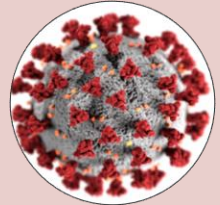


School District No. 59
COVID-19
Communicable Disease
Protocols for Schools

K-12 Education Recovery Plan



(Effective March 19, 2022)

COVID-19 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

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COVID-19 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

Overview

The Ministry of Education has shifted from a pandemic response to a recovery. This recovery is guided by health and safety guidelines, measures, protocols, and orders as well as the principles developed for continuity of learning during the pandemic. This Protocol is meant to address a return to face to face instruction.

Before a child is able to attend school, it is expected that parents/caregivers will:

- complete a daily health check with their child, checking for symptoms of COVID-19 each day prior to dropping their child off at the school site. **Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the [Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick](#) resource for daily assessment of symptoms.** The parental check will include checking for fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea and vomiting, sore throat, loss of appetite, extreme fatigue, headache, body aches and diarrhea.
- **Keep child at home when sick.**
- provide their child with a water bottle (water fountains may not be available).

All Students in Grades K – 12

- **The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice. A person's choice is to supported and respected.**

COVID-19 Preventative Measures for Staff



- Complete a daily health check, checking for symptoms of COVID-19 each day prior to coming to work. Staff can utilize the **[Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick](#) resource for daily assessment of symptoms.** The health check will include checking for fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, nausea and vomiting, sore throat, loss of appetite, extreme fatigue, headache, body aches and diarrhea.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, going to the washroom, before eating or preparing food, and entering the building. If sinks are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- **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. Schools should have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill while at school.**
- Staff will work with the students to help them understand and practice coughing and sneezing etiquette; reminding students to cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue, and then throw out the tissue if used and wash hands or use hand sanitizer afterwards.
- Staff will work with the students to help them understand and practice avoiding touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through. 2 metre physical distancing is not required.

COVID-19 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plan Reviews

Schools must regularly review COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plans and should do so with their Site Committees and address areas where there are identified gaps in implementation. Schools are to use the BCCDC COVID-19 School Communicable Disease Checklist (See Appendix C) to support these plan reviews. **Updated plans are to be posted on the school website and at the school.**

COVID-19 Procedures for Staff - Multiple Sites

In order to support students, families and staff, School District #59 has many staff who work at multiple sites including but not limited to the district learning services team (speech, elementary counsellors, educational psychologist, literacy teachers, etc.) and on call teachers (TTOCs and TOCs) and on call educational assistants (EA). These staff work in multiple schools and with multiple learning groups.

1. When entering schools, staff who work at multiple sites must follow all school COVID-19 protocols and procedures (daily health checks, entrance and location routines, hand hygiene, sign in, etc.). Staff must familiarize themselves with these protocols before going to a school.
2. When possible, staff who work at multiple sites can consider participating virtually in meetings with others if it meets their job requirements and responsibilities.
3. Staff who work at multiple sites must schedule their visits with schools to ensure space and availability for working with students, families and staff. Schools will designate the contact person (for example: administrator, learning assistance teacher, etc.). In addition, they need to coordinate with other staff when possible to limit the number of outside staff in a school at a given time.
4. TTOC, TOC and EA substitutes will need to follow all COVID-19 Communicable Disease Protocols:
 - a. District administration/staff and/or school-based administrators will meet with TTOC, TOC and EA substitutes to review district and school COVID-19 Communicable Disease Protocols prior to working at school sites.

COVID-19 Procedures for Community Agencies

School and district staff also work closely with community agencies such as the Ministry of Children and Families, Children and Youth Mental Health, Children and Youth with Special Needs, etc. in order to support student and family needs. These community agencies are an integral part of the school team for many students and families and may need to come into the school to be a part of this team.

1. When entering schools, community agencies must follow all school COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plan protocols and procedures (daily health checks, entrance routines, hand hygiene, sign in, etc.). Schools must ensure that the community agency is familiar with these protocols prior to coming to the school.
2. When possible, schools may connect with the community agency virtually.
3. Schools will designate a contact person (for example: administrator, learning assistance teacher, etc.) to schedule times and locations to meet with outside agency in the school building.

