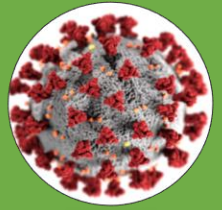


School District No. 59

COVID-19: Mandatory School Protocols

K-12 Education Restart Plan: Stage 2

(Revised September 3rd, 2020)



The Ministry of Education has a five-stage approach for resuming in-class instruction. Each stage 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 Stage 2, which is a return to face to face instruction.

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

- check their child for symptoms of COVID-19 each day prior to dropping their child off at the school site. The parental check will include checking for fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, muscle aches (common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms). **Children who exhibit symptoms will be expected to stay home until they have been assessed by a healthcare provider to exclude COVID-19, or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.**
- parents and caregivers must complete a daily health check with their child.
- provide their child with a water bottle (water fountains may not be available).

COVID-19 Preventative Measures for Staff



- Stay home when you are sick. If you have a fever, a new cough or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1. If you are having common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms, **stay home until you have been assessed by a healthcare provider to exclude COVID-19, or other infectious diseases AND your symptoms have resolved.**
- 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.
- Maintain physical distancing and avoid close contact with people who are sick. Wear non-medical masks in high traffic and common areas, such as hallways or buses, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with soap and water.

Reinforcing Preventative Measures for Students

- Principals will clearly communicate with parents and caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school, and to keep their children at home if they are ill. There is no school role for screening students for symptoms, checking temperatures, or COVID-19 testing. Such activities are reserved for health care professionals.
- Staff will work with the students to help them understand and practice safe physical distancing of six feet/two metres between self and others while in common areas. Younger students should be supported to have minimized physical contact with one another.
- Staff will remind students in middle and secondary schools that they are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic and common areas, such as hallways, concession, and buses, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- 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.

Cohorts

Cohorts reduce the number of in-person, close interactions a person has in school without requiring physical distancing to consistently be practiced.

- In **elementary and middle schools**, a cohort can be composed of up to **60** people.
- In **secondary schools**, a cohort can be composed of up to **120** people.
- Cohorts can be composed of students and staff.

Cohorts are smaller in elementary and middle schools due to the recognition that younger children are less able to consistently implement personal measures such as hand hygiene, reducing physical contact and recognizing and articulating symptoms of illness.

Cohorts are larger in secondary schools due to the increased ability of children in that setting to be able to consistently minimize physical contact, practice hand hygiene, ensure physical distance where necessary and recognize and articulate symptoms of illness.

School administrators will determine the composition of the cohorts. The composition of the cohort should remain consistent for all activities that occur in schools, including but not limited to learning and breaks (lunch, recess, classroom changes, etc).

Within the cohort, minimized physical contact will be encouraged, but a two-metre physical distance does not need to be maintained.

Cohort composition can be changed at the start of a new quarter, semester or term in the school year. Outside of these, composition should be changed as minimally as possible, except where required to support optimal school functioning. This may include learning, operational or student health and safety considerations.

Consistent seating arrangements are encouraged within cohorts where practical. This will assist public health should contact tracing need to occur.

School administrators must keep up-to-date lists of all members of a cohort to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.

Interacting with Cohorts

Schools will minimize the number of adults (staff and others) who interact with cohorts as much as practical while supporting learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment.

Those outside of a cohort must practice physical distance when interacting with the cohort. For example, a secondary school teacher can teach multiple cohorts but should maintain physical distance from students and other staff as much as possible. In an elementary or secondary school, two classes from different cohorts can be in the same learning space at the same time if a two-metre distance is able to be maintained between people from different cohorts.

Cohorts (cont.)

In **elementary schools**, students can socialize with peers in different cohorts if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact or if they are indoors and can maintain physical distance. Elementary-aged students are less able to consistently maintain physical distance. Outdoors is a lower-risk environment than indoors.

In **middle and secondary schools**, students can socialize with peers in different cohorts if they can maintain physical distance. Middle and secondary-school students are expected to be capable of consistently maintaining physical distance when it is required. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student should socialize within their cohort or where they can be supported to physically distance.

Unless they are part of the same cohort, staff and other adults are expected to maintain physical distance from each other at all times. This includes during break times and in meetings.

