

SCHOOL DISTRICT 22

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

SAFETY - OUR PRIORITY

On April 16, 2022 key changes occurred to existing Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Schools. COVID-19 will continue to circulate in our population, including within K-12 school settings; however, with high immunization rates in BC, as well as emerging treatment options for people with higher risk of serious disease, we can transition to managing COVID-19 as we do other serious respiratory infections in the community. Public Health continues to review emerging evidence and monitor cases and transmission trends of COVID-19 to determine if actions should be taken to prevent COVID-19. Guidance will continue to be modified as needed, as we transition from emergency response to the pandemic to the recovery and readiness phases in the next few months. **From time to time, changes may happen that impact a particular region or school.**

All members of our School District No. 22 (SD22) community have a shared responsibility for protecting themselves and others from the spread of COVID-19, or any other communicable disease. This Communicable Disease Plan (CDP) is part of SD22's commitment to promote the health and safety of all employees, students, and visitors by providing information that can be used to prevent the contraction and spread of communicable diseases, and to guide appropriate responses to any communicable disease outbreak. WorkSafeBC defines a communicable disease as an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another, such as COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza. Variants of COVID-19 spread the same way as the original COVID-19. A combination of preventative measures will be used to minimize employee, student, and visitor exposure to communicable diseases, including the most effective control measures available. SD22 will clearly communicate this plan to employees, students and visitors and expect everyone to follow the procedures outlined in this plan. Information in this plan will be reviewed and updated as required. As the CDP evolves, new updates will be shared with SD22 staff, students, and their families. All members of the SD22 community are expected to follow this plan in conjunction with the [Provincial COVID-19 Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (effective April 16, 2022). All employees are expected to read, know, and organize their work in accordance with these guidelines.

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

- Supporting the health and well-being of students, families, and staff continues to be our top priority.
- Addressing pandemic impacts on student learning and well-being, with a focus on the "whole child" including literacy, numeracy, social-emotional development and mental health.
- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments through trauma-informed practices.
- Implementing strategies to routinely support students to practice personal prevention measures.

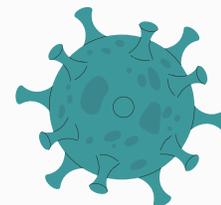


PURPOSE

The purpose of this Communicable Disease Plan is to protect employees, students, and visitors from harmful exposure to communicable diseases and to reduce the risk of infection in the event of an exposure. In alignment with [WorkSafeBC Guideline G-P2-21](#), this plan:

- develops and implements proper risk controls
- establishes safe work places
- raises awareness, educates, and trains our students, staff, and community following direction and guidance from the [BCCDC](#), the Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), Interior Health's Medical Health Officer (MHO), and the First Nations Health Authority.

Public Health & Environmental Measures



VACCINATIONS

Vaccines are important tools to protect against many serious communicable diseases. Vaccination protects from serious illness due to COVID-19 and is the most effective way to reduce the impact of COVID-19 in our communities. The BCCDC strongly recommends that adults interacting with children be fully vaccinated. All COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in Canada protect against serious complications, including the Omicron variant. More information about COVID-19 vaccines is available from the [BCCDC website](#).

VENTILATION AND AIR EXCHANGE

The District will ensure building heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are in good operating condition as designed, and that preventative maintenance is conducted. We require all ventilation systems to be properly balanced, which means verifying that the system meets its design conditions for air flow, temperature, humidity, and other design parameters in compliance with sections 4.70 through 4.80 of the WorkSafe Regulations related to indoor air quality. In the event a school/worksite's ventilation system is temporarily compromised (e.g. partial power outage, ventilation breakdown), the Director of Facilities will be contacted and actions will be taken to ensure the safety of the school/worksite. If worksite ventilation systems are temporarily compromised, contact the Director of Facilities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SD22 site-based Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Committees and staff review ongoing prevention measures to identify areas where measures may be inconsistently implemented and to identify mitigation efforts. OH&S Committees should review plans regularly throughout the year, and identify if there are any gaps in implementation. Measures should be communicated to the school community (e.g., newsletters, posters, etc.) to support awareness and compliance.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- **Cleaning and disinfecting responsibilities:** Custodial staff are in place to ensure the recommended cleaning and disinfecting frequency for K-12 schools.
- **Frequency of Cleaning and Disinfecting:** General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces (items touched by larger numbers of people) should occur at least once in a 24 hour period. Visibly dirty surfaces should be cleaned and garbage should be emptied daily.
- **Frequently Touched Surfaces and Equipment:** Everyone should practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched equipment (e.g. keyboards, sports equipment, music equipment), appliances (e.g. microwaves), and service counters (e.g. library circulation desks).
- **Spaces not used:** The requirements for daily cleaning & disinfecting do not apply to spaces/equipment not being used by students, staff, and visitors. Schools/sites should consider implementing procedures such as securing unoccupied spaces or adding sign-in sheets posted next to room entrances that help custodial staff focus cleaning on spaces that have been utilized.
- **Class materials not easily cleaned:** Objects made of materials that are not easily cleaned (e.g. playdough, foam) or typically cleaned intermittently (e.g. fabrics, soft toys, carpets/rugs in primary classrooms) can continue to be used. They should be cleaned (if possible) according to usual practices. Textbooks, paper, other paper-based products, laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. books, magazines) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) do not need to be cleaned or disinfected, or quarantined for any time period. As such, there is no need to limit distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources.
- **Bodily Fluids** (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine): Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or bodily fluids. Wash hands before and after wearing gloves. Follow regular health and safety procedure and regularly used PPE.
- **Laundry:** Schools can use regular laundering practices.
- **Dishwasher safe items:** Can be cleaned and disinfected in a dishwasher with a hot rinse cycle.

