analysis by public health (if needed). *Visitors*The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf), including completing a daily health check and not entering the school if they are sick. Schools should also continue to keep a list of the date, names, and contact information of all visitors who enter the school for 45 days following their visit.On visitor access, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) provides the following additional information:* Schools can leave front doors unlocked for visitor access, but may wish to encourage visitors to make appointments.
* Schools should have a sign-in/sign-out process in place for all visitors and staff who are not typically onsite (e.g. itinerant teachers, maintenance personnel, district administrators, etc.).
* All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school.
* Where possible, visitor access should be limited to those areas required for the purpose of the visit and parents/caregivers should be encouraged to drop-off/pick-up students outside of the school.
* Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others’ personal space while on school grounds, including outside.
* For after-hours community use, community users are responsible for collecting names and contact information of participants to support contact tracing activities by the local health authority.

*First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to daily health checks, attendance, and visitors than those set out in the available guidance.*  |
| **Daily Health Checks, Attendance, & Visitors: My School’s Plan***Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school.*
	+ *If a child has any symptoms, they must not go to school.*
* *Staff and other adults must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school.*
	+ *If staff or any adult has any symptoms, they must not enter the school.*
* *The school will work with its Regional Health Authority to ensure policies and procedures are in place regarding reporting elevated staff and student absenteeism due to influenza-like illness.*
* *The school will:*
	+ *Ensure school staff and other adults entering the school are aware of their responsibility to wear a mask and assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school.*
	+ *Provide staff and families the following resources for guidance on symptoms and when to seek testing:* [*BC Self-Assessment Tool*](https://bc.thrive.health/) *app,* [*When to Get Tested for COVID-19*](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/When_to_get_tested.pdf), *calling 8-1-1, and contacting their health care provider.*
	+ *Verify that staff and adults have successfully completed a health check before entering the school and are aware of the mask requirements.*
	+ *Clearly communicate with parents and caregivers about their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.*
	+ *Maintain contact information for all visitors to the school and use a sign in/out process.*
* *The school will communicate on a regular basis with the Regional Health Authority and local First Nations leadership to ensure a coordinated approach to managing illness at home and school.*
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# 10.0 Illness at School and Returning After Illness

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| Guidance and Considerations***Illness at School (Symptoms Develop at School)***If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school, the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that schools adhere to the following procedures in order to decrease the risk of illness to others:1. Move the person to a space that is comfortable, safe, and supervised (if necessary). This can be a separate location (e.g., another room, a common space, or outdoors if weather allows), or in the same space (e.g., a classroom) if the person can consistently be 2-metres away from others.
2. Contact the student’s parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible (if applicable).
3. If the ill person requires assistance, where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance. If not possible, staff should wear a mask if available and tolerated.
4. Provide the person with a mask (if available and tolerated) or tissues if they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms (to cover their coughs or sneezes). Masks should not be worn if the person has gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., is at risk of vomiting). Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
5. Avoid touching the person’s body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva, vomit). If you do, practice hand hygiene.
6. Practice hand hygiene after the person has left.
7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces in spaces where the person’s body fluids may have been in contact while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.).

*What To Do When Sick*School administrators can encourage staff and families to go to the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19) to find information about what to do when they are sick with COVID-19 symptoms. Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the [BC SelfAssessment Tool](https://bc.thrive.health/) app, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. Information on region-specific services (e.g., testing and vaccination sites) is available on [health authority websites](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities).Staff and families can also be encouraged to visit [HealthLink BC](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/) or call 8-1-1 for support on what to do when sick with any symptoms of illness, including non-COVID-19 symptoms.*Returning to School After Illness*The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that students or staff can return to school after being sick depending on the type of illness they had:* If they had COVID-19 or another communicable disease, they can return according to the guidance provided to them from public health.
* For other illnesses, generally, the person can return when their symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all activities at school.

