

School District 81

Stage 2 - Health and Safety Plan

Updated February 5, 2021

Based on guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and experience to date within B.C. and other jurisdictions that schools continue to be low risk for COVID-19 transmission, even with increased risk of COVID-19 in some communities, K-12 students can participate in full-time in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

- Prevent crowding and gathering; pay particular attention to the start and end of the day, and stagger recess, lunch and transition times for student and staff whenever possible.
- Avoid close face-to-face contact whenever possible.
- Assign staff to a specific learning group whenever possible.
- Ensure that the use of masks does not reduce or replace practicing physical distancing between learning groups and other prevention measures, for both students and staff.
- Ensure prevention measures are in place in staff only areas, including break and meeting rooms.
- Implement music classes according to the British Columbia Music Association and the Coalition for Music Education in British Columbia Guidance for Music classes.
- High intensity physical activity should occur outside whenever possible.

SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Schools can support students to practice personal preventive measures by:

- Having staff model these behaviours.
- Sharing reliable information, including information from the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, to parents, families and caregivers.
- Promoting required safety measures in the school through visual aids like floor markings and signage.

In line with the K-12 Education Restart Plan's goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students within current health and safety guidelines for schools, staff should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in practices and should not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature.

LEARNING GROUPS

Learning groups (cohorts) have been established in all schools.

- In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact. Within learning groups, physical distancing should include avoiding physical contact, minimizing

close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions, and spreading out as much as possible within the space available.

- The composition of learning groups should remain consistent for all activities. Students and staff from different learning groups can interact with one another while practicing physical distancing.
- Students from different learning groups can be in the same learning space at the same time if physical distancing can be maintained and there is adequate space available to prevent crowding of those from within the same learning group.
- Learning group composition can be changed at the start of a new term.
- School administrators will keep up to date lists of all members of a learning group, and others who work with that learning group, and their contact information to support swift communications from the school and to share with public health to support contact tracing, if needed.
- Consistent seating arrangements are encouraged where practical. Seating arrangements where students directly face one another should be avoided where possible, particularly for the secondary school.
- Maximum learning group sizes: Elementary 60; Secondary 120.

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

Cleaning and Disinfection

Cleaning will be done with disinfectants listed on Health Canada’s list of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus.

Items to be cleaned	Frequency	Responsibility
General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises	Nightly	Contracted janitors
Garbage cans emptied	Nightly	Contracted janitors
Doorknobs, light switches, emergency door handles, railings	Twice Daily	Contracted janitors
Surface that is visibly dirty	As needed	Staff members
Bathrooms; toilet handles, faucets, floors	Twice Daily	Contracted janitors
Tables, desks, chairs	Twice Daily	Contracted janitors
FNSS weight room equipment	Between classes	Teacher to turn on sanitizing mister.

Additional Measures taken

- Water fountains will remain disabled and hydration station will be cleaned twice daily by contracted janitors.
- Keyboards and toys used by multiple students will be cleaned at least twice in 24 hours by contracted janitors, staff, or by students after use.
- Limit frequently touched items by assigning items for individual student use.
- Some frequently touched items like toys and manipulatives may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) These items can continue to be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.
- Learning carpets and fabric covered seating have been removed from classrooms.
- Students to wash hands before and after computer use.
- Students to wash hands before and after gym equipment use.
- Portable sinks to be available for areas with no sinks.
- Blow dryers in washrooms will be disabled and paper towels available.
- All furnace filters changed on a regular basis which includes filter change before September.
- All in-town schools have heating monitored and adjusted remotely by the Director of Facilities for as much fresh air exchange as possible, depending on the weather.

ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Please note: The Provincial Health Officer has advised to prioritize Physical Distancing, Hand Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in stopping the transmission of disease. Non-medical masks are not a replacement for the need for physical distancing.

The following has been implemented:

- Plexiglass barrier and signage in office to allow for safe distance surrounding administrative assistants' desk area,
- Adults have been instructed to avoid close greetings such as hugs or handshakes
- Explicitly teach and regularly remind students about keeping "hands to yourself"
- Each classroom teacher has carefully considered flow and spacing. Furniture has been rearranged and removed, as necessary.
- Assigned student seating where practical.
- Instructional Release teachers, Student Services Resource Teachers, and other staff may provide service in classrooms or arrange areas for physical distancing to reduce student movement in hallways.
- Staff outside of a learning group should practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. Physical distancing of 2 meters of space between staff and students is recommended.

