

## SD69 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN

Infection prevention and exposure control measures (also called communicable disease measures or health and safety measures) help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases. These are more effective in settings such as schools where there is a relatively consistent grouping of people and multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely implemented. The following is an outline of SD69 district communicable disease plan for the 2023-2024 school year. This plan is subject to change based on relevant local, regional, Provincial and Federal health recommendations and is guided by the [B.C. Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#).

<b>General</b>	
Attendance & Record Keeping	<p>Maintain daily attendance records for staff and students using standard technology-based platforms.</p> <p>School shall have a documented sign in/sign out practices for visitors and staff not typically onsite. Schools do not need to keep a list of the date, names and contact information of visitors for communicable disease prevention purposes.</p> <p>Maintain accurate class and bus lists (seating arrangements are not required).</p>
Supportive School Environments	<p>Schools can be supportive environments for communicable disease prevention by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having staff model personal practices (e.g., hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette), and assist younger students as needed.</li> <li>• Sharing reliable information, including from the BC Centre for Disease Control, Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and local health authorities to parents, families and caregivers.</li> <li>• Promoting personal practices in the school (e.g., posters).</li> <li>• Ensuring individual choices for personal practices (e.g., choosing to wear a mask or face covering) are supported and treated with respect, recognizing varying personal comfort levels.</li> </ul>
Trauma Informed Practice	<p>Trauma-informed practice is a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events including the emotional and traumatic impact of a pandemic. Trauma-informed practice includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments</li> <li>• Understanding coping strategies</li> <li>• Supporting independence</li> <li>• Helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual needs of students and staff</li> </ul> <p>Some students may have experienced elements of trauma during the pandemic. Educators and support staff should be aware of changes in student behavior, including trauma-related behaviors which may include fear;</p>

	<p>hyperactivity; aggression; body aches and pain; depression; self-harming behaviors; excessive shyness; or withdrawal. To support educators and staff in identifying and responding to the needs of students who have experienced trauma, the Ministry has created <a href="#">Trauma-informed practice resources</a> that are available on the <a href="#">erase (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) website</a>.</p>
<b>Environmental Measures</b>	
Ventilation and Air Exchange	<p>All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly.</p> <p>When using air conditioners and fans in ventilated spaces, air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person’s breathing zone to another’s. Avoid horizontal cross breezes.</p> <p>Natural ventilation (operable windows, etc.) and portable HEPA filter units can be considered in regularly occupied classrooms that do not have mechanical ventilation systems.</p> <p>Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided, except when necessary (e.g., during high or excessive heat events).</p>
Cleaning and Disinfecting	<p>Frequently touched surfaces (door knobs, handrails, switches, fountains, service counters, etc.) are cleaned and disinfected at least once per day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned once per day. All disinfecting to meet these requirements in SD69 buildings will be done by after-hours custodial staff.</p> <p>Sd69 computer labs, gym equipment rooms, and music rooms/storage spaces will be disinfected daily by custodial staff using electrostatic sprayers when those spaces are in use.</p> <p>Disinfecting supplies to be made available to WHMIS trained first aid attendants to disinfect bodily fluid spills related to first aid treatment that cannot wait for clean up after hours.</p>
<b>Administrative Measures</b>	
Gatherings, Events and Sports	No specific capacity limits or restrictions.
Space Arrangement	No limits or specific restrictions. Schools can use classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches.
Visitors	No specific restrictions. (including substitutes, specialists/sub-contractors, district staff, parents/caregivers, and volunteers)

Curriculum Programs and Activities	Students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after shared equipment use. Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., instrument mouth pieces, water bottles, utensils) or has been in contact with bodily fluids should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.
Field Trips	When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. Schools should consider guidance provided for overnight camps from BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.
Bus Transportation	Regular cleaning of the interior and exterior of school buses shall continue as normal.  Bus drivers, teachers and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 may choose to wear masks or face coverings when they are on the bus but masks are not mandatory.
Food Services	Regular operational and food safety practices including food safety training for applicable personnel for food services (ie. Meal programs, cafeterias, fundraisers, etc.)
Community use of Schools	No specific restrictions or limitations.
<b>Personal Measures</b>	
Daily Health Checks	School administrators should ensure that staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers, and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. School administrators can support this practice by communicating the importance of everyone doing a health check.  A health check means a person regularly checking to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness that would limit their ability to participate fully in regular activities before coming to school to prevent spread of communicable diseases within school settings. Schools do not need to monitor students or staff for symptoms of illness.  School administrators should ensure that everyone entering a school is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness, including that they should not come to school if they are sick. This can be supported through communications (e.g., emails/letters to parents and staff, signage), and orientation activities (e.g., meetings, videos).
Stay Home When Sick/What To Do When Sick	Staff, students, or other persons who are exhibiting new symptoms of illness (including symptoms of <a href="#">COVID-19</a> or gastrointestinal illness) should stay home and follow the BCCDC guidance outlined below:

	<p><i>If the person is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:</i>  The <a href="#">When to Get Tested for Covid-19 resource</a> or the <a href="#">B.C. Self-Assessment Tool</a> provides more information on whether you should get a test for COVID-19. Those unsure or concerned about their symptoms should connect with a health care provider or call 8-1-1.</p> <p>Staff, children, or other persons in the school setting who test positive for COVID-19 should follow the guidance on the BCCDC website as to how long they should self-isolate. They can return to school when they no longer need to self-isolate as long as symptoms have improved, and they are well enough to participate in regular activities. Schools should not require a health care provider note (e.g., a doctor’s note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.<sup>4</sup></p> <p><i>If the person is experiencing other symptoms, isn’t recommended to take a COVID-19 test (most people) or tests negative for COVID-19:</i>  Staff, children, or other persons can attend school if their symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) or symptoms have improved enough to where they feel well enough to return to regular activities and their fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., ibuprofen, acetaminophen). Information specific to COVID-19 is available from <a href="#">BCCDC</a>.</p>
Symptoms Develop At School/Work	<p>If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school and is unable to participate in regular activities, they should be supported to go home until their symptoms have improved. Appropriate infection control precautions should be taken while the person is preparing to leave the school premises, including use of appropriate hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection of surfaces soiled with bodily fluids. They may use a mask if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms.</p>
Returning to School/Work After Illness	<p>Health care provider notes/doctors’ notes are not required to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.</p> <p>Request that the individual stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all school-related activities.</p>
Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette	<p>Hand cleaning facilities shall be available and accessible throughout all schools and office buildings. Wall mount hand sanitizer dispensers will be maintained throughout the district, but there will be no requirement to have pump bottle dispensers in other spaces.</p> <p>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette posters shall be hung in appropriate areas identifying best practice, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refrain from touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.</li> <li>• Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.</li> <li>• Always wash hands before and after handling shared objects.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>	
Masks	<p>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.</p> <p>Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one (for both the person who is sick and for those who may be assisting them).</p>