The BCCDC also advises that if a person is unsure if they are well enough to attend school, they should call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. It advises that schools should not require a health care provider note (i.e. a doctor’s note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.Additionally, the BCCDC indicates that students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the household member tests positive for a communicable disease (including but not limited to COVID-19), public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on next steps.The Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) notes that students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and should not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to illness at school and returning after illness than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Illness at School and Returning to After Illness: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *If a student develops any symptoms of illness parents or caregivers must keep the student at home.*
* *If a staff member develops any symptoms of illness, staff must stay home.*
* *The designated space for an ill student or staff member to wait if they cannot return home immediately is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*
* *Consistent with BCCDC recommendations the following steps will be taken in response to illness at school:*
1. *Move the person to a space that is comfortable, safe, and supervised (if necessary). This can be a separate location (e.g., another room, a common space, or outdoors if weather allows), or in the same space (e.g., a classroom) if the person can consistently be 2-metres away from others.*
2. *Contact the student’s parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible (if applicable).*
3. *If the ill person requires assistance, where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance. If not possible, staff should wear a mask if available and tolerated.*
4. *Provide the person with a mask (if available and tolerated) or tissues if they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms (to cover their coughs or sneezes). Masks should not be worn if the person has gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g., is at risk of vomiting). Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.*
5. *Avoid touching the person’s body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva, vomit). If you do, practice hand hygiene.*
6. *Practice hand hygiene after the person has left.*
7. *Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces in spaces where the person’s body fluids may have been in contact while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.).*
* *Staff, students, and parent/caregivers will be encouraged to go to the* [*BCCDC website*](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19) *to find information about what to do when they are sick with COVID-19 symptoms. They will also be informed about the* [*BC SelfAssessment Tool*](https://bc.thrive.health/) *app and to call 8-1-1, their health care provider, or their Community Health Nurse for guidance.*

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# 11.0 Managing School Exposures and Notifications

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC and Ministry of Education have developed [updated protocols](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/covid-19-protocols-for-administrators.pdf) for managing school-associated COVID-19 activity. FNESC and FNSA have developed [an adaptation of the protocols](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19/updated-protocols-and-first-nations-schools-reopening-considerations-and-template/) for First Nations schools.The BCCDC advises that school administrators or staff should not provide notifications to staff or students’ families about potential or confirmed communicable diseases cases (including COVID-19) unless the school administrator is directed to do so by the school medical officer. See also the FNESC and FNSA resource [COVID-19 Protocols for First Nations Schools Administrators: Management of Illness and Exposures at School](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid-19-protocols-for-first-nations-school-administrators/), adapted from a BC Ministry of Education resource in consultation with the First Nations Health Authority and the BCCDC. Additionally, the BCCDC recommends that schools should contact their local Medical Health Office if they are considering closing due to operational challenges related to increased absenteeism from staff required to self-isolate, self-reported illness of students and staff, or other factors that may impact the ability of a school to stay open.The BCCDC also states that if a cluster or outbreak occurs, additional measures may be recommended or required by a Medical Health Officer to prevent further transmission of a communicable disease. ***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to managing school exposures and notifications than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Managing School Exposures and Notifications: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *In the case of a possible COVID-19 exposure event, outbreak or cluster, or higher levels of illness-related school absences compared to previous years, the school will seek direction from local First Nations leadership and follow up with the regional health authority as appropriate.*
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# 12.0 Cleaning and Disinfection

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| Guidance and Considerations***Cleaning and Disinfection***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) includes the following cleaning and disinfection recommendations:* Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least once per day and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g., door handles, hand rails, tap faucets, shared gym equipment, etc.).
* Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g., desks used by a few students, lockers, manipulatives) should be cleaned at least once per day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices.
* Objects made of materials that are not easily cleaned (e.g., foam, playdough, etc.) or typically cleaned intermittently (e.g., fabrics, soft toys, etc.) can continue to be used. At a minimum they should be cleaned (if possible) according to regular practices.
* Textbooks, paper, other paper-based products, laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers do not need to be cleaned and disinfected, or quarantined for any period of time.

