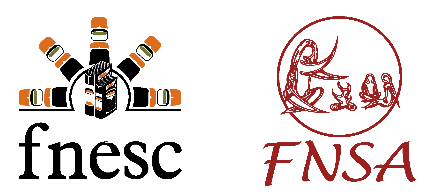
**First Nations Schools Reopening   
Considerations and Template**

Draft, Revised September 6, 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) first developed this resource to support BC First Nations planning to deliver in-person instruction during the 2021/2022 school year. It has now been revised to reflect updated public health recommendations for the 2022/23 school year. This resource 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 and Child Care (ECC) 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](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Public_Health_Guidance_Campus.pdf).

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 also continue to support the decision of individual First Nations 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, like the BC Ministry of Health, BCCDC, and ECC, 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 the authority to decide if and how to use these guidelines and guidance documents to inform planning, and if and when to reopen their schools for in-person learning.***

# Using this Resource

This resource includes health and safety considerations related to key areas of school operations. It 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 and Child Care [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.pdf). Those documents should be referred to directly as the authoritative sources of health and safety information when planning for the return to school.

As set out in the above-noted documents, 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 the 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 and Child Care 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 other communicable diseases, not to eliminate transmission completely.

***Please note that extensive updates have been made to this resource based on changes to public health guidance for the 2022/23 school year. 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) 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 and Child Care 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

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) emphasizes that vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. 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.

# Public Health Guidance: Important Changes for the 2022/2023 School Year

Important highlights or changes in public health guidance for fall 2022 are noted below. First Nations may have additional or more rigorous requirements related to each of these items than those set out in the available guidance.

**Space Arrangement:** Schools can return to classroom configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches. Strict enforcement of physical distancing is not specifically recommended by the BCCDC or the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

**Transportation:** School buses can return to regular seating and onloading/offloading practices.

**Personal Protective Equipment:** The BCCDC advises that the decision to wear a mask beyond when it is required by public health is a personal one, based on individual preference. When providing student services, staff should follow routine infection control practices and care plans for the child.

**Health Check:** Schools should continue to communicate the importance of regular health checks to ensure that students or staff are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities. Schools do not need to monitor students or staff for symptoms of illness.

**Gatherings and Events:** Schools no longer need to limit capacity or hold event virtually. Events should proceed as per relevant local, regional, Provincial and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events and BCCDC guidance.

**Visitors:** Schools can follow normal processes for welcoming visitors and allowing community use of schools.

**Cleaning and Disinfection:** Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces should occur in line with regular practices and when visibly dirty.

**Physical Barriers:** Physical barriers are longer recommended for communicable disease prevention.

**[SCHOOL NAME]**

**Reopening Plan**

**[Date]**

**Table of Contents**

*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.*

[1.0 Introduction 7](#_Toc112920793)

[2.0 Space Arrangement and Classroom 8](#_Toc112920794)

[3.0 Ventilation and Air Circulation 10](#_Toc112920795)

[4.0 Student Transportation 12](#_Toc112920796)

[5.0 School Gatherings and Events 13](#_Toc112920797)

[6.0 Extracurricular Activities and Community Use of School Facilities 14](#_Toc112920798)

[7.0 Food Services 16](#_Toc112920799)

[8.0 Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette 17](#_Toc112920800)

[9.0 Health Checks and Visitors 19](#_Toc112920801)

[10.0 Illness at School and Returning After Illness 21](#_Toc112920802)

[11.0 Managing School Exposures and Notifications 24](#_Toc112920803)

[12.0 Cleaning and Disinfection 26](#_Toc112920804)

[13.0 Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity, and Delegated Care 28](#_Toc112920805)

[14.0 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) 30](#_Toc112920806)

[15.0 Communication, Training, and Orientation 31](#_Toc112920807)

[Appendix A: Further Information 33](#_Toc112920808)

[Appendix B: School Planning Checklist 35](#_Toc112920809)

# 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 BC Centre for Disease Control (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 and Child Care [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.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 and Classrooms

