



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 27 COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR K-12 SETTING

(Updated February 16, 2022)

PRINCIPLES

In complement to the Ministry of Education's overarching principles for the COVID-19 response, the Ministry along with education partners articulated the following principles with respect to health and safety:

- All schools will adhere to the standards, guidelines, and direction from the Public Health Officer (PHO) and WorkSafeBC.
- In collaboration with education partners, the Ministry may develop additional health and safety requirements for all schools to ensure consistency across the K-12 system. These additions will enhance, not duplicate, PHO and WorkSafeBC requirements.
- Psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice will be valued and implemented alongside physical health and safety measures.
- Effective communication with all community partners, parents, students, unions and employees is an essential aspect of successfully implementing these guidelines.

OBJECTIVES

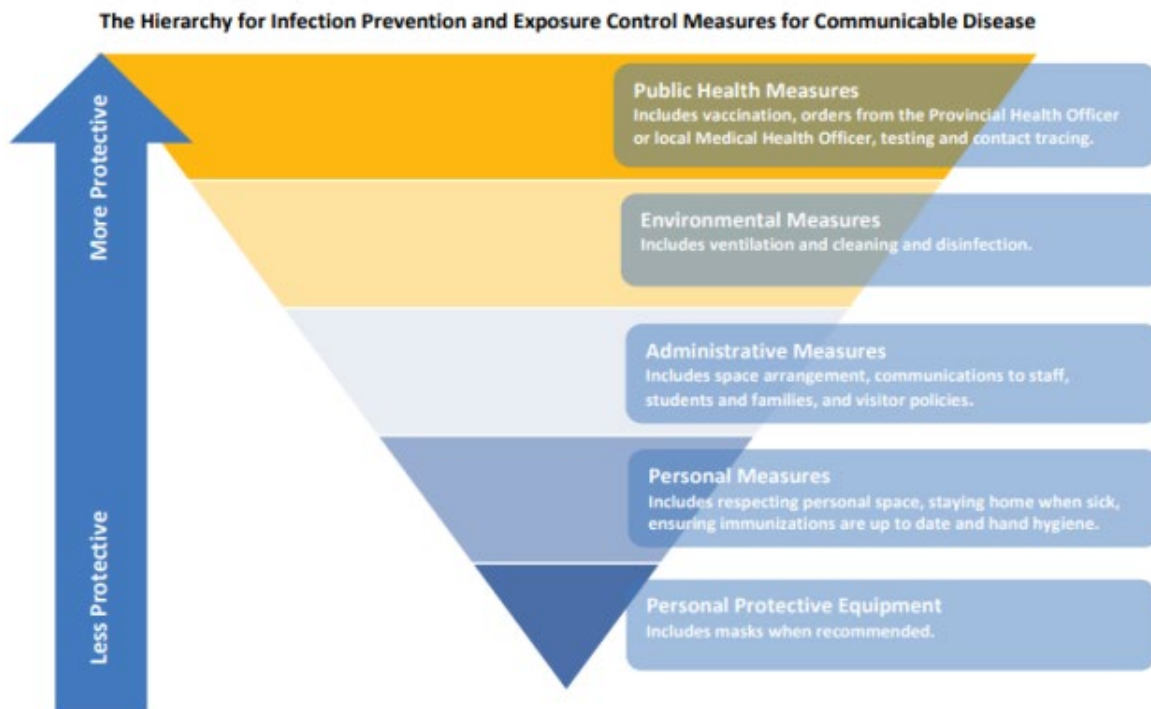
As a part of ensuring continuity of learning and educational outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines are intended to support K-12 employees, students, parents, administrators and school community members to:

- Be informed about public health measures and feel safe in schools.
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting public health and school safety.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- BC Ministry of Education [B.C.'s Back to School Plan](#)
- [BC Ministry of Education Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings \(Feb. 3, 2022\)](#)
- District website at www.sd27.bc.ca for regular updates
- [Daily Health Check](#)
- [Government of Canada COVID-19: Travel, testing and borders](#)

The **Hierarchy for Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures for Communicable Disease** describes measures that should be taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Control measures at the top are more effective and protective than control measures at the bottom of the inverted pyramid. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 or any communicable disease is substantially reduced.