In addition to cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) recommends that schools use commercial disinfectant products listed on Health Canada’s [hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus (COVID-19).](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html) Ministry of Education also recommends emptying garbage containers daily.The Ministry of Education notes that many schools and districts have implemented procedures such as sign-in sheets posted next to room entrances that help custodial staff focus cleaning and disinfecting activities on those spaces that have been utilized by staff or students.***Water Stations/Fountains***The BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) recommends against limiting the use of water fountains. Schools should continue to clean and disinfect water fountains as a frequently touched surface and encourage hand hygiene before and after use. Schools should ensure non-drinkable (non-potable) water sources are not used for drinking water, and that these sources are labelled as such ([Part 4 of OHS Regulation](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-guidelines/guidelines-part-04#SectionNumber:G4.87)). More information is available from WorkSafeBC.***Cleaning and Disinfecting Bodily Fluids***The Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) recommends the following procedures, in conjunction with school/district policies, when cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine):* Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
* Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
* Follow regular health and safety procedure and regularly used PPE (e.g., gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).

***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to cleaning and disinfection than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Cleaning and Disinfection: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Cleaning and disinfection procedures in the school will include:*
	+ *Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces at least once per day and when visibly dirty.*
		- *Frequently touched surfaces include door knobs, light switches, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs used by multiple students, water fountains, toys, coffee makers, water refill stations, keyboards, tablets, and photocopiers.*
	+ *Cleaning surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g., desks used by a few students, lockers, manipulatives) at least once per day.*
	+ *Using common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products and closely following the instructions on the label.*
* *Limiting frequently-touched items that are not easily cleaned.*
* *Emptying garbage containers daily.*
* *Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Washing hands before wearing and after removing gloves.*
* *Incorporating end-of-shift wipe downs for all shared spaces.*
* *Cleaning and disinfecting cots and mattresses prior to use and after they are used or soiled. Use single use only pillow cases and blankets and dispose of them immediately after single use. Where pillow cases and blankets are not single use, launder between each student.*
* *Providing adequate instruction, training, and supplies to custodians.*
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# 13.0 Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity, and Delegated Care

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) recommends that those providing services to students with medical complexity, immune suppression, receiving delegated care, or with disabilities and diverse abilities that require them to be in close proximity to a student should follow their standard risk assessment methods to determine what PPE is needed for general communicable disease prevention in accordance with routine practices. In addition, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) states the following: * People providing these services in schools must wear a mask (medical or non-medical) when providing services and the service cannot be provided from behind a physical barrier. Additional PPE over and above that needed for routine practices and the use of a medical or non-medical mask is not necessary.
* Those providing health services in schools may be receiving different guidance related to PPE from their regulatory college or employer. Health service providers are encouraged to work with their employer to confirm what PPE is recommended for the services they provide in school settings.
* 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.

***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to students with disabilities/diverse abilities, medical complexity, and delegated care than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity, and Delegated Care: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Staff will use standard precautions in their work with students with disabilities and diverse abilities.*
* *Extra effort will be made to communicate on a regular basis with parents to ensure student needs are being met.*
* *If space limitations make it necessary to reduce the number of students in a learning environment, students who will most benefit from in-person support and learners with diverse needs will be prioritized.*
* *Clear masks that cover the nose and mouth will be used when facial communication is necessary for student learning and understanding.*
* *Parents /caregivers of children who are at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 will be encouraged to consult a healthcare provider to determine their child’s level of risk.*
* *The school will work with families to develop options for student safety and learning.*
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# 14.0 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that all staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and K-12 students in “bricks and mortar” schools should wear a non-medical mask or face covering (a “mask”) at all times while indoors at school. The [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks) advises that face shields do not replace non-medical masks.Mask wearing is subject to the following exceptions:* If a person is unable to wear a mask because they don’t tolerate it (for health or behavioural reasons, which include health impacts experienced during excessive heat events or poor air quality);
* If a person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
* If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
* If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. actively playing a wind instrument, high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
* If a person is eating or drinking;
* If a person is behind a barrier (e.g., a divider, a cubicle, or in a room by themselves);
* While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important.