COVID-19 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

COVID-19 Procedures for Students with Diversabilities

Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student. When staff are working with a student indoors, **they should follow the standard risk assessment methods to determine what PPE is needed for general communicable disease prevention in accordance with routine practices.** Additional personal protective equipment is not required beyond that used as part of the personal care routine normally encountered in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

School Gatherings and Events

For school gatherings and events that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing a single activity) from the same school (but members of the school community beyond staff, students and necessary volunteers are not attending), there is not a specific capacity limit.

School-led Gatherings and Events with Visitors	
While PHO Gatherings and Events Order is in Place	After PHO Gatherings and Events Order is lifted (expected end of day April 7, 2022)
Schools should not implement proof of vaccination requirements and indoor capacity should not exceed 50 people or 50 % operating capacity (whichever is greater).	All school gatherings and events can return to 100% capacity.

Staff Only Spaces

There is no longer a capacity limit for indoor staff spaces (i.e. staffrooms, photocopy rooms, etc.). Staff are encouraged to spread out as much as possible in the available space. For gatherings (e.g. meetings, pro-d, etc.) respect room occupancy limits, use available space to spread people out, and consider virtual options.

Visitors

Schools are responsible for ensuring that visitors are aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements, and **should** have completed a daily health check, prior to entering the school.

- Information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors should be posted by the entrance to the school, on the school's website and included in communications to students and families.

Schools can return to routine sign in/sign out practices for all visitors and staff who are not typically onsite (e.g. TTOCs, itinerant teachers/specialists, maintenance or IT personnel, district/authority administrators). Schools do not need to keep a list of the date, names and contact information of visitors for communicable disease prevention purposes.

- **Schools can return to routine pick-up/drop-off practices though should still consider strategies to prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.**
- **Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others' personal space on school grounds, including outside.**

After hours community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:

- Use must occur in line with those activities permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders

COVID-19 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

- Diligent hand hygiene
- **Respiratory etiquette**
- Ensuring participants stay home if they are feeling ill
- Where possible, limiting building access to only those areas required for the purpose of the activity

Volunteers in Schools:

Volunteers are no longer restricted to those essential to the running of the school.

Student Drop Off/Pick Up and Breaks:

- **Schools can return to routine pick-up/drop-off practices though should still consider strategies to prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.**
- Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others' personal space on school grounds, including outside.
- Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when they enter/exit the school.

Playgrounds and Outdoor Activities

- Take students outside more often.
- Reassure students, parents and caregivers that playgrounds are a safe environment, and encourage appropriate personal hygiene practices before, during, and after outdoor play.
- Spread people out into different areas.

Washrooms

- Schools will develop a washroom use plan for students to prevent crowding.
- Regularly review the COVID-19 handwashing guidelines (as posted) with students.

Food for Students

- Students must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before handling food.
- Students are not to share food items or contact food items that belong to others.
- Microwave ovens must be treated like other frequently touched items and cleaned and disinfected.
- Students should consume food items at their individual designated work area and clean the area when finished.
- All beverage and food containers should be clearly labeled with the student name.

Workspaces for Students

Schools can return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches, though should still consider implementing strategies that help to create space between people and support students and staff using a trauma informed approach:

- Avoid close greetings (**e.g. hugs, handshakes**). Regularly remind students about keeping their **"hands to yourself"**.
- **Remind students and staff about respecting others' personal space.**
- **Use available space to spread people out, both in the learning environment and for gatherings and events where possible.**
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and washrooms.

Physical Education

Spread out students and staff within available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible.

- Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.
 - Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.
 - Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

Music Classes

Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after music equipment use.

- Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

School Sports

Intra and inter-school programs, activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices, games), sports and events can continue in alignment with the guidance in this document regarding capacity at gatherings and events.

Sport activities should be held outside whenever possible.

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:

- For transportation, including school bus transportation and public transit, see guidance in the transportation section in this document.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines.
- Alignment with applicable local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.
- 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).

Emergency Evacuation Drill

Schools should continue to practice emergency (e.g. fire, lockdown) and evacuation drills, including the six required annual fire drills as per BC Fire Code 2.8.3.2, and modify current procedures to adhere to health and safety guidelines (e.g., providing additional muster spots to prevent crowding/congestion).