- Staff who work with different learning groups and cannot physically distance, will have masks, face shields (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield, and plexiglass barriers.
- Staff who work between sites have been scheduled to reduce movement between sites as much as possible.
- Elementary students will be assigned to classes as usual but have been grouped into learning groups for outside time and for In Days.
- The Secondary School timetable has been switched to a Term system where courses will be 10 weeks long. There are three learning groups: Grades 8/9, Grade 10 and Grades 11/12. Grade 8/9 students are assigned to a classroom with assigned seating for academic courses and move to elective courses only with physical distancing. Grades 10 and 11/12 learning groups have been assigned classrooms designated for academic courses with assigned seating. There will be some student movement with physical distancing, but this has been kept to a minimum. Most students are scheduled to receive the same courses they chose in June.
- Students from different learning groups may be required to be together to receive beneficial social supports, programs, or services. Within these supports or services, it is expected that learning groups are maintained, and physical distancing is practiced between learning groups as much as is practical to do so while still ensuring the support program or service continues.
- Student Services will continue in all schools for students with diverse learning needs/disabilities including in-class support, Leveled Literacy Intervention, Great Leaps, Youth & Family support, Counseling, and Aboriginal support.
- Band/Music classes will have 2-meter physical distancing in place surrounding each student with signage evident; no music stands will be shared, bell covers and slit masks will be used for specific instrument use.
- Bathroom use has been limited to two students at a time where possible or washrooms have been assigned to learning groups.
- Teachers have been asked to send only one student at a time to the washrooms.
- Learning groups will be assigned to specific playground areas and supervised to avoid mingling with other learning groups.
- Learning groups will be assigned to specific areas of the school during In Days to avoid mingling with other learning groups.
- Students will be physically distanced entering and exiting school and in hallways.
- Front doors are locked except prior to bell times, with a doorbell system for visitors.
- Visitor/staff registration/sign-in is in place for visitors/staff to confirm they are not ill and are not required to self-isolate.
- Parents have been asked to drop their children off close to bell times.

Learning outside

Teachers are encouraged to plan learning activities outside including snack time, P.E., place-based learning and unstructured time when practical. Take activities that involve movement outside including those for physical health and education outside when practical.

Physical Education (PHE)

Teachers are encouraged to plan physical activities that:

- Do not involve prolonged physical contact (i.e. beyond a brief moment) or crowding. For example, activities such as tag and touch football are low-risk, whereas activities like wrestling or partner dancing should be avoided. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities wherever possible to reduce physical contact.
- K-12 staff are required to wear masks during PE when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m), and a barrier is not present.
- For low intensity exercise activities (activities that do not significantly increase respiratory rates e.g. weight training equipment) students at R.L. Angus Elementary School (due to our local grade configuration) and Fort Nelson Secondary School are required to wear masks when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m), and a barrier is not present.

Flow of people in common areas

Hallways are divided with tape and/or arrows denoting flow of traffic. Emergency exit doors will be used. Assemblies and school-wide activities have been cancelled but may occur using Zoom. Learning groups have been segregated into pods or wings of schools to minimize hallway flow.

Separate Entrances and Line Ups

Students are divided into learning groups with designated entrances being assigned. Adult supervision will be present at each entrance to ensure students physical distance, use hand sanitizer and do a wellness check (“How are you feeling today?”).

Students will enter the classroom upon arrival to school. (soft start) to avoid line ups.

Students will follow physical distancing when lining up.

Emergency and Evacuation Drills

Schools should continue to practice emergency (e.g. fire, earthquake, lockdown) and evacuation drills including the six required annual fire drills as per BC Fire Code 2.8.32, and modify drill procedures to prevent crowding/congregating.

- In the event of an actual emergency, emergency procedures must take precedence over COVID- 19 preventative measures.

PERSONAL MEASURES

Stay Home When Sick

- Students, staff, or other adults should stay home when sick. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:

- Parents/caregivers and students can use the K-12 Health Check App.
- Staff and other adults can refer to BCCD's "When to get tested for COVID- 19.
- Staff, students and parent/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool, call 8-1-1 or their health provider.
- Parents and caregivers will be instructed to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school or on the bus. A daily health check form or the provincial health check app may be used.
- School Administrator will ensure school staff is aware of their personal responsibility to assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before entering the school. The School Administrator will have sign in verifying that the health check has been performed.
- Staff will assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before entering the school.
- If the staff or student (or their parent) indicates that the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual, they may return to school. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.
- The following students, staff, or other adults must stay home and self-isolate:
 - A person confirmed by the health authority as testing positive for COVID– 19; or
 - A person confirmed by the health authority as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID- 19; or
 - A person who has traveled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.
- A person who has been tested for COVID- 19 must stay home while they are waiting for the test result.
- When a staff, student or other adult can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced and if a COVID- 19 test was recommended as indicated on the K-12 Health Check App and BCCD "When to get tested for COVID- 19 resource, or their health provider.
- If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, the student/staff can return to school when symptoms have improved, and they feel well enough.
- If a COVID-19 test is negative, the student/staff can return to school once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness.
- If a COVID-19 test is positive, the student/staff public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves.