BCCDC advises that schools continue to be encouraged to support student mask use through positive and inclusive approaches, and not punitive or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma. Schools are also encouraged to ensure there are opportunities throughout the day for students to remove their masks (like providing opportunities to go outside if weather allows).The BCCDC also states that no student should be prevented from attending or fully participating in school if they are not wearing a mask. Furthermore, if an activity cannot be implemented in line with the BCCDC’s guidance, the BCCDC advises that it should be adapted or another activity should be selected. For staff, the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) advises that 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. See Section 13.0, Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity and Delegated Care, for related guidance from BCCDC and the Ministry of Education relating to working with students.The Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) includes the following requirements regarding personal protective equipment:* All students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are required to wear a mask indoors in schools and on school buses. Students may wear a face shield in addition, but must wear a mask under the face shield.
* Staff should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in the use of masks, and should not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature.

The Ministry of Education [Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) states that reminders should be communicated to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff about mask wearing, including the importance of [proper fit](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html#a9). Additionally, the Ministry of Education’s guidance notes that students and staff should be supported to know how to properly put on, wear, take off and store non-medical masks and other face coverings. More information on non-medical masks is available on the [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks) website and [the Government of Canada website](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/how-put-remove-clean-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html). Regarding visitors, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) states that visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school.The Ministry of Education’s guidance outlines that medical-grade masks are not required within school settings for general use. Regarding face shields, they are a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. They may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. Face shields should not be worn in place of non-medical masks.According to the Ministry of Education, in the event a regional or provincial public health recommendation or Order requires stricter non-medical mask use than what is outlined in the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf), that recommendation or Order should be followed.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to personal protective equipment than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Personal Protective Equipment: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *All staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and K-12 students will wear a mask while indoors at school.*
* *Students and staff will have a non-medical mask or face covering available at school so it is accessible should they become ill while at school.*
* *Students and staff will wear a non-medical mask or face covering when on school busses and will put on the mask before boarding.*
* *Students will be taught about how to use masks and the expectation that they will treat people wearing masks with respect.*
* *Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff. Note that if a face shield is worn, a mask is still required.*
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# 15.0 Staff-Specific Considerations

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsFor staff-specific considerations, the BCCDC [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) recommends the [WorkSafeBC guidance for workplaces](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart) to determine what measures should be in place within staff-only spaces within schools (e.g. break rooms, individual offices) and non-school spaces operated by a school district.The BCCDC [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf) advises that virtual alternatives should be sought for staff meetings where possible. If a virtual alternative is not possible, the size of the gatherings should be minimized as much as possible.The BCCDC advises that staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development days, etc.) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for workplace gatherings and events and any related WorkSafeBC guidance.Additionally, the Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) and [Addendum](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) outline the following considerations for staff spaces and staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development days, etc.):* Utilize floor markings and signage to direct traffic flow and prevent crowding (e.g. in the break room, by the photocopier, etc.).
* Respect room occupancy limits.
* Use available space to spread people out and consider virtual options.
* Hold staff-only gatherings virtually.
* Gatherings must occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders and any related WorkSafeBC guidance.

See also Section 14.0, Personal Protective Equipment, for further details.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to staff-specific considerations than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Staff Safety: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *Staff gatherings, including meetings and professional development, will be held virtually whenever possible.*
* *Staff will wear masks while indoors and on buses.*
* *Establish and post occupancy limits and physical distancing guidelines for shared spaces such as lunch rooms and break rooms.*
* *Remove chairs or tables to ensure occupancy limits are not exceeded and provide additional areas for staff to have their breaks, including areas outdoors*.
* *Stagger start and end of shift times as well as break times for workers to prevent crowding when entering and leaving the workplace.*
* *Ensure that workers are knowledgeable regarding the controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.*
* *Report any unsafe conditions or acts.*
* *Staff will be encouraged to remain on site and not to leave during lunch or at break times.*
* *If staff need to travel between schools/worksites, they will physical distance in vehicles wherever possible.*
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# 16.0 Communication, Training, and Orientation