Environmental & Administrative Measures

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION CONTINUED...

- **Cleaning products and procedures:** For cleaning, use water and detergent (e.g. liquid dish soap) along with good cleaning practices (i.e. strong action on surfaces). For disinfecting, only use commercial disinfectant products provided by the District as listed on [Health Canada's hard-surface disinfectants for use against COVID-19](#). When cleaning and disinfecting:
 - 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.
 - Individuals responsible for cleaning and disinfecting should review SD22 Safe Work Procedures for [Lemon Quat](#) and [Bioesque](#) Disinfectants.

GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

Schools can resume all types of gatherings and events (including staff only gatherings and events), and there are no longer specific capacity limits. Schools and staff should use an inclusive and trauma-informed lens when planning school events and gatherings.

SPACE ARRANGEMENT

Schools can use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational opportunities.

STAFF ONLY AREAS

Staff only spaces can use preferred configurations.

VISITORS AND COMMUNITY USE

Schools should ensure visitors are aware of and follow the CDP, including personal practices. This could include posting information at the school entrance, on the school's website, and including in communications to students and families. After hours community use of facilities should occur in alignment with activities permitted as per local, regional, provincial, and federal public health recommendations and Orders. Visitor sign-in, beyond usual practices, is no longer required.

PROGRAMS, EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND SPORTS

All curriculum programs and activities should operate in alignment with school communicable disease prevention plans, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community based programs/courses). Schools should continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity.

FIELD TRIPS

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- Schools should consider guidance provided for overnight camps from BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.
- Schools should make every effort to avoid venue/locations that place additional requirements that could prevent a person from being able to participate, particularly students. If this is not possible (and the field trip/travel cannot occur otherwise), schools can require participants to confirm they are able to meet the additional requirements (e.g., are able to provide proof of vaccination).
- Students and staff may be required to follow the communicable disease prevention plan of places attended on the field trip. Where there is a conflict with the CDP, the more stringent safety protocols should be followed.

FUNDRAISERS

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers. If the fundraisers involve the sale of food, they should align with the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools.



Administrative Measures Continued

TRAVELLERS RETURNING TO CANADA

The federal government continues to outline [requirements for people travelling internationally](#).

Travellers entering Canada by land, air or water, regardless of citizenship, must follow testing and quarantine requirements to keep everyone safe.

Effective April 25, 2022 there are fewer federal requirements for travellers (and any fully vaccinated children who travelled with them) to follow for 14 days following entry into Canada. For example, these individuals are no longer required under federal law to wear a mask when in public spaces or to report their signs and symptoms. **However, unvaccinated children aged 5-11 will still need to wear a mask in public settings (including schools and day camps) for 14 days after arrival to Canada.**

- Travellers are still required to report any positive results from a government-required test if you were selected to complete one.
- Travellers must continue to wear a mask during their entire travel journey (onboard a flight or ship).
- Some federal rules may be different from the provincial or territorial rules. For example, individuals may be required to wear a mask on public transportation in some provinces. In this case, people must follow the stricter rules.
- While masks are no longer required for 14 days after arrival to Canada for most travellers, people may still wish to wear one.

TRANSPORTATION

Bussing: Individuals with symptoms of illness must not take the bus or go to school. Bus drivers, staff, volunteers, and students in K-12 may choose to wear a mask or face covering when they are on a bus. Passengers and bus drivers should practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.



PERSONAL ITEMS & SHARED ITEMS

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to not share any items that come in contact with their mouth (food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices). Shared-use items that touch the mouth should be cleaned between use by different individuals (e.g. water bottles, instrument mouth pieces). Students can use lockers and cubbies.

HEALTH AWARENESS AND ILLNESS PRACTICES

Health awareness reduces the likelihood of a person with a communicable disease coming to school/work when they are infectious. This includes a person checking regularly they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including, but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) to ensure they are not coming to school/work when they are sick (including if they are unable to participate fully in regular activities due to symptoms of illness).

School and District Responsibilities

School administrations should ensure that everyone entering a school is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness. This can be supported through communications (e.g. emails, letters to parents/staff), orientation activities (e.g. meetings, videos), and other reminders (e.g. signage on doors). COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators can be found [here](#).



School administration should also establish procedures for staff and students who become sick while at school/work.

- Some students or staff may not be able to be picked up immediately. Sites should have a place where individuals can wait comfortably and be separated from others.
- Sites should have non-medical masks available for those experiencing respiratory symptoms.
- Schools must provide supervision for younger children who become ill. Supervising staff can choose to wear a mask and/or face shield, and should wear gloves and practice diligent hand hygiene if touching bodily fluids.
- Cleaning/disinfecting the entire room after an ill person was in it (a "terminal" clean) is not required, but if the person's bodily fluids may have been in contact with surfaces/equipment while they were ill, the surface/equipment should be cleaned prior to being used by others.

Personal Measures & PPE

HEALTH AWARENESS

Everyone should practice personal health awareness and stay home when they are sick.

- **Masks and Face Coverings:** The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students, and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respected.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Everyone should be encouraged to practice hand hygiene upon school entry, before/after breaks and eating, using the washroom, and using frequently touched surfaces.
- **Respiratory Etiquette:** Everyone should be encouraged to cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- **Personal Space:** Everyone should be encouraged to respect others personal space (the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person).
- **Sharing items:** Staff and students should be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with their mouth. Shared-use items that touch the mouth should be cleaned between use by different individuals.



SYMPTOMS & TESTING

The management of COVID-19 in the community is now more aligned with the management of other serious respiratory infections. Staff, students, or other persons in the school setting who are exhibiting symptoms of 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 their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen).

The When to Get Tested for COVID-19 resource or the B.C. Self-Assessment Tool provides more information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19. If you are unsure or concerned about your symptoms, connect with your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

Staff, children, or other persons in the school setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the BCCDC website 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.

Students and staff may still attend school/work if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness and/or has tested positive for COVID-19, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. BCCDC has more information for those considered a close contact, which are usually people from the same household.



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings

- The decision to wear a mask, face shield, or other personal protective equipment (PPE), beyond when it is recommended 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.
- Schools will continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill at school.

PPE When Providing Student Services

- 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 needed for general communicable disease prevention.

Supportive Environments

PERSONAL PREVENTION PRACTICES

Schools can support students to practice personal preventative measures by:

- Having staff model preventative measures and behaviours
- Sharing reliable information, including from the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, to parents, families and caregivers.
- Promoting safety measures in the school through the use of visual aids.
- Utilizing positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in personal preventive practices aligned with existing professional practices to address behaviour. Approaches should not exclude students from participating in school or potentially result in stigma.
- Utilizing a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities and interacting with other staff and students, including considerations around respecting other's personal space.

POSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE APPROACHES

Schools should implement psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice alongside physical health and safety measures. See the [K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#) for more information. Staff should consider the [Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal webinar](#) for more information, ideas, and strategies to use to create compassionate spaces for students.

SUPPORTS FOR STAFF

- [Employee Family Assistance Program](#)
- SD22 Human Resources - if you are asked to self-isolate, if you are sick, or if you need any additional supports
- [BCTF Health and Wellness Program](#)
- CUPE Joint Early Intervention Services (JEIS) Program - contact [CUPE](#) for further information
- Site-base Joint OH&S committees - at sites to support all workers, responsible for reviewing site safety plans, meeting, inspecting sites routinely, & responding to worker concerns
- [SD22 Safety Website](#) - training, safe procedures, forms, manuals
- [First Nations Health Authority](#)
- [Safe and Healthy Schools Resources](#)

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

This district plan was developed in alignment with public health direction, engagement with multiple partner groups, and the provincial guidelines.

This plan is based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., the latest research, and guidance from the Provincial health officer.

We will continue to update the plan, and will inform our SD22 community as needed. The most current information will be available on the [SD22 Website](#). Staff will be emailed if/when a new copy of the plan is created. Parents and students will be informed through their schools.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR SUGGESTIONS

Students and parents should direct any questions, concerns, or suggestions to their teachers and school administration. Staff are encouraged to speak to their supervisor(s) for further information, or if they have questions, concerns, or suggestions.