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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) advises that schools can use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches.  Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf). Schools should implement communicable disease prevention practices (e.g., cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.  ***Personal Items and 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) no longer has specific advice regarding students and staff bringing personal items and school supplies to school for their own use.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.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 (e.g., food, drinks, and utensils).   ***Physical Distancing***  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) advises that staff and students should be encouraged to respect others personal space (the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person).  ***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 and Classrooms: 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.* * *Staff and students will be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g., food, drink and utensils).* * *Personal items, including school supplies, will be labelled with student names.* * *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.* |

# 3.0 Ventilation and Air Circulation

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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 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.  The BCCDC also recommends opening windows when the weather permits, if it doesn’t impact the functioning of ventilation systems. Taking students outside more often is no longer necessary for communicable disease prevention.  Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) notes that school district and site-based safety plans should include provisions when a school’s ventilation system is temporarily compromised (e.g., partial power outage or ventilation break down).  To enhance school ventilation, the Ministry states that schools should think of HVAC systems holistically, considering how the combination of outdoor air supply and filtration can significantly influence indoor air quality. The Ministry says that schools should consider guidance from [ASHRAE](https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-reopening-schools-and-universities-c19-guidance.pdf). This includes considering:   * Schools with recycled/recirculated air systems should consider upgrading filters to finer grain filters such as MERV 13 (if possible), * 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:   * When using air conditioners and fans in ventilated spaces, 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. * Natural ventilation (e.g., operable windows) and portable HEPA filter units can be considered in regularly occupied classrooms that do not have mechanical ventilation systems. * Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided except when necessary (e.g., during high or excessive heat events). Schools are encouraged to use BCCDC resources, including [Heat Event Response Planning](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/heat-event-response-planning#:~:text=BC%20Provincial%20Heat%20Alert%20and%20Response%20System&text=This%20system%20lays%20out%20the,health%20sector%20and%20other%20partners.) and [Wildfire Smoke](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke), in planning for excessive heat events, and to consult their local health authority for guidance as needed.   ***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 Circulation: 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.* * *Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed will be avoided, except during very hot days.* |

# 4.0 Student Transportation

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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) advises that school buses can follow normal seating and onloading/offloading practices.  Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) recommends that buses used for transporting students be cleaned and disinfected in line with cleaning and disinfection practices (see Section 12.0, Cleaning and Disinfection). Bus drivers and students should be encouraged to practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Bus drivers, teachers and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 may choose to wear masks or face coverings when they are on the bus.  ***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.*   * *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.* * *Students will not take the bus to school if they are sick.* * *Bus drivers and students will be reminded to practice* [*hand hygiene*](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/hand-hygiene) *and* [*respiratory etiquette*](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm)*.* |

# 5.0 School Gatherings and Events

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and Considerations  most recently updated in August 2022  The BCCDC recommends that school social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools), regardless of location, should occur in line with the guidance 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), as well as any applicable local, regional, or provincial public health recommendations and Orders.  The BCCDC guidance is also that schools can follow normal practices for welcoming visitors and the community use of schools.  The Ministry of Education’s guidance for public and non-First Nations independent schools is that visitors, including community groups using the school, should follow applicable communicable disease prevention measures outlined in its [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.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.*   * *For school gatherings people will be spread out as much as possible in the available space to prevent overcrowding.* * *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.* |

# 6.0 Extracurricular Activities and Community Use of School Facilities

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and Considerations  ***Extracurricular Activities***  The BCCDC advises that school extracurricular activities, regardless of location, should occur in line with the guidance 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)](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf) as well as any applicable local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.  ***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 return to normal practices for community use of schools.  In addition, the Ministry of Education and Child Care guidance for public and non-First Nations independent schools indicates that visitors, including community groups using the school, should follow applicable communicable disease prevention measures outlined in [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.pdf).  The Ministry also recommends that schools consider guidance provided for overnight camps from [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/childcare-schools/camps) and the [BC Camps Association](http://bccamping.org/) when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.  Community use of school facilities should be approved by local First Nations leadership and aligned with applicable public health guidance, recommendations and Orders.  ***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.* * *Community users will be advised of the school’s communicable disease plan, including the requirement for people to complete a health check and not enter the school if they are sick and to clean hands before and after using frequently touched items.* |

# 7.0 Food Services

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and Considerations  The most recent 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) does not reference food services (e.g., meal programs, cafeterias, and fundraisers). Food services 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.    ***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 communicable diseases.* * *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*. |