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| Guidance and ConsiderationsThe Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) advises that districts and schools clearly and consistently communicate guidance, recommendations and Orders from regional Medical Health Officers and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), including COVID-19 resources. The Ministry of Education outlines the following considerations for the communication of communicable disease measures in schools:* Ensure communication is relayed in multiple formats for ease of understanding (e.g., visual representation, videos using sign language, etc.).
* Include evidence-based information, provided by the Provincial Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control, to build awareness that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from students is minimal and to help address inaccurate information that might be circulating in the school community.
* Consider providing early and ongoing health and safety orientation for staff (including newly hired staff and staff who change worksites), parents/caregivers, students and other adults in the school (e.g. teacher candidates in practicums, volunteers) to ensure all members of the school community are well informed of their responsibilities and resources available. Examples include online information, distribution of orientation and training materials that are clear, concise and easily understood, interactive sessions with Q&As, material in multiple languages to meet community needs, etc.
* School districts and independent school authorities should provide COVID-19 safety orientation opportunities for staff prior to students arriving for the first day of school, and in consultation with their local unions and staff health & safety representatives.

Reflecting WorkSafeBC guidance, the Ministry of Education emphasizes the need to involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for schools as a workplace.WorkSafeBC recommends that employers ensure the following:* Everyone entering the workplace, including workers from other employers, have received information about the workplace’s measures, practices and policies for managing communicable disease.
* All workers understand the measures in place at the workplace.
* Supervisors are knowledgeable about the measures, practices, and policies in place, and incorporate these into supervision practices at the workplace.
* Workers know how to raise health and safety concerns.

Schools/districts can refer to the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19), [BC COVID-19 Safe Schools website](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools) and [Queen’s Printer COVID-19 Signage Catalogue](https://brokerage.qp.gov.bc.ca/pdf/QP_COVID19_Signage_Catalogue.pdf) for signage and posters.The Ministry of Education [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidlines.pdf) encourages schools to support students by practicing personal preventive measures like respecting others personal space and regularly practicing hand hygiene. Some measures include:* Having staff model these behaviours.
* Promoting safety measures in the school through the use of visual aids like floor markings and signage.
* Sharing reliable information, including from the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, to parents, families and caregivers.

The Ministry of Education also notes that staff should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in preventive practices and should not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature. Staff should also utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g. gatherings and events) and interacting with other staff and students, including considerations around respecting others personal space and choice of personal protective equipment beyond the circumstances outlined in this document. The Ministry of Education also states that schools should continue to practice various emergency procedures, including six school fire evacuation drills, lockdown drills, etc. Staff should be notified in advance of emergency/evacuation drills.***First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to communication, training, and orientation than those set out in the available guidance.***  |
| Communication, Training, and Orientation: My School’s Plan*Note: Here are some possible provisions for your school’s plan based on the considerations above. You are invited to select, modify, and delete as appropriate for your school. Additional provisions can be added below.** *The school will send a regular email to families/parents/caregivers. It will include updates about the school’s COVID-19 response and procedures, reminders about daily health checks and signs/symptoms of COVID-19, mental health resources, and responses to common questions/concerns.*
* *The principal will communicate on a regular basis with First Nation administration and Chief and Council (consider specifying how frequently this will happen).*
* *COVID-19 information and notices will be posted to a designated school bulletin board.*
* *Signage will be posted at the school entrances, including notices to adults entering the school about their responsibility to assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering.*
* *A start of the year email update and meeting will be held with staff to review workplace practices relating to COVID-19 and answer questions.*
* *Regular check-in meetings with staff will be held to share current information and review any concerns.*
* *The school will provide instruction to staff on the following:*
	+ *The risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease.*
	+ *Safe work procedures or instruction to be followed, including hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette.*
	+ *How to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.*
	+ *Changes made to policies, practices, and procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*
	+ *The school will keep a record of the instruction and training provided to workers regarding COVID-19, as well as reports of exposure and first aid records. COVID-19 related meetings will be documented and minutes posted at a central location.*
* *The school will keep a record of the instruction and training provided to workers regarding COVID-19, as well as reports of exposure and first aid records. COVID-19 related meetings will be documented and minutes posted at a central location.*
* *The school will practice regular emergency procedures, including school fire evacuation drills, lockdown drills, etc.*
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# Appendix A: Further Information

Find this resource and supporting documents at [www.fnsa.ca/covid19](http://www.fnsa.ca/covid19) and [www.fnesc.ca/covid19](http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19).