In SD#27, all schools and sites will establish protocols for accessing work sites and minimizing risk, including:

- Establishing clear site-based protocols for staff and student access to site
- Parents are responsible for ensuring students are symptom free prior to attending school.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring they are symptom free prior to attending the work site.
 - Sites will have processes for staff or students leaving if sick
 - Sites will need locations for students who are unable to return home



- SD#27 and schools will communicate with families the importance of students not attending if sick
- Sites should not have visitors or volunteers, but if they do, it should be by appointment.
 - Itinerant staff will visit and provide regular service and will adhere to specific site protocols, including physical distancing and/or masks
- Sites will have clearly designated staff and student wash areas
- Other PPE lab coats, shields, and gloves will be made available where regularly required

Cleaning and hygiene

The health and safety of our workforce is paramount, and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure reasonable measures are taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- All sites will:
 - Be cleaned in accordance with [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
 - Provide adequate handwashing and sanitizing facilities on site for all staff and ensure the location is visible and easily accessed. Develop policies around when staff must wash their hands, including upon arriving for work, before and after breaks, after handling cash or other materials, before and after handling common equipment (photocopiers, etc.).
 - Where possible, schools will maximize classrooms with sinks for additional hand washing
 - Consistent focus on handwashing and hygiene
 - Schools will provide additional hand sanitizing stations to the extent possible
 - Implement a cleaning protocol for all common areas and surfaces, including washrooms, equipment, tools, common tables, desks, light switches, and door handles. Ensure those engaged in cleaning have adequate training and materials.
 - Washrooms should be cleaned at least once a day or as needed
 - High touch surfaces should be wiped down at least once a day
 - Provide time between movement of students for necessary wipe-down or cleaning (this can and should be done by any available staff)



- Remove any unnecessary tools or equipment that may elevate the risk of transmission
- Staff should not prepare food or share implements or preparation areas

Ventilation & Air Exchange

Ventilation & Air Exchange Good ventilation reduces the potential for COVID-19 transmission:

- CO2 levels must be maintained at the WorkSafeBC Guideline Levels of 1000 PPM or lower. Currently our buildings are set at 600 PPM which is 40% better than the minimum acceptable requirement. Ventilation systems, classrooms or combined rooms are equipped with CO2 monitors.
- Where possible, natural ventilation should be maximized by opening the doors and windows to periodically assist in changing the air. This direction only applies when outdoor temperatures are 10 degrees Celsius or higher and there are not strong winds that would create cross-ventilation indoors. If it is windy outside, keep the windows closed and allow the HVAC system to work.
- HVAC systems have been optimized in compliance with industry standards for COVID-19 to provide the very best air quality possible in the space being served. The air filters are on a scheduled maintenance program to ensure regular replacement and cleaning.

[SD27 Ventilation System Overview](#)

Maintaining physical distance

Our focus on physical distancing remains. The Health Authority has been clear that risk of transmission across students and from students is very low. In schools, it will be difficult to maintain that level between staff and students and especially between students.

- All adults/staff on site will wear masks and continue to adhere to physical distancing guidelines wherever possible.
- Ensure we limit the number of adults in a building beyond regular workforce and specific workspaces do not exceed density (e.g., photocopy room, office space, washrooms, and other small spaces), and limiting the number of staff at one time in break locations.
- Implement measures to ensure workers have adequate space when serving or working with or near members of the public, where possible, specifically in office or clerical areas where the public may engage (plexi-glass, tape, physical barriers).



- School strategies may include:
 - Staggered recess/lunch
 - Increased use of outside/environmental learning
 - Traffic flow and site planning
- Masks will be required at all times ,except when eating
- Specialty programs such as PE and music will have enhanced measures of physical distancing and mask usage
 - High intensity physical activity should be outdoors as much as possible
 - Shared equipment such as weight machines, treadmills or musical instruments must be cleaned between use
 - Students playing instruments should be spaced
 - Masks are to be used when singing

MOVEMENT of STAFF

- TTOC's, itinerant staff and other casual employees must wear masks and maintain physical distancing where possible.

Where physical distance cannot be maintained

BUSES: with the full return of students, there are additional measures reflecting the higher density of students on buses.

- All students are required to wear masks
 - Student will need to have their mask on before loading
- Students will sit in family groups where possible
- Bus drivers will be provided with a barrier or face shield to limit potential risk when loading and unloading
- Staff will limit and avoid physical contact with students

In the event of illness

Recent public health guidance recommends [those who test positive for COVID-19](#) notify those whom they live with or who they've had intimate contact with. They do not need to notify the school or others at school. Going forward, schools will be monitoring their attendance to determine if a public health-determined threshold for a grade or school has been met. If met, schools will send a notification to the school community indicating the threshold has been met and that they are following up with public health for further investigation.

If you are managing your illness at home you can end isolation when all three of these



conditions are met:

1. **If you are fully vaccinated:** At least **5 days** have passed since your symptoms started, or from the day you tested if you did not have symptoms. You should wear a mask even in settings where a mask isn't required and avoid higher risk settings, such as long term care facilities and gatherings, for another 5 days after ending isolation. Fully vaccinated means you received both doses of a 2-dose series (e.g. AstraZeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech, or Moderna vaccine) more than 7 days ago, or have received a single dose of a 1-dose series (e.g. Janssen/Johnson and Johnson) more than 14 days ago.

If you are not **fully vaccinated:** at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms started, or from the day you tested if you did not have symptoms.

2. Fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, and
3. Symptoms are improving and you are able to participate in your usual activities

Continue to isolate for longer if you have a fever or are not feeling better.

- anyone under the direction of the provincial health officer to self-isolate must follow those instructions
- limit visitors
- Staff who feel ill while at work will follow site protocols for:
 - Informing administration
 - Arranging appropriate transportation home if other than themselves
 - Leave by designated exit to minimize contact with others
- Sites will receive increased/intense cleaning as appropriate if evidence of COVID-19 like illness

COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

SD#27 will provide all communications through regular channels for parents and partner groups. Any posters or associated materials will be provided to all sites and posted accordingly.

All schools will post their site-specific plans for:

- Site access and risk limitation
- Cleaning and hygiene
- Physical distancing where necessary



SCHOOL PLANS

Individual School COVID-19 Safety Plans have been posted to school websites. A list of schools can be found here [Our Schools \(sd27.bc.ca\)](https://sd27.bc.ca).

Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement		
Prevention Measures		Implementation and Examples
Space Arrangement	Maximize space between people.	Different common space, classroom, and learning environment configurations (e.g., different desk and table formations). Limit and, whenever possible, avoid face-to-face seating arrangements.
	Implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition and break times.	Stagger start/stop times, or recess/snack, lunch and class transition times. Regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes (e.g., examinations, physical education) should be spread out across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible, but do not need to be reduced in size.
Staff Only Spaces	Hold staff-only gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities) virtually.	
School Gatherings And Events (including Extracurricular)	Hold school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) virtually. If gatherings and events must be in-person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), minimize the number of people in attendance as much as possible, do not exceed 50% operating capacity, and do not allow spectators.	For indoor spaces without a defined operating capacity, schools should determine a capacity limit that is at most half the number of individuals that would be within the space for that activity or event if prevention measures weren't in place.
Visitor Access	Limit visitors to those that are supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing	E.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc..



Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement		
Prevention Measures		Implementation and Examples
Sports	Extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused.	<p>Sports tournaments are a single or multi-day gathering of three or more sports teams, who come together outside regular league play for the purpose of teams playing against multiple other teams, but does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gathering where team members compete on an individual basis against members of other teams, or • A gathering where the result will decide if a team will advance to play in a national or international competition.
Masks	<p>The PHO Order – Face Coverings requires all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask indoors at school.</p> <p>Everyone who is able to (i.e., does not have a mask exemption) must wear a mask.</p>	<p>Reminders communicated to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing masks at school is required under a public health order. • Proper fit is a key factor in mask effectiveness. Masks worn at school should fit well. • Masks are most effective when everyone who is able to is wearing one. • Those with mask exemptions continue to follow any strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Those not able to wear a mask all day continue to be encouraged to wear one as much as they're able to. <p>Administrators and staff use positive and inclusive approaches, aligned with existing professional practices to address non-compliant behaviour for those able to wear masks. For those with mask exemptions, administrators and staff support other strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures (as outlined in the Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions).</p> <p>For those with mask exemptions, alternative strategies identified are adjusted if needed, based on the additional prevention measures.</p>