Hand Hygiene

- Prior to entering the school students, each time, will be assisted with using an alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol or using soap and water.
- If hands are visibly soiled, soap and water are the preferred method to use.
- Students will use hand sanitizer or soap and water prior to exiting school.

- Staff will model and teachers will explicitly teach students hand washing procedures based on BCCD'S hand washing poster.
- Posters to promote the importance of appropriate hand hygiene will be displayed at entrance to school, washrooms and in classrooms.
- Classrooms equipped with a sink, soap dispenser and paper towels.
- School areas not equipped with sinks or not in an area close to a sink, will have portable sinks with soap and paper towels available or hand sanitizer.
- Students will be directed by teacher or support staff to wash hands as needed throughout the day but specifically: before eating, after eating, after using a tissue, after washroom use and before and after going outside.
- Students will be directed by teacher or support staff to wash hands before and after using in-class centres, math manipulatives, computers and tablets, and gym equipment except if objects are individual-use items.
- Staff will assist students will hand hygiene as needed.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students in Grades 5 to 12 are asked to wear non-medical masks when on the bus. Two re-useable non-medical masks will be provided to students and staff. A

Staff working with more than one Learning Group will have a mask, face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield), or a plexiglass barrier for when they cannot physically distance.

Staff will model and teachers will explicitly teach students to:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throw away tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, and unwashed utensils.
- How to put on and remove and store masks for grades 5 to12 or as necessary as on the [BCCDC](#) website and the [Government of Canada](#) website.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Non-medical masks should not be used in place of other safety measures. Those wearing masks must still maintain physical distancing whenever possible. There must be no crowding or congregating of people even if masks are worn.
- 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 – both within and outside of their learning group, except when:
 - sitting in (or standing at) their seat or desk/workstation in a classroom or learning space;
 - there is a barrier in place;
 - eating and drinking; and

- outdoors.
- Exceptions will be made for staff who cannot tolerate masks.
- All middle and secondary students (due to our local configuration this will be R.L. Angus Elementary School and Fort Nelson 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) in schools – both within and outside of their learning group, and on the bus except when:
 - sitting in (or standing at) their seat or desk/workstation in a classroom or learning space;
 - there is a barrier in place;
 - eating and drinking; and
 - outdoors.
- Exceptions will be made for students who cannot tolerate masks.
- Students in K-4 are not required to wear a mask in schools or on the buses except by their personal or family/caregiver choice, and their choices must be respected.

Managing students/staff with illness or possible COVID-19

All students and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19, OR traveled outside Canada in the last 14 days, OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate.

If a student or staff member who is self-monitoring (i.e. has been directed by public health to self-monitor for symptoms but not self-isolate) or begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while attending school, it is recommended that:

- All staff be advised to let the Principal know if they are showing symptoms or if a student is showing symptoms.
- Schools should promptly, but showing awareness for confidentiality concerns, separate the student or staff who display symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, headache, muscle aches). The student should be put in an area separate from others, with adequate supervision, until they can go home. The staff should leave the building and follow health procedures. Notify the Superintendent.
- To help prevent transmission, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene practices are recommended, as well as, to the extent possible, having the ill student or staff stay two meters away from others. The student should be placed in a separate room from other students with a closed or partially closed door. The person monitoring the student should wear gloves and a mask.
- The student should be instructed to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Schools should notify parents/guardians if their child begins to show symptoms of illness or COVID-19 while at school, including the need for immediate pick up. They should not go home on the bus.
- Advise parents/guardians that they can phone 8-1-1 for a health assessment if their child has symptoms compatible with COVID-19 while at school.

- Notify the Director of Facilities to have any rooms where the student was symptomatic be cleaned and disinfected. This is best done at break times or after school if practical.
- For mild symptoms of illness, without fever, students and staff can monitor at home for 24 hours. If symptoms improve, they can return to school without further assessment.
- If symptoms include fever or if after 24 hours, symptoms remain unchanged or worsen, seek a health assessment. A health assessment can include calling 8-1-1 or a primary care provider.
- If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, the student/staff can return to school when symptoms have improved, and they feel well enough.
- If a COVID-19 test is negative, the student/staff can return to school once symptoms have improved and they feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves.
- If a COVID-19 test is positive, the student/staff must stay home until they are told by public health to end their self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms.
- Public Health Officials will identify individuals who may have had contact with a COVID-19 infected person and alert school administrators to actions that need to be taken. Public Health will contact close contacts of a confirmed case and advise them if self-isolation is needed.
- Try to maintain familiar routines and activities.
- Listen to students and provide age-appropriate information to their questions.