Key Resources

**The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is an important source of information about COVID-19. Resources available on their website can be used to support learning and to respond to questions you may receive from members of your school community. More information is available at** [**http://www.bccdc.ca/schools**](http://www.bccdc.ca/schools)

BCCDC Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools:

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

Addendum - BCCDC Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools (December 29, 2021):
<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Addendum_K-12Guidance_12292021.pdf>

Ministry of Education Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings:

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

Addendum - Ministry of Education Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (December 29, 2021):

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

COVID-19 Safe Schools:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school>

Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Public Health Authorities:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/program-management/safe-caring-and-orderly-schools>

BCCDC Contact Tracing Infographic:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/Contact_Tracing.pdf>

BCCDC Contact Tracing in Schools One-Pager:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/Contact_tracing_schools_2021.pdf>

COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators: Management of Illness and Exposures at School (Updated January 7, 2022):

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/covid-19-protocols-for-administrators.pdf>

Regional Health Authorities:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities>

BCCDC Indigenous Community Resources:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/indigenous-community-resources>

Additional Resources

FNESC and FNSA COVID-19 Protocols for First Nations School Administrators: Management of School Associated Activity (Updated January, 2022):

<http://www.fnesc.ca/covid19/updated-protocols-and-first-nations-schools-reopening-considerations-and-template/>

Health Canada list of hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers for use against coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

Federal Guidance for School Bus Operations during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/initiatives/covid-19-measures-updates-guidance-issued-transport-canada/federal-guidance-school-bus-operations-during-covid-19-pandemic>

BCCDC Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance_Child_Care.pdf>

COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care-response-covid-19/child-care-response-covid-19-provider/child-care-response-covid-19-health-safety>

WorkSafeBC Protocols on COVID-19 Communicable Disease Prevention:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/bcs-four-step-restart>

Health Canada COVID-19 Guidance for the 2021/2022 school year:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/planning-2021-2022-school-year-vaccination.html>

Health Canada COVID-19 Vaccines for Children:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/vaccination-children/covid-19.html>

BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool:

<https://bc.thrive.health>

BCCDC K-12 Health Check:

<https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1>

BCCDC When To Get Tested for COVID-19?:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/When_to_get_tested.pdf>

BCCDC posters, (e.g. screening and self-check tools, physical distancing):

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/signage-posters>

COVID-related mask use information:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

# Appendix B: School Planning Checklist

*Please adapt and add to this checklist as appropriate for your school*

**Planning**

* Communicable disease prevention plan drafted
* Plan reviewed and approved by Chief and Council
* COVID-19 news being monitored
* Person identified to manage the plan
* PPE protocols followed according to the corresponding and age-appropriate settings (classrooms, buses, etc.)
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Scheduling and Organization**

* 45-day visitor log kept at school reception
* Staff, parents and students reminded of daily health checks and health and safety protocols
* Strategies are in place to prevent crowding during class transition times.
* School gatherings and events are held virtually, whenever possible.
* For events that must be in-person, attendance is minimized and does not exceed 50% operative capacity.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation**

* Driver PPE provided
* Parent/caregiver instructions communicated
* Student spread out if empty seats are available
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Building, Supplies, and Cleaning**

* Cleaning supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ordered
* HVAC and other ventilation systems maintained and working efficiently
* Enhanced cleaning/disinfecting schedule in place
* Floor markings and posters address traffic flow
* Indoor spaces and gatherings kept within room capacity limits
* Hand cleaning facilities available and accessible
* Classroom activities and gatherings are provided with enough space to avoid involuntary contact, and avoiding face-to-face contact
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Staff**

* Start of the school year orientation/training with staff (all types) to review procedures and responsibilities
* WorkSafeBC guidance reflected in communicable disease plan
* Written instructions/plan shared with staff
* Staff gatherings occur virtually when possible.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Communication**

* Share communicable disease plan and any subsequent updates to it with First Nation leadership and parents/caregivers
* Families of students with higher risk of severe illness consulted and informed of risks and illness mitigation strategies
* Signage posted: entrances, bathrooms, halls, classrooms, and common areas
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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