- Staff should be notified in advance of emergency/evacuation drills (i.e. no “surprise” drills)
- The BC Fire Code requires schools to conduct “total evacuation fire drills” involving all occupants in the building. Partial evacuations involving smaller groups of students would not comply with the fire drill requirements of the Fire Code.
- Schools must continue to update their fire safety plans on an annual basis, as per the BC Fire Code, to “ensure it takes account of the changes in use and other characteristics of the building” (such as current pandemic-related protocols). School fire safety plans, including fire drill procedures, should be developed in cooperation with the local fire department and other regulatory authorities.
- Emergency procedures may require modification to adhere to communicable disease plans (e.g. designating additional muster locations to reduce crowding where required, making efforts to minimize involuntary physical contact between participants, etc.). Schools may also need to consult with their local medical health officer for guidance on current public health Orders, which may affect site specific emergency and evacuation procedures.
 - In the event of an actual emergency, emergency procedures must take precedence over COVID-19 preventive measures.

Staff Will Promote Good Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette with Students

Reinforce and remind the rule of “hands to yourself”.

Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer, particularly:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home.
- Before/after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).
- Between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom).
- Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student’s desk or locker).
- After using the washroom.
- After handling common resources/equipment/supplies or pets.
- Before and after using an indoor learning, space used by multiple learning groups (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.)
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

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Staff Should Wash Hands Frequently

Staff should wash hands or use hand sanitizer:

- When they arrive at school, before they go home. Before/after breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.
- Before and after giving medication to a student or self.
- After using the washroom.
- After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).
- After cleaning tasks, or handling garbage.
- After removing gloves.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Staffroom and Breaks

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before you go into the staffroom.
- Indoor staff only spaces (i.e. staffrooms, photocopy rooms, etc.) may return to defined capacity limits. Staff are encouraged to spread out as much as possible in the available space.
- Bring a lunch/snack that does not require a lot of preparation (to limit microwave use, surface use, utensil use, etc.).
- Clean the areas, surfaces, appliances, etc. that you use in the staffroom.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer again before you go back to your classroom, office or workspace.
- Do not share food or drink.

Other Shared or Specialty Spaces

- Administrators will develop procedures for use of other shared spaces within their individual buildings (libraries, gyms, shops, etc.). Procedures for these spaces must be in line with District protocols.

Maintain Cleaning/Disinfecting Procedures

The following frequency guidelines must be adhered to when cleaning and disinfecting:

- General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, **at least once in a 24-hour period.**
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Empty garbage containers daily.

The requirements for daily cleaning and disinfecting outlined above do not apply to spaces/equipment that are not being used by students, staff or visitors. Many schools may have implemented procedures such as sign-in sheets posted next to room entrances that help custodial staff focus cleaning/disinfecting activities on those spaces that have been utilized by staff or students.



Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Items used by larger numbers of students and staff, including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet handles, toilet handles.
 - Limiting access to water fountains is no longer recommended. Hand hygiene should be practiced before and after use.
 - **School communicable disease plans should not include restricting access to water, washrooms or other spaces that support student learning and well-being (e.g. gymnasiums, libraries, support rooms, etc.). Schools should return to full operation of all spaces in alignment with the protocols outlined in this document.**
- Shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for science labs, kitchen equipment for culinary programs, sewing machines and sewing equipment for home economic programs, PE/sports equipment, music equipment, etc.)
- Appliances (staff and students can share the use of appliances and other objects, but treat items like microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, photocopiers or laminators as frequently touched surfaces)
- Service counters (e.g., office service window, library circulation desk)

Frequently-touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use. Carpets and rugs (e.g. in Kindergarten and StrongStart classes) can also be used.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. children's books or magazines) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) can be contaminated if handled by a person with COVID-19; however, the risk is low. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, or for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

Universal Precautions

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you have had contact with blood or other body fluids, after going to the washroom, before preparing or eating food, and after removing latex gloves. Use hand lotion to help keep your hands from becoming chapped or irritated. Intact skin is your first defense against infection!
- Wear gloves when in contact with blood or other body fluids, excrement or non-intact skin.
- Wear gloves when in contact with articles such as clothing or surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or body fluids.
- Replace torn or punctured gloves immediately.
- DO NOT clean up blood or other bodily fluids from surfaces, call administrator or speak with the on-site custodian regarding clean-up
- If you have cuts or open sores on your skin, cover them with a plastic bandage.