Students from different cohorts may be required to be together to receive beneficial social supports, programs or services (e.g. meal programs, after school clubs, etc.). Within these supports or services, it is expected that cohorts and physical distance are maintained as much as is practical to do so while still ensuring the support, program or service continues. This does not apply to extracurricular activities where physical distance between cohorts must be maintained.

Elementary and middle schools are likely able to implement cohorts without reducing the number of individuals typically within the school. Secondary schools may use both approaches: implement cohorts and reduce the number of individuals typically within the school to enable physical distance for out-of-cohort interactions. This may be necessary due to the larger number of people and the increased frequency of classroom exchanges that typically occur within secondary schools.

School Gatherings

School gatherings may occur within the cohort; however, these gatherings should happen minimally.

Gatherings must not exceed the maximum cohort size in the setting, plus the minimum number of additional people required (e.g. school staff, visitors, etc.) to meet the gathering's purpose and intended outcome. Additional people should be minimized as much as is practical to do so.

Schools should seek virtual alternatives for larger gatherings and assemblies.

Other Strategies

The following strategies should be implemented wherever possible in the K-12 school setting:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes).
- Encourage students and staff to not touch their faces.
- Spread people out as much as is practical to do so.
- Consider different classroom and learning environment configurations to allow distance between students and adults (e.g., different desk and table formations).
- For middle and secondary schools, consider arranging desks/tables so students are not facing each other and using consistent seating arrangements.
- Consider strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.
- Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
- Take students outside more often.

COVID-19 MANDATORY PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

Other Strategies (cont.)

- Organize learning activities outside including snack time, place-based learning and unstructured time.
- Take activities that involve movement, including those for physical health and education, outside.
- Playgrounds are a safe environment. Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play.
- For elementary students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items.
- For middle and secondary students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
- All visitors should confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering.
- Schools should keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors who enter the school.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage greater space between students and staff.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

Parents, caregivers, health-care providers, volunteers and other non-staff adults (e.g. visitors) entering the school should be prioritized to those supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing (e.g. teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.).

Student Drop Off/Pick Up:

- Students will use designated entrance(s) and exit(s). These are site-specific.
- Students will maintain physical distancing as they enter/exit the school.
- Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when they enter/exit the school.
- Parents must drop off and pick up their students at their designated time (site specific).
- Schools will have further site-specific procedures for student arrival/exit at school.
- Schools will develop site specific procedures for students arriving and departing by bus.

Washrooms

- Schools will develop a washroom use plan for students in keeping with physical distancing expectations.
- Regularly review the COVID-19 handwashing guidelines (as posted) with students.
- Washrooms will be cleaned twice per day.

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 frequently.
- Students will need to 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.
- Students are discouraged from leaving the school to pick up food at breaks to limit potential exposure in schools.

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.
- Limit the number of students on certain pieces of playground equipment.

COVID-19 MANDATORY PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

Maintain Cleaning/Disinfecting Procedures

Regular cleaning and disinfecting of objects and high-touch surfaces is very important to help to prevent the transmission of viruses from contaminated objects and surfaces.

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least twice a day.
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch electronic devices (i.e., keyboards, tablets, smartboards).
- Soap and water will be used to clean work spaces.
- Regularly clean and sanitize items that are designed to be shared.
- Washrooms will be cleaned twice daily, keeping in line with high touch surface area protocols.
- Items that are not easily cleaned (e.g. fabric or soft items) will be limited.
- Garbage containers will be emptied daily.
- Schools may have rotating day-custodian coverage to disinfect common areas periodically throughout the day.

Staffroom and Breaks

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before you go into the staffroom.
- Whenever in shared spaces, maintain appropriate physical distancing.
- Bring your own lunch. We are asking you not to leave the building for lunch to limit potential exposure. If you have to leave, make sure you follow the same protocols that you did when you arrived.
- Bring a lunch/snack that does not require a lot of preparation (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.

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 cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.)
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

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).
- Between different learning environments (e.g. outdoor-indoor transitions, gym to classroom).
- 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.

COVID-19 MANDATORY PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

Workspaces for Students

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes). Regularly remind students about keeping their “hands to yourself”.
- If possible, organize students into smaller groups that stay together throughout the day.
- Strive to minimize the number of different teachers and EAs that interact with groups of students throughout the day.
- Stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between students and staff.
 - For younger students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items.
 - For adolescent students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and washrooms.
- Assemblies and other school-wide events should be held virtually to avoid large gatherings of people in one space.

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.

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 Protocol

Personal Measures: Stay Home When Sick

- Any student, staff or other person within the school who has symptoms of COVID-19 **OR** travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak **must stay home and self-isolate**, including children of essential service workers.
- Any student, staff, or other person within the school who has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms are expected to seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms, provided the student/staff is asymptomatic. It is expected the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider.
- Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they are expected to seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. **If a child has any symptoms, they must not go to school.**
- Staff and other adults must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school. **If staff or any adult has any symptoms, they must not enter the school.**

Those unsure of if they or a student should self-isolate or be tested for COVID-19 are expected to use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).

You are expected to contact a health care provider (a family physician or nurse practitioner) or call 8-1-1 for to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.

Staff and students should not return to school until they have been assessed to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.

If you have further concerns, please contact the local public health unit to seek further guidance (250-719-6500).

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.

If a staff or student in a school is confirmed by public health as positive for COVID-19, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students' families should be notified.

Schools 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.

What to Do if a Student or Staff Member Develops Symptoms

If a Student Develops Any Symptoms of Illness

Parents must keep the student at home.

IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL:

If a child begins to exhibit symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, muscle aches):

Staff must take the following steps:

1. Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.
2. Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.
3. Where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance from the ill student. If not possible, staff should wear a non-medical mask or face covering if available and tolerated or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.
4. Provide the student with a non-medical mask or tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
5. Avoid touching the student's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.
6. Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.
7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).

Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.

Parents or caregivers must keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, AND their symptoms have resolved.

If a Staff Member Develops Any Symptoms of Illness

Staff must stay home.

IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT WORK:

Staff should go home as soon as possible.

If unable to leave immediately:

- If you start to develop symptoms of common cold, influenza or COVID-19 while at work, let your supervisor know, and separate yourself into an area away from others.
- Use a tissue or mask to cover your nose and mouth until you are able to leave the school.
- Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was separated and any areas used by them (e.g. classroom, washroom, common areas).
- **Staff must be excluded from work and stay home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, AND their symptoms have resolved.**
- If you are not sure whether you should stay home use the self-assessment tool at: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19>

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Non-medical masks are required to be used in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance and is in close proximity to a person outside of their learning group or household.

Students in Middle and Secondary school are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic and common areas, such as hallways and buses, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased personal contact from school staff).

No student needs to wear a non-medical mask if they do not tolerate it.

Staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in high traffic and common areas, such as hallways or buses, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. itinerant teachers/specialists interacting with multiple learning group). Staff can also wear a mask, a face covering or a face shield within their classroom or learning group if that is their personal preference.

Schools and the District will have non-medical masks available for staff and students, including anyone who becomes ill while at school.

Wearing a non-medical mask, face covering, or face shields outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice for students and adults. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Managing students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care may require staff providing health services or other health care providers to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune suppressed student.

- In community based clinical settings where there is low incidence and prevalence of COVID-19, additional personal protective equipment over and above that required for normal practice is not required. The same guidance is applicable to staff providing health services and other health care providers who are providing health services in schools. However, if a person providing health services assesses that need for personal protective equipment beyond routine practices following a point of care risk assessment, it should be worn.
- Staff providing health care services and other health care providers are required to wear a mask when working in close proximity with students.
- Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine the child's level of risk.

COVID-19 MANDATORY PROTOCOL: SCHOOL SITE PROCEDURES

Supporting Documents:

- **[BC's K-12 Education Restart Plan](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-restart-plan.pdf)**: Updated July 29th to outline the five-step approach for resuming in-class instruction.
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-restart-plan.pdf>
- **[Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Setting](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf)**: Updated August 28th 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>
- **[WorkSafeBC K-12 Education Protocols](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/education)**: Updated August 11th to provide guidance and protocols for returning to operation for K-12 education providers.
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/education>
- **[BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf)**: Updated July 29th to provide health and safety standards for schools to operate in Stage 3.
http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