# 8.0 Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

|  |
| --- |
| 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 or using an [effective hand sanitizer](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/hand-washing) to reduce the spread of illness. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene and schools should facilitate regular opportunities for students and staff to wash their hands.  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 poster provides the following instructions:  How to Hand Wash   1. Wet hands with warm (not hot or cold) running water. 2. Apply liquid or foam soap. 3. Lather soap covering all surfaces of hands for 20-30 seconds. 4. Rinse thoroughly under running water. 5. Pat hands dry thoroughly with paper towel. 6. Use paper towel to turn off the tap.   How to Use Hand Rub   1. Ensure hands are visibly clean (if soiled, follow hand washing steps). 2. Apply about a loonie-sized amount to your hands. 3. Rub all surfaces of your hand and wrist until completely dry (15-20 seconds).   Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) for public and non-First Nations independent schools advises the following:   * Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene.   + Use portable hand-washing sites or alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol.   + Schools should use [commercial hand sanitizer products that have met Health Canada’s requirements and are authorized for sale in Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html). * 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. * 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.   + Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.   ***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 parents and staff can teach and reinforce good respiratory etiquette practices among students, including:   * 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 and 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:*   + *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, and science lab);*   + *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:*   + *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, or blood);*   + *after cleaning tasks;*   + *after handling garbage; and*   + *whenever hands are visibly dirty.* |

# 9.0 Health Checks and Visitors

|  |
| --- |
| **Guidance and Considerations**  ***Health Checks***  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 health check is defined by the BCCDC as a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to [COVID-19 symptoms](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms)) that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, within school settings. The BCCDC advises that schools do not need to monitor students and staff for symptoms of illness. Regular 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) and the Ministry of Education and Child Care [K-12 Health Check.](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/covid/daily-health-check-english.pdf)  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/if-you-have-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.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) also recommends that school administrators ensure that everyone entering a school is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness, including that they should not come to school if they are sick. This can be supported through communications (e.g., emails/letters to parents and staff), orientation activities (e.g., meetings or videos) and other reminders (e.g., signage on doors).  *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) advises that schools can follow normal practices for welcoming visitors and the community use of schools.  On visitor access, the Ministry of Education and Child Care states that visitors, including community groups using the school, should follow applicable communicable disease prevention measures outlined in [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.pdf).  *First Nations may include additional or more rigorous requirements related to health checks and visitors than those set out in the available guidance.* |
| **Health Checks and 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 should regularly assess their child for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other communicable disease before sending them to school.*    + *If a child has any symptoms, they must not go to school.* * *Staff and other adults should assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other communicable disease prior to entering the school.*    + *If staff or any adult has any symptoms, they must not enter the school.* * *The school will:*   + *Ensure school staff and other adults entering the school are aware of their responsibility to regularly assess themselves for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other communicable 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.*   + *Clearly communicate with parents and caregivers about their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.* |

# 10.0 Illness at School and Returning After Illness

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and Considerations  ***Illness at School (Symptoms Develop at School)***  According to 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) if a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school and is unable to participate in regular activities, they should be supported to go home until their symptoms have improved. Appropriate infection control precautions should be taken while the person is preparing to leave the school premises, including use of appropriate hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection of surfaces soiled with bodily fluids. They may use a mask if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) for public schools and non-First Nations independent schools states that school administrators should also establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school/work.   * Continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one (for both the person who is sick and for those who may be assisting them). * Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible (e.g., contact student’s parent/caregiver for pick-up). * Some students or staff may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such, schools should have a space available where the student or staff can wait comfortably and are separated from others * Younger children must be supervised when separated. Supervising staff can wear a non-medical mask and face shield, and should avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible and practice diligent hand hygiene. * Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the person’s bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom or the bathroom stall they used) prior to the surfaces/equipment being used by others. Cleaning/disinfecting the entire room the person was in (a “terminal” clean) is not required in these circumstances. * Request that the individual stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.   *What To Do When Sick*  The BCCDC advises that staff, students, or other persons in the school setting who are exhibiting symptoms of illness, such as COVID-19, should stay home until they are well enough to participate in regular activities. Staff, children, or other persons can attend school if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to where you feel well enough to return to regular activities and any fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., acetaminophen or ibuprofen). The [When to Get Tested for COVID-19](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing/when-to-get-a-covid-19-test) resource or the [BC SelfAssessment Tool](https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en) provides more information on whether to get a test for COVID-19.  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 or [When to Get Tested for COVID-19](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing/when-to-get-a-covid-19-test) resource, 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.  Staff, children, or other persons in the school setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation) as to how long they should self-isolate. They can return to school when they no longer need to self-isolate as long as symptoms have improved and they are well enough to participate in regular activities. 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.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) recommends that students, staff and other adults follow public health guidance, BCCDC guidance, and/or the recommendation of their health care provider when they are sick.  ***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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.* * *The following steps will be taken in response to illness at school:*   + *Continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one (for both the person who is sick and for those who may be assisting them).*   + *Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible (e.g., contact student’s parent/caregiver for pick-up).*   + *Some students or staff may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such, schools should have a space available where the student or staff can wait comfortably and are separated from others.*   + *Younger children must be supervised when separated. Supervising staff can wear a non-medical mask and face shield, and should avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible and practice diligent hand hygiene.*   + *Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the person’s bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom or the bathroom stall they used) prior to the surfaces/equipment being used by others. Cleaning/disinfecting the entire room the person was in (a “terminal” clean) is not required in these circumstances.*   + *Request that the individual stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.* * *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.* |

# 11.0 Managing School Exposures and Notifications

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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) guidance states that most communicable diseases experienced by students and staff within school settings may be managed by the individual/family and through routine preventive measures, such as staying home from school until well enough to participate in regular activities.  Resources are available to support management of routine communicable diseases, including [HealthLink BC](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/), the BCCDC [Guide to Common Childhood Diseases](http://www.bccdc.ca/schools/Documents/EN_Guide_Childhood_Diseases.pdf), the [Sneezes and Diseases website](https://sneezesdiseases.com/), and other school health resources hosted on health authority webpages ([Vancouver Coastal Health](http://www.vch.ca/public-health/children-youth-schools/school-health); [Fraser Health](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/school-health#.Yu1V4kfMI2x); [Interior Health](https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/infant-child-and-youth-health/school-health); [Island Health](https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/children-youth/school-age-children-5-19-years-old); [Northern Health](https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/school-and-youth-health)).  In addition, BCCDC advises that that **school or district administrators can contact public health if they have concerns about communicable disease transmission within the school setting and require additional support.** Public health may become directly involved if certain reportable diseases, such as measles, are identified where there are effective interventions available to prevent further spread and protect against severe disease. Additional time-limited public health measures may also be implemented at the discretion of the local Medical Health Officer or the Provincial Health Officer in response to broader risk of communicable disease transmission in the community.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) advises public and non-First Nations independent schools that to protect personal privacy and to support accuracy, schools should exercise caution in providing communicable disease notifications beyond when they are recommended by public health. It also states that Medical Health Officers play the lead role in determining if, when and how to communicate information regarding increased communicable disease activity within a school.  ***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 communicable disease compared to previous years, the school will seek direction from local First Nations leadership and follow up with the regional health authority as appropriate.* * *The school will communicate frequently to staff and parents about the importance of routine communicable disease preventive measures, such as staying home from school until well enough to participate in regular activities* |

# 12.0 Cleaning and Disinfection

|  |
| --- |
| 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) advises that regular cleaning and disinfection can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, handrails, faucet taps, and shared equipment) should occur in line with regular practices and when visibly dirty.  In addition to cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, the Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) encourages schools to maintain and incorporate enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices whenever possible, as part of sustainable communicable disease management.  For **cleaning**, the Ministry recommends using water and detergent along with good cleaning practices. For hard to reach areas, use a brush and rinse thoroughly prior to disinfecting. For **disinfecting**, use common 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)  Cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces should occur at least once in a 24-hour period and when visibly dirty. When cleaning and disinfecting the Ministry recommends the following:   * Always wash hands before and after handling shared objects. * Items and surfaces that a person has placed in their mouths or that have been in contact with bodily fluids should be cleaned as soon as possible and between uses by different people. * A dishwasher can be used to clean and sanitize dishwasher-safe items if the sanitize setting is used with adequately hot water.   The Ministry also 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.  ***Cleaning and Disinfecting Bodily Fluids***  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) recommends the following procedures, when cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, and 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 and Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g., toileting, spitting, and 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.*   + *Regular cleaning of surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g., desks used by a few students, lockers, and manipulatives).*   + *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.* * *Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, and 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.* |

# 13.0 Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity, and Delegated Care

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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 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 routine infection control practices and care plans for the child, if applicable.  The he Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) also states the following:   * 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 communicable disease (including COVID-19) are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine their child’s level of risk. Students are not required to wear a mask or face covering when receiving services, though may continue to, based upon their or their parent/caregiver’s personal choice. Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten those, but would like to wear one.   In addition, the Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) advises that public and non-First Nations independent schools are expected to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities. In-class instruction may not be suitable for some children (or families) with severe immune compromise or medical complexity, which should be determined on a case-by-case basis with a medical care provider. Schools should follow regular practices for those needing alternative learning arrangements due to immune compromise or medical complexity to ensure access to learning and supports.  ***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.* * *Parents /caregivers of children who are at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 or other communicable diseases 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.* * *The school will have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one.* |

# 14.0 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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) advises that the decision to wear a mask beyond when it is required by public health is a personal one, based on individual preference. Some students and staff may choose to continue to wear a non-medical mask or face covering throughout the day or for certain activities. The choice of staff and students to choose whether they practice additional personal prevention measures should be respected. Information on non-medical masks is available from [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks).  See Section 13.0, Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities, Medical Complexity and Delegated Care, for related guidance from BCCDC and the Ministry of Education and Child Care relating to working with students.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.pdf) also says that the decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice that should be supported and respected. The Ministry has the following additional advice:   * Promote the school environment as supportive of wearing masks through mask-specific messaging at assemblies and in announcements, signs and written communications. Include that some people wear masks to reduce their risk of communicable disease, and it is important to be respectful of other’s choices. * Continue school-wide efforts to create safe and inclusive learning environments, free from discrimination, bullying and harassment. Set, communicate and consistently reinforce clear expectations that bullying or other disrespectful behaviour or conduct related to mask use is unacceptable.   ***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.*   * *Students will be taught about how to use masks and the expectation that they will treat people wearing masks with respect.* * *The school will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff and students.* |

# 15.0 Communication, Training, and Orientation

|  |
| --- |
| Guidance and 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) encourages schools to share evidence-based information about vaccination (i.e., from [BCCDC](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine) and [ImmunizeBC](https://immunizebc.ca/covid-19)) and promote opportunities to be vaccinated, in partnership with public health and local Medical Health Officers.  The Ministry of Education and Child Care [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.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 and Child Care outlines the following considerations for the communication of communicable disease measures in public schools and non-First Nations independent schools:   * School boards and independent school authorities must follow WorkSafe BC [communicable disease prevention guidance](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/covid-19-prevention) and must provide communication, training and orientation to ensure the health and safety of their workers. * School administrators should ensure that everyone entering a school is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness, including that they should not come to school if they are sick. This can be supported through communications (e.g., emails/letters to parents and staff), orientation activities (e.g., meetings and videos) and other reminders (e.g., signage on doors).   WorkSafeBC has [additional guidance](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/covid-19-prevention) about communicable disease prevention measures.  Schools/districts can refer to the [BCCDC website](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/signage-postershttp:/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.  ***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 communicable disease procedures, reminders about 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).* * *Public health 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 for symptoms of communicable disease prior to entering.* * *A start of the year email update and meeting will be held with staff to review workplace practices relating to communicable disease prevention and answer questions.* * *Regular check-in meetings with staff will be held to share current information and review any concerns.* * *Ensure that workers are knowledgeable regarding the controls required to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases.* * *Report any unsafe conditions or acts.* |

# 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 and other communicable diseases. 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>

Ministry of Education and Child Care 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.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>

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

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 Communicable Disease (including COVID-19) Management in Child Care Settings:

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

WorkSafeBC, COVID-19 and Communicable Disease

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19>

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 COVID-19 Testing:

<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):

<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 and communicable disease news being monitored
* Person identified to manage the plan
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Scheduling and Organization**

* 45-day visitor log kept at school reception
* Staff, parents and students reminded of regular health checks and health and safety protocols
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**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
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**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
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# 