Illness and Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols

The School District has developed local protocols that:

- Ensure staff and other adults (e.g. parents, caregivers, visitors) entering the school/worksites are aware of their responsibility to complete a daily health check prior to entering the school/worksites (e.g. emails/letters to parents and staff, orientation video, signage on doors) and to stay home if they are sick.
- Clearly communicate with parents/caregivers their responsibility to complete a daily health check with their child, and keep them home from school if they are sick.
 - Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school/work to be sent home as soon as possible.
 - 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 is separated from others, **and should have non-medical masks available for those experiencing respiratory symptoms who would like to wear one.**
 - Schools must provide supervision for younger children. Supervising staff **can choose to** wear a non-medical mask **and/or** 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 bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.) 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.
- Establish procedures that allow for students and staff to return to school/work in line with the guidance in the Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms section.
 - This is to ensure students and staff who are not sick are not kept out of school/away from work longer than necessary.

Schools and districts should not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practices).

Daily Health Check

A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious.

- Parents and caregivers **should** assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.
 - **Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the [Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick](#) resource for daily assessment of symptoms.**
- Staff and other adults **should** complete a daily health check prior to entering the school.
- If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school.

Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms

Stay Home When Required to Self-Isolate

Students, staff or other adults **must stay home if they are required to self-isolate.**

Symptoms of Illness and Return to School

Students, staff or other adults should stay at home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:

- [When to Get a COVID -19 Test](#)

- **Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick** resource
- Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the [BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool](#), call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.

When a staff, student or other adult can return to school depends on **if they have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or improvement of their symptoms**. See Appendix A – COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing and Return to School for more information **regarding what to do when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms**.

Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g. seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and should not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

Students or staff may still attend school 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**.

Northern Health Online Clinic and Information Line: [1-844-645-7811](tel:1-844-645-7811)

Protocol if a Student/Staff Develops Symptoms of Illness at School

If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, schools will:

- Provide the student/staff with a non-medical mask if they don't have one (exceptions should be made for students and staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons).
- Provide the student/staff with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others.
 - The student is to be supervised and cared for, when separated.
- Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible.
 - Contact the student's parent/caregiver with a request to have their child picked up as soon as possible.
- Clean and disinfect the areas the student/staff used.
- Request that the student/staff stay home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have resolved.

Students, staff or other adults should stay home when sick.

Protocol in the Event of a Confirmed Covid-19 Case in a School

The emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant of COVID-19 has necessitated changes in public health management. With higher levels of community transmission, a shorter virus incubation period, and the increased use of rapid antigen testing, contact tracing and close contact notification by public health is no longer effective to minimize spread of COVID-19.

Public health has transitioned to individual self-management (i.e., individuals care for themselves, engaging with health care providers when needed), with public health focused on identifying and responding to larger clusters and outbreaks. Individuals who test positive are to notify those they live with or have had intimate contact with. **They do not need to notify the school or others at school.**

There is no role for screening students or staff for symptoms, checking temperatures, or COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health-care professionals.

The District and school personnel must not provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed to by public health.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

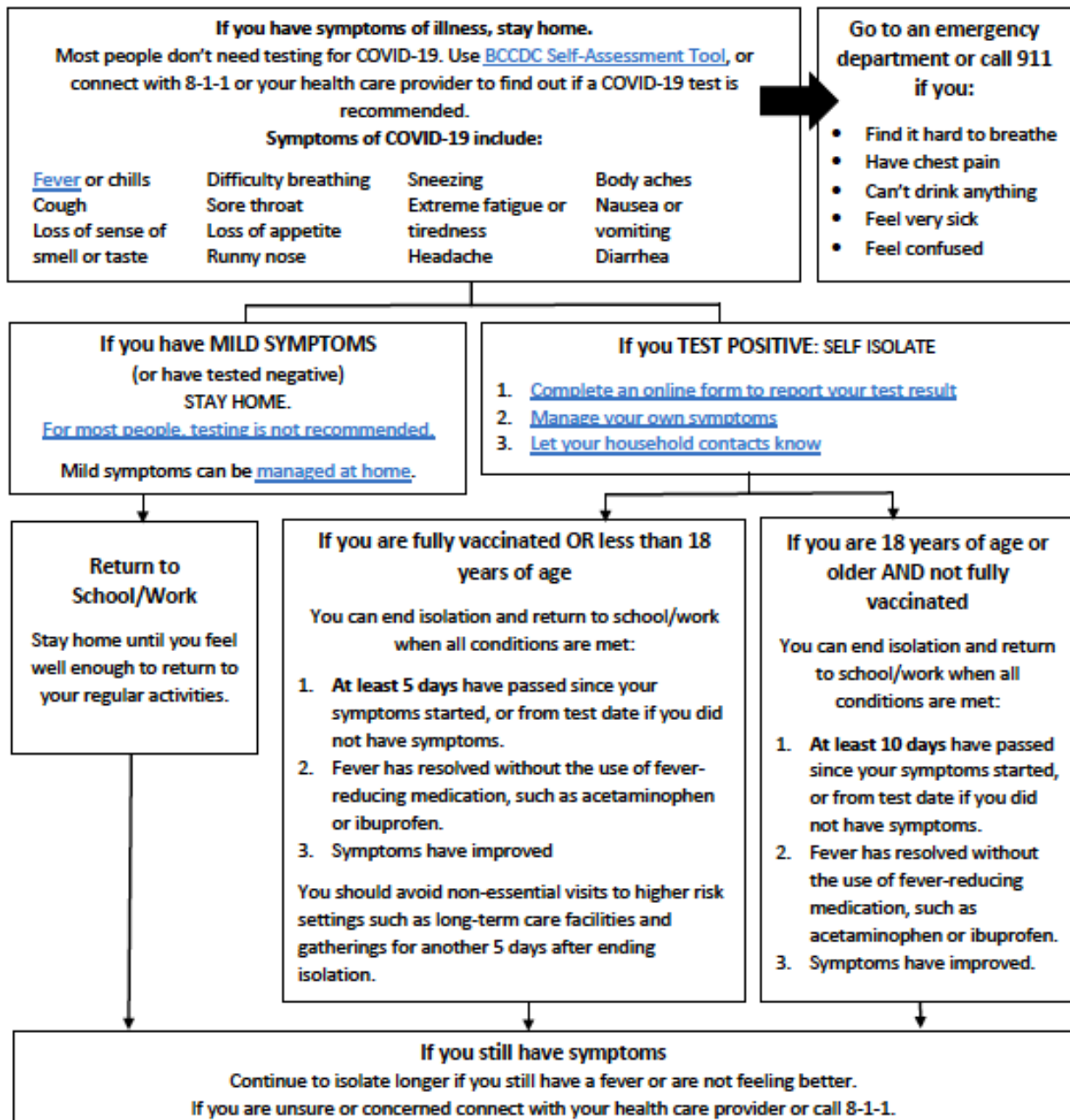
The decisions to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respected.

Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one or who become ill while at school.

Supporting Documents:

- **BC's K-12 Education Recovery Plan**: Updated August 24th, 2020 provides direction to boards of education and independent school authorities to deliver educational programs and supports in line with provincial pandemic recovery efforts in the 2021/22 school year by:
- **Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Setting**: Updated March 10, 2022 to provide detailed information and guidelines pertaining to health and safety in K-12 schools.
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>
- **BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings**: Updated March 10, 2022 to provide health and safety standards for schools to operate.
http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

Appendix A: Daily Health Check & What To Do When Sick



What to do if someone is sick in your household:

You can continue to attend school if someone in your household is sick and/or self-isolating as long as you do not have any symptoms of illness and feel well. This includes if they have tested positive for COVID-19. Ensure you closely monitor yourself (or your child) for symptoms of illness and stay home if you feel unwell. The best way to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for anyone ages 5 and up. Register now at:

[Getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca](https://getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca)