

Nakusp Secondary School Safety Guidelines for COVID-19

This document has been created by Nakusp Secondary School to serve as a guide to keep SD10 employees, students, parents, and community partners safe in this time of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

This document outlines safety information and protocols that need to be considered. This plan will be updated, as necessary, to continue following guidelines outlined by the Provincial Medical Health Officer and the Minister of Education.

We should all continue to aspire to support learning and a positive, healthy, and safe environment. If staff or students are forgetful of these guidelines, gently remind and encourage them to follow through with best practices for the good of all. As Dr. Bonnie Henry says, "Be kind, be calm, and be safe."

Please ensure you have the most recent version and that this plan is posted at the worksite.

Introduction

In September 2020, all schools in British Columbia will re-open in Stage 2, with the goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students under revised public health guidelines to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Having students in the classroom helps to minimize learning gaps and provide the academic, social, and emotional supports essential for learning. Schools and school districts will also have the necessary plans in place to be able to shift quickly between stages if, and when, required.

Guiding Principles

The September start-up plan will be continued to be supported by the four foundational principles established at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, teachers, and staff
- Provide the services needed to support the children of our essential workers (ESWs)
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
- Provide continuity of educational opportunity for all students

Goals

- Maximize in-class learning for all students
- Use cohorts (learning groups) to reduce the number of close, in-person interactions
- Minimize the number of contacts, thereby reducing the risk of transmission and ensuring more effective contact tracing by health authorities
- Work with community partners to discuss their wishes, collaborate on plans and determine how the school district can support our learners

Schools are operating under the guidelines established by the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control to ensure the safety of students and education professionals. These guidelines include controlling access to buildings, maintaining physical distancing amongst staff, implementing distancing strategies for students who are in schools, and maintaining good hygiene practices.

Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this NSS COVID-19 Safety Plan includes:

- 1) Ensuring staff members are aware of Public Health protocols and school district procedures that allow them to safely care for children, colleagues, and themselves.
- 2) Informing school district employees on best practices to reduce the risk of infections through the transmission of COVID-19; and
- 3) Ensuring all school district employees are aware of their responsibility to ensure the health and safety of themselves, other staff, and students.

The site plan for Nakusp Secondary is a synthesis of the following documents. Please click on the links if you require more information.

School District 10

<https://sd10.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SD-10-Stage-2-Restart-Plan-August-2020.pdf>

BC Government

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-restart-plan.pdf>

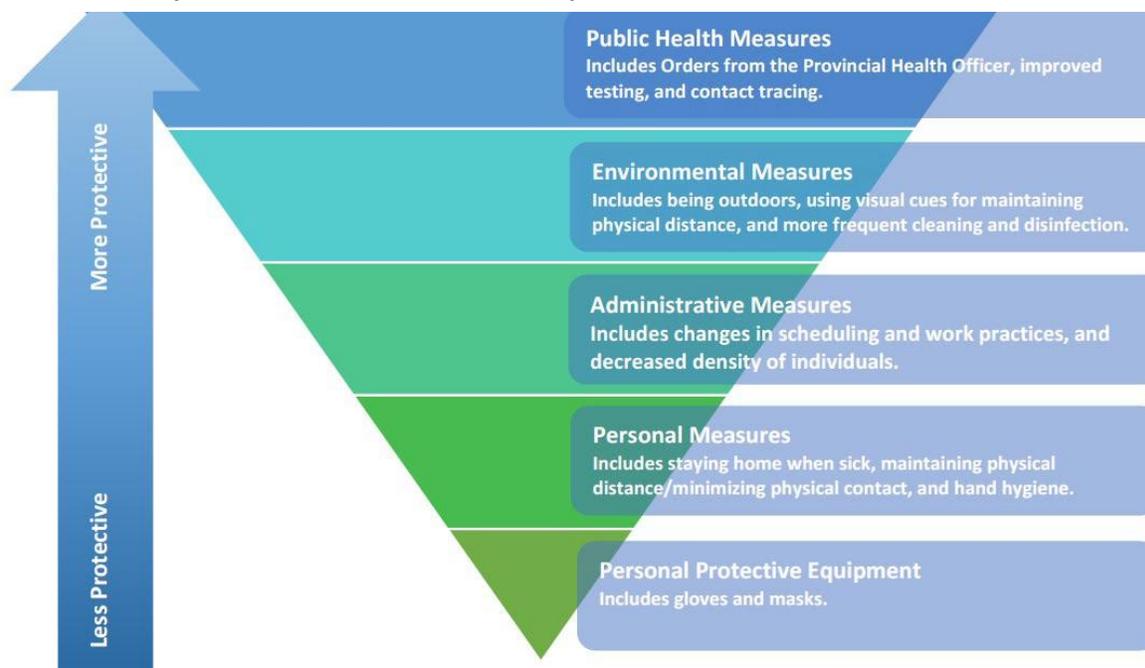
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school>

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

BCCDC:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/schools>

The Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease



Workers' Rights and Responsibilities

Everyone in the workplace has distinct responsibilities regarding health and safety. Employers, supervisors, workers, and contractors have a role to play in keeping the workplace safe.

- 1) The right to know about hazards in the workplace.
- 2) The right to participate in health and safety activities in the workplace.
- 3) The right to refuse unsafe work without getting punished or fired.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Learning Groups (*previously known as cohorts*)

Dividing into Learning Groups (or Cohorts) is a requirement by the Public Health Office and BC Centre for Disease Control as a powerful measure to limit the risk in transmission or spread of the virus and also conduct rapid contact tracing should a case of COVID-19 be confirmed. In this way, only the cohort rather than the whole school would need to self-quarantine if a case were confirmed. “Fewer faces” as Dr. Henry tells us is an important public health safety measure.

Variance from the learning group size of 120 people for secondary schools has been approved by the Medical Health Officer at Interior Health Authority in accordance with BCCDC/PHO guidelines given the specific context of our small rural schools and small communities as follows:

Nakusp Secondary School (140 students and staff) have been granted a variance approved to have the entire secondary school operate as one learning group. This means that we can work and operate freely without the required physical distancing, but it should be maintained where possible while ensuring hand hygiene and no physical contact. Learning groups (Cohorts) are designed to reduce the number of in- person, close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions a person has in school without requiring physical distancing to consistently be practiced.

Enhanced Cleaning

Schools will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC’s Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document.

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf

- 1) General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least **once a day**.
- 2) Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least **twice a day**.
 - These include doorknobs, light switches, bathroom faucets, front desk counter, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, keyboards, and manipulatives.
 - Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- 3) Custodial staff will use common, commercially available detergents and disinfectant products and closely follow the instructions on the label.
- 4) Classrooms will have disinfectant wipes available to spot clean any surfaces, equipment or materials that are used repeatedly (Chromebook, pencil sharpeners, shared equipment).
- 5) Physically managed spaces to reduce items that are not easily cleaned (e.g. fabric or soft items) or have limited use.
- 6) There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper, or other paper- based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources to students. **Laminated paper-based products should be cleaned and disinfected daily if they are touched by multiple people.**
- 7) Other staff may also clean areas as needed to maintain a clean environment:
 - Cleaning supplies are provided by the school district. **Do not bring cleaners from home.**
 - Do not take school materials home to clean.
- 8) If cleaning is required, staff should notify the principal or school office.

School Entry and Exit

- 1) Access to the school by non-school district personnel, including parents, is via the front doors only.
 - Other than district staff, school administrator must approve all visits further into the building.
- 2) Designated entrances for students and visitors will only be the front doors and the bus hallway doors (bus hallway door will be locked by 9 AM)
 - Staff and students can exit at any door to reduce contact when passing.
- 3) Signage on designated entrances and exits to provide instructions and public health information.

Visitors and Access to Schools

- 1) Parents, caregivers, health-care providers, volunteers, and other non-staff people (e.g. visitors) entering the school should be limited to those supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing
- 2) All visitors should provide active confirmation (e.g. sign in at entry, e-mail before entry, etc.) that they have no symptoms of illness and are not required to self-isolate before entering.
- 3) The school will keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors who enter the school.
- 4) All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school. See the [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) section for more information, including exceptions to mask requirements for visitors.
- 5) After house community use of schools is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures.
 - Must adhere to the Gatherings and Events Order of the Provincial Health Officer.
 - Diligent hand hygiene
 - Respiratory etiquette
 - Physical distancing among older youth and adults
 - 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
 - Spaces and equipment used by community members should be cleaned and disinfected prior to students and staff re-entering the space. Cleaning for purposes of after school use cannot result in a reduction of cleaning for education purposes.
 - Schools can consider asking community members to bring their own equipment, where appropriate.

Main Office/Reception

- 1) The school will limit the number of staff and students allowed in the office and ensure occupancy is assessed and posted. Our current limit will be 5 people.
- 2) No students at this time will be allowed beyond the office counter area to do tasks such as announcements or photocopying.
- 3) Exception: Access to the counselling area is by permission only
- 4) Physical distancing must be maintained in the school office. Signage and markers reinforcing this should be used.

Physical Distancing

It is important that we do what we can to try to model the importance of minimizing the frequency of physical contact with one another and try to maintain a distance of at least two meters from others, as much as possible. Physical distancing can be challenging in any educational setting, particularly with younger children. From a public health perspective, there are no set ratios that prescribe the number of adults to children that can be present in the same space, at any given time. Physical distancing involves making changes in everyday routines, to minimize contact with others.

- 1) Spread everyone out in the classroom as much as it is practical to do so.
 - ☒ Consider reconfiguring your room set-up, moving to a larger space, and removing items that are not needed in your room to create space.
- 2) Seating arrangements where students directly face one another should be avoided.
- 3) Use a consistent seating arrangement if possible.
- 4) Take students outside for learning as much as possible and practical.
- 5) Reducing the number of close, in-person interactions:
 - ☒ Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes).
 - ☒ Incorporate more individual activities that encourage greater space between students and staff.
 - ☒ Minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact or face-to-face interactions
 - ☒ Encourage students and staff to not touch their faces.

Shared Resources and Personal Items

- 1) Staff and students should not share personal items such as electronic devices and writing instruments. Personal items should be labelled with student's name indicated.
- 2) Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to only bring items that are necessary such as backpacks, school supplies and water bottles.

Class to Class Transitions and Traffic Patterns

- 1) Students will be required to wear a mask during class-to-class transitions. Students that cannot tolerate a mask will be provided with an opportunity to transition to their next class at a different time than their peers.
- 2) The school will manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through. Students will be expected to travel down the right-hand side of any hallway and cross over only when there is sufficient space to do so.
- 3) Benches will be removed from all areas of the main hallway and be placed in other locations so as not to impede travel.

Lunch Time Procedures

- 1) Extra classroom spaces will be made available for students (Room 10 and 11, library)
- 2) Encourage student to not eat their lunch in the hallways. Congregating in the hallways will be discouraged.
- 3) Students are not allowed to share food, beverages, or utensils at any time.
- 4) The gym will be open and supervised at lunch, but physical distancing will apply for students sitting in the bleachers.
- 5) Weather permitting, students will be encouraged to be outside during lunch break and maintain social distancing measures.
- 6) Students going home for lunch are encouraged not to return to school until 5 minutes before the start of afternoon classes.

Isolation/Recovery Room

- 1) Students that present symptoms of illness must use the isolation/recovery room until they can be picked up by a parent/guardian. We will use our current sick room as our isolation room.
- 2) We will use our current sick room, with a door that can be used for isolating a sick student and/or staff member while waiting for a parent/caregiver or transportation to arrive.
- 3) The selected area is chosen as it has a sink with running water and hand washing supplies.
- 4) The room must have an isolation sign posted while this room is in use.
- 5) The selected isolation room must not impede the timely provision of school first aid services.
- 6) The room cannot be used again until properly cleaned by custodial staff.

Drop-off and Dismissal

- 1) Students are encouraged not to arrive at school prior to 8:45 and should proceed directly to their first class after washing their hands and visiting their lockers.
- 2) Parents are welcome to drop their child off at the school, but they need to observe physical distancing of 2 metres with all students and adults on site.
- 3) Students who walk to school should not be sent early.
- 4) If parents need to enter the school, they must enter by the office entrance and sign in and use hand sanitizer before proceeding to check in at the office. Parents **will not** be permitted to access areas of the school without expressed permission and only after checking in at the office
- 5) Students will be dismissed at 2:57 pm. Parents are requested to pick their children up off the school grounds.
- 6) The bus parking lot is not available for parents to use after school until the buses have left.
- 7) Students who walk to school independently should leave the school grounds right after dismissal.

Bus Rules

- 1) Students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings when they are on the bus.
- 2) Assigned seating will be employed to minimize learning group interaction. It is recognized that many students come from the same family and this will be considered when establishing seating
- 3) No student will sit immediately behind the driver to maintain physical distancing with the driver.
- 4) All regular rules apply as per the District's Protocol S-15:
<https://sd10.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/S-15-Student-Conduct-Riding-a-School-Bus-R.pdf>

For more information on exceptions to mask requirements for bus drivers and students, see the Personal Protective Equipment section (page 16)

Field Trips

Planned learning activities away from the school are still possible and are encouraged but will require some extra steps and considerations. For any low-level field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

Low risk field trips are allowed at this time with approval from site administrator. Field trip location must provide school designate with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with Maintaining Safe and Healthy Schools COVID 19 or the school's plan.

- 1) Field trip locations must provide school supervisors and administrator with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with the school or District plans. The field trip supervisor should ensure the plan be shared with parents and be approved by school administrator.
- 2) For transportation, see guidance in the bussing section in this document.
- 3) Use of parent volunteers for driving groups of students is not permitted during stages 2 to 4.
- 4) Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines.
- 5) No field trip can have greater than 50 students (PHO guideline for massgatherings)
- 6) Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable.
- 7) No overnight field trips should occur.
- 8) All International field trips are cancelled until further notice.

Staff Only Spaces and Gatherings

Experience from the fall of 2020 underscores the importance of COVID-19 prevention among adults in the school setting. Attention should be given to ensuring physical distancing is practiced within staff only spaces, including during break times, in addition to mask use.

To support this, schools should:

- Hold meetings, in-service and professional development activities, and other gatherings virtually whenever possible. If meetings cannot be held virtually:
 - Staff should practice physical distancing (2m) for face-to-face meetings, whenever possible.
 - Participants are **required to** wear masks **when indoors**. The number of participants gathered, and the length of the gathering should be minimized as much as possible.
- WorkSafe BC guidance for offices lists measures that should be considered and implemented as applicable to the workplace for staff in office environments (both inside and outside of school buildings). This guidance is available [here](#).

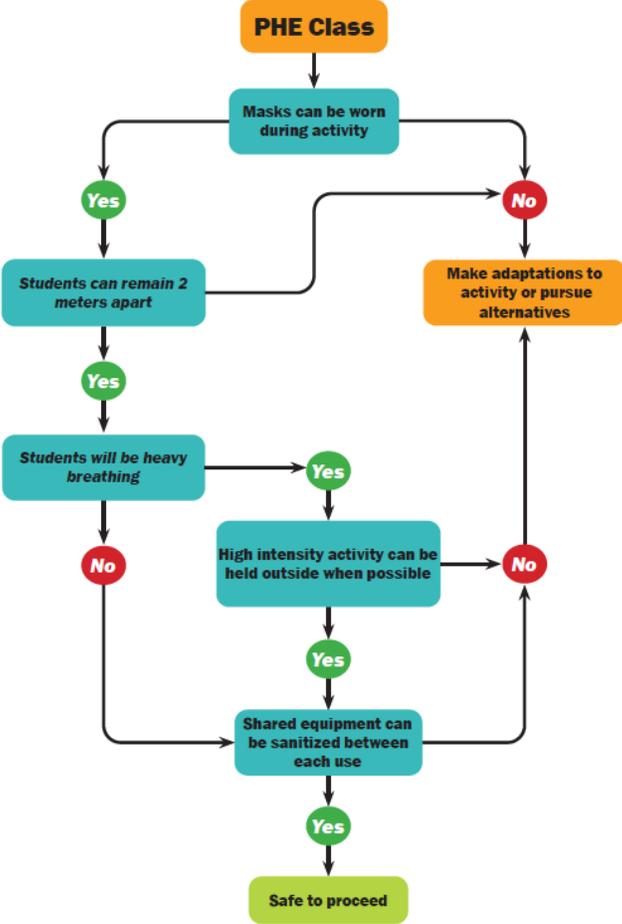
School Gatherings and Events

At this time, no full school-wide gatherings will be taking place.

Physical Education

- 1) People should be spread out as far as possible during physical activity.
- 2) Activities should be adapted wherever possible to reduce physical contact. There should be no activities that include prolonged physical contact (i.e. physical contact beyond a brief moment) or crowding. For example, activities like tag or touch football are lower-risk, whereas activities like wrestling or partner dancing should be avoided.
- 3) Physical education and extracurricular exercise and sport activities should occur outside whenever possible. High intensity exercise activities are those that result in significantly increased respiration rates.
- 4) If indoors and the activity is stationary, have students spaced 2 metres apart. If the activity involves movement, ensure there is ample space available to reduce the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
 - a. Move activities outside or pursue a low-intensity activity if this is not possible.
- 5) Masks should be worn indoors by middle and secondary students during low-intensity indoor activities where physical distancing cannot be consistently practiced. Wearing masks during high intensity exercise activities or outdoors is based on personal choice but cannot be in place of the other measures detailed in this section.
- 6) Masks should be worn by staff during physical education when they are unable to practice physical distancing.
- 7) Shared equipment can be used; it should be cleaned according to the Cleaning and Disinfection section of this guidance.

PHE Class Flowchart



Lockers

- 1) The use of lockers in schools will be allowed, but students will be encouraged to avoid hallway gatherings at their lockers.
- 2) There are not enough lockers to skip every other one, so locker use in the grade 8 wing will be every locker, with lockers being used in the senior wing set up for every other locker for students.
- 3) Lockers in the bus hallway will not be used.
- 4) PE change room locker use will be allowed.

Laundry

Some courses or activities may require items to be laundered. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Home Economics
- Physical and Health Education

- 1) Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner
- 2) Do not shake dirty items
- 3) Wearing gloves is optional; if choosing to wear gloves please follow SWP – removal of gloves
- 4) Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water.

Use of Water Dispensers and Water Fountains

- 1) Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water bottles.
- 2) Fill stations (water dispensers) can be used to fill individual water bottles.
- 3) Do NOT use mouthpiece features of the water dispensers.

Fire and Emergencies

- 1) In the event of a fire alarm or other emergency, physical distancing may not be possible.
- 2) Follow all regular emergency procedures outlined in the school emergency management plan.

Extracurricular Activities

- 1) Extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if physical distance can be maintained between students and reduced physical contact is practiced by those within the same cohort.
- 2) Sports should be held outdoors whenever possible. When indoors, larger spaces should be prioritized.
- 3) Avoid sports or activities that require or encourage physical contact.
- 4) Inter-school events including competitions, tournaments, and festivals, should not occur at this time. This will be reevaluated in mid-Spring 2021.
- 5) School-based extracurricular activities including sports, arts or special interest clubs can occur if they can be implemented in line with the guidance for within- and outside-of-cohort interactions noted in this document.
- 6) Intra-school events that are not an educational activity (i.e. are not offered specifically for student learning, health and development or mental well-being and inclusion) are considered events as defined by the Provincial Health Officer Order on Gatherings and Events. For that reason, they must comply with this Order. This includes events like student dances, music, theatrical or dance performances, parties, services, or other occasions where large groups of people may gather and health and safety guidelines may be difficult to implement.

Weight Room

- 1) Masks must be worn at all times when not exercising
- 2) Masks can be encouraged to be worn during exercise, but not required
 - a. People who are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition exempt from mask requirements. (see page 16)
 - b. People who are unable to wear a mask must maintain at least 2-metres distance at all times when in the facility.
- 3) No more than 1 person for every 7 m² of available space in the weight room.
- 4) Teachers must wear masks at all times unless they are exercising or are in the 2.5m x 2.5m “instructor area”.
- 5) Equipment must be cleaned before and after each user as per cleaning protocols in this document.

Microwaves

- 1) No microwaves will be utilized in common student areas such as classrooms at this time.
- 2) Microwaves in lunchrooms or other areas where hand washing facilities are in proximity will be allowed for use.

Counselling Spaces

- 1) Counselling area, including reception, need to be assessed to ensure physical distancing.
- 2) Other considerations may be to use another space or remove furniture to increase space available.

Food Services

- 1) NSS can continue to provide our meal programs (breakfast and Cougar Snacks) but everyone involved must follow BCCCD and WorkSafe guidelines. [WorkSafe Food Return to Operation Guidelines](#)
- 2) The school can continue to include food preparation as part of learning if:
 - If food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the student(s) who prepared it, no additional measures beyond those articulated in this document and normal food safety measures and requirements need to be implemented (e.g. FOODSAFE trained staff, a food safety plan, etc.).
 - If food is prepared within or outside a school for consumption by people other than those that prepared it (including for sale), it is expected that the [WorkSafe BC Restaurants, cafes, pubs, and nightclubs: Protocols for returning to operation](#) are implemented as appropriate and as relevant to the school setting, in addition to normally implemented food safety measures and requirements (e.g. FOODSAFE trained staff, a food safety plan, etc.).
 - No homemade food items to be made available to students at this time (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items, PAC popcorn sales, potlucks)
 - Individually prepared and packaged commercial items are acceptable.
 - No food sharing among either staff or students is permitted.

School staff must continue to emphasize that food and beverages as well as utensils should not be shared.

PERSONAL MEASURES

STAY HOME WHEN SICK

The BCCDC guidelines for schools are firm. If a student, staff member or any other adult has any symptoms of a cold, influenza, COVID-19, or any other infectious respiratory disease, **they must not enter the school.**

Students, staff members and any other adult must stay home and self-isolate if they have:

- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days
- Identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak
 - o This includes the children of essential service workers.

Staff or Students Who Become Symptomatic at School

a. Staff who Become Symptomatic While at Work

- ☒ Any staff member who develops the symptoms of cold, influenza or COVID-19 during the workday while at school will immediately distance themselves from others, report the concern to their supervisor, and remove themselves from the facility without delay. They will call a medical practitioner and stay home as advised.

b. Students who Become Symptomatic While at School

- ☒ If a child starts to show signs and symptoms of what could be influenza, cold or COVID-19, move them to the isolation room and arrange pick-up by the child's parent or guardian without delay.

The BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health>) is available for anyone that develops symptoms and can be used to help determine if you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.

For more information on what to do if you have COVID-19, if you think you may have it, or believe you may require medical care, call 811 or visit the BC Centre for Disease Control page

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/if-you-are-sick>

2) As per the PHO: **“There is no role for screening students or staff for symptoms, checking temperatures, or COVID-19 testing. Screening staff or students are reserved for health-care professionals.”**

3) **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.

- **Informing and ensuring staff and students are aware of their responsibility to self-assess is critical.** (this will be the role of the school administrator, but it would be helpful if staff re-enforced this message with parents and caregivers).
- If a child has any symptoms, they must not be sent to school.

Respiratory Etiquette

- 1) Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough and sneeze into the bend of your arm, not your hands.
- 2) Use tissues to contain secretions and dispose of them promptly in a waste container. Wash hands immediately.
- 3) Refrain from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- 4) Wash hands regularly.
- 5) Everyone is encouraged to refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

Hand Hygiene

Hand washing is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of infection. Proper hand washing helps prevent the transfer of infectious material from the hands to other parts of the body, particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth or to other surfaces that are touched. *Temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water.*

1) How to Wash Hands:

- Wet hands with running water.
- Apply a small amount of liquid soap. Antibacterial soap is not required.
- Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds. Rub palms, backs of hands, between fingers and under nails/creating a lather.
- Rinse off all soap with running water.
- Dry hands with a clean, disposable towel.
- Turn off taps, using the paper towel – if required.
- Discard the used towel in the waste container.

2) Students Should Wash Their Hands:

- When they arrive at school and before they go home.
- Before and after any break.
- Before and after eating and drinking – excluding drinking at students' desk.
- Before and after using an indoor learning or equipment that might be used by others during the day (example gym, shop, foods, or science lab equipment).
- After using the washroom.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

3) Teachers, Administrators and Support Staff Should Wash Their Hands:

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

4) **Alternatives:**

- If a sink is not available, use hand sanitizer with 60%-70% alcohol agent. Please note, this is not as effective as washing hands with soap and water. Antiseptic agents are to be used as a last line of defense only.
- If hands are soiled with visible contamination, they must first be washed with soap and water. The hand-sanitizer may then be used to further reduce the microorganism load on the skin.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- If you are unable to perform hand washing as above due to injury or medical skin conditions, please advise your supervisor.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Those wearing masks must still maintain physical distancing whenever possible. There must be no crowding or congregating of people, even if masks are worn. Masks should not be used in place of the other safety measures detailed in this document.

K-12 STAFF:

- 1) All K-12 staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools.
- 2) All K-12 staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) on school buses.

STUDENTS

- 1) All secondary students are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools - both within and outside of their learning group,
- 2) All middle and secondary school students are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) on school buses.
- 3) Specific guidance for mask use during physical activities in schools is detailed in the and Health Education (PHE)/Outdoor Programs and School Sports sections of this document

VISITORS

- 1) All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school

The use of masks should not reduce or replace other more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in schools, such as:

- Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or required to self-isolate, including ensuring everyone entering the school performs a daily health check;
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection;
- Placing students and staff into consistent groupings of people (learning groups);
- Adapting learning environments to maximize the use of space;
- Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between learning groups; and
- Frequent hand hygiene

These measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of transmission.

EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS:

The guidance outlined above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:

- to a person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- to a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- if the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- if the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- if a person is eating or drinking;
- if a person is behind a barrier; or
- while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

Schools must not require a health-care provider note (i.e. doctor's note) to confirm staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask.

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask.