

# **School District No. 57**

## **Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings**

**September 3, 2021**

*Respecting the beautiful unceded ancestral lands, culture and people of the  
Lheidli T'enneh, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Simpcw First Nation.*

Table of Contents

INFECTION PREVENTION AND EXPOSURE CONTROL MEASURES ..... 1

RESOURCES ..... 2

SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS ..... 3

    VACCINES: ..... 3

PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND SPACE ARRANGMENT ..... 3

    STAFF ONLY SPACES ..... 4

    SCHOOL GATHERINGS AND EVENTS ..... 4

    PERSONAL ITEMS ..... 4

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES ..... 4

    EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS ..... 4

    GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WORKING WITH DIVERSE/EXCEPTIONAL ABILITIES WHERE PHYSICAL CONTACT MAY BE REQUIRED ..... 4

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ..... 5

    BUSES ..... 5

    CARPOOLING ..... 5

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING ..... 5

    DEFINITIONS ..... 5

    CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FREQUENCY ..... 5

    FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES ..... 5

    CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BODILY FLUIDS ..... 6

    LAUNDRY ..... 6

VISITOR ACCESS/COMMUNITY USE ..... 6

STUDENT ATTENDANCE ..... 7

    ILLNESS & SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS ..... 7

SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES ..... 7

    STAYING HOME, SELF ISOLATION AND SYMPTOMS ..... 8

    STAY HOME WHEN REQUIRED TO SELF ISOLATE ..... 8

    SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS AND RETURN TO SCHOOL ..... 8

    PROTOCOLS FOR MANAGING ILLNESS AT SCHOOLS ..... 8

    HAND HYGIENE ..... 8

    RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE ..... 9

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE).....	9
K-12 STAFF .....	9
K-12 STUDENTS .....	10
EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS .....	10
MASK TIPS: .....	10
GENERAL VENTILATION AND AIR CIRCULATION .....	11
EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION DRILLS .....	11
COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING/ORIENTATION.....	11
SIGNAGE AND POSTERS .....	12
CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES.....	12
Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School .....	18
Appendix B: Communicable Disease Plan Orientation Checklist.....	19
APPENDIX C: Ventilation Disruption Procedures .....	22

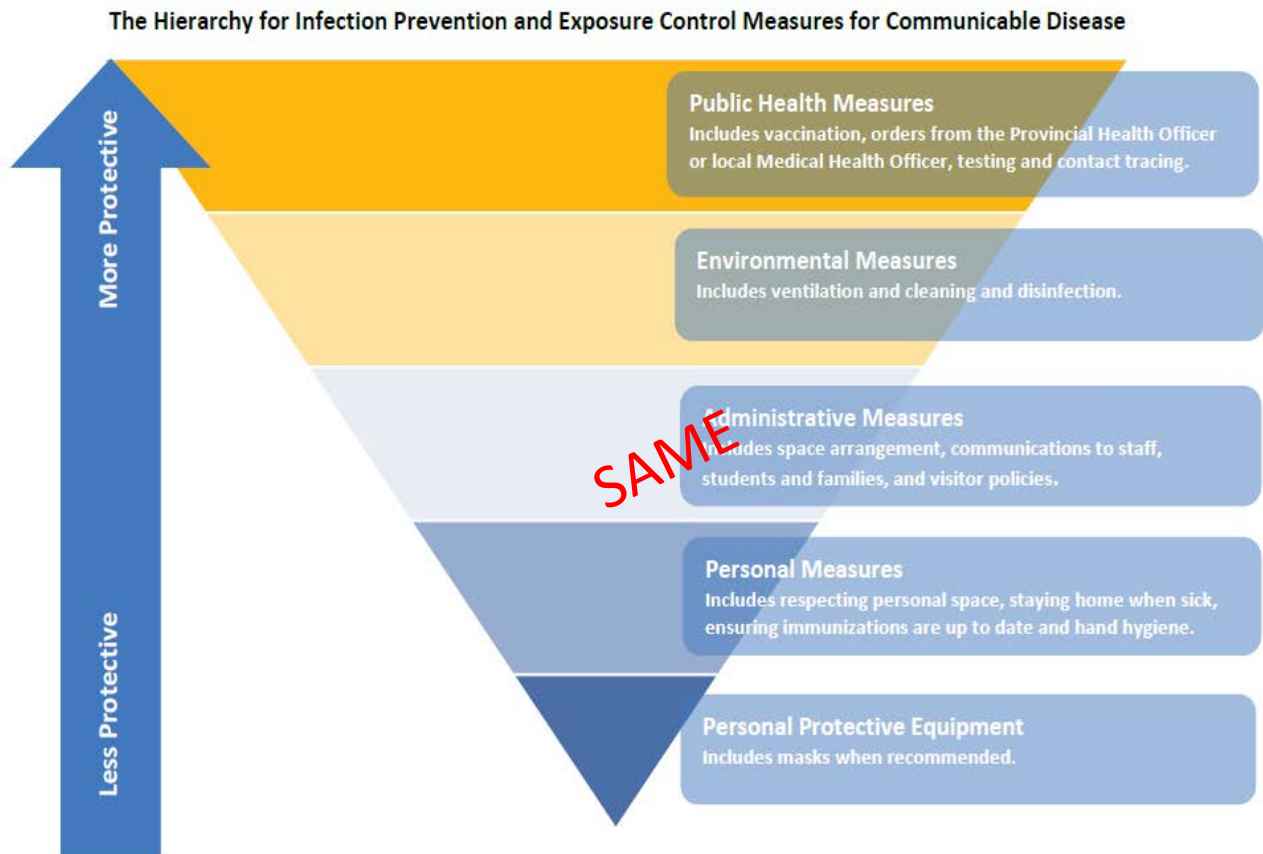
The contents of this document is based on the information provided by the BC Centre for Disease Control, Indigenous rights holders and education partners - including teachers, parents and school leaders - to outline the principles and requirements for maintaining safe learning environments. These comprehensive guidelines build on the Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools developed by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure schools have effective measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

For ease of use we have outlined what is the SAME from previous plans. The sections marked SAME indicates the information is unchanged from the 2020-2021 school year.

Additional Resources:

## INFECTION PREVENTION AND EXPOSURE CONTROL MEASURES

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



## RESOURCES

[Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)

[BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)

[K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#)

[COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators and Staff](#)

## TERMS/DEFINITIONS

(Reference [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators and Staff](#))

### Close Contact

- someone who has been near a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes when health and safety measures were not in place or were insufficient, and as such is at increased risk of developing COVID-19
- public health determines close contacts as part of contact tracing

### Cluster

- two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 that occur among students and/or staff within a 14-day period, and transmission is suspected or confirmed to have occurred within the school/worksite. Medical health officer determines clusters

### Confirmed Case

- person with laboratory confirmation of infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 performed at a community, hospital, or reference laboratory

### Contact Tracing

- process led by public health to identify people that are close contacts of a confirmed case. Contact tracing helps reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19.

### Exposure

- person was at a school when they were able to spread COVID-19

### Outbreak

- when there is sustained, uncontrolled, widespread transmission of COVID-19 within a school/worksite, and extraordinary public health measures are necessary to stop further transmission in the school/worksite or school community.

## Self-Isolation

- staying home and avoiding situations where one could come in contact with others. Self-isolation is required for those confirmed as a case of COVID-19, as well as for some close contacts.
  - Close contacts not fully vaccinated are more likely to be required to self-isolate than those who are fully vaccinated

## Self Monitoring

- Assessing oneself for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 for 14 days after being exposed, if public health has determined the person does not need to self-isolate
- Individuals who have been asked to self-monitor can continue to attend school/work as long as they are asymptomatic. If COVID-19 symptoms develop, they should stay home and get tested

## SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Schools can support students to practice personal preventative measures by:

- Staff Modeling the behaviour
- Sharing reliable information, including BC Centre for Disease Control and the Office of the Provincial Health Officers to school community
- Use floor aids and signage throughout school

Staff must use a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities, paying special consideration to respecting personal space

## VACCINES:

- Most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19
- Public health encourages all staff eligible students to be fully vaccinated (2 doses)
- According to BC Centre for Disease Control, children under 12 continue to be less likely to get and spread COVID 19, and have low risk of serious outcomes if they do get COVID 19
- Schools and School Districts are expected to work with local authority to:
  - Share evidence-based information
  - Explore opportunities to establish school-based COVID 19 vaccination clinics to help increase community uptake

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND SPACE ARRANGMENT

- Public Health no longer recommends learning groups and physical distancing of 2M
- Suggested Strategies:
  - Remind students and staff about respecting personal space - visual supports, signage
  - Implement strategies that prevent crowding:
    - Pick up and drop off times
    - Recess/lunch/class transition where possible
    - Common areas - lockers - minimize crowding as possible
    - Use floor markings/one way hallways/stairs etc.. as strategies

## STAFF ONLY SPACES

- Prevent crowding and direct traffic flow in staff only spaces
- For meetings and learning events, use large spaces, spread out, offer virtual options if necessary
- Gatherings must adhere to Public Health Recommendations

## SCHOOL GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

- Can occur if meeting the public health orders and a trauma-informed lens is applied. Consider:
  - Student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space
  - Gradual transitions to larger gatherings
  - Spread people out as much as possible, preventing involuntary contact between people
  - Examinations/assessments are not considered school gatherings

## PERSONAL ITEMS

- Staff and students can bring personal items, but not share items that come in contact with the mouth (food, drinks, vaping devices, wind instruments)
- Lockers are permitted. Try to manage flow and prevent crowding at lockers

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE ABILITIES

### EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS

- Schools expected to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with diverse/exceptional abilities
- Students with diverse/expectations or medical complexity not considered at greater risk of experiencing COVID 19
- Please refer to Page 5 of K-12 Education Recovery Plan for more information specific to children with immune suppression

### GUIDELINES FOR STAFF WORKING WITH DIVERSE/EXCEPTIONAL ABILITIES WHERE PHYSICAL CONTACT MAY BE REQUIRED

- May require close proximity or physical contact with the student
- When working indoors and service cannot be provided behind a barrier, staff required to wear a non-medical mask, face covering or face shield (Reminder mask worn underneath).
- Additional PPE is not required beyond that as used in the regular course of work. However, individual student safety plans may require additional PPE.
- If facial expressions/lip reading is necessary, masks with transparent sections to enable the visualization of the mouth are recommended.
- Students in Grades 4-12 are required to wear non-medical masks indoors
- For students in Grades K to 3, the student or parent/caregiver should determine whether or not the student should be wearing any PPE when receiving services in close physical proximity.
- Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

### BUSES

- Bus drivers will clean hands often, including before and after completing trips. Drivers encouraged to use alcohol-based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips
- Bus drivers wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields (with masks underneath) on school buses except while driving
- Students in Grades 4 to 12 required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings on school buses. Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a non-medical mask or face covering on school buses but are not required to do so - mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students
- Non-medical masks or face coverings should be put on before loading
- Students should clean hands before and after taking the bus
- Students should spread out if empty seats available
- Open windows when weather permits

### CARPOOLING

- Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible
- Travel with same people whenever possible
- Open windows and set vehicles ventilation to bring in fresh air
- Clean hands before and after trips and clean frequently touched surfaces often
- Practice safe hand hygiene before and after trips when taking public transit

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

### DEFINITIONS

- **Cleaning:** physical removal of visible soiling. Cleaning removes virus and bacteria, but does not kill it. Done with water, detergent, cloth. Soiled surfaces should be cleaned before disinfecting
- **Disinfection:** killing of virus and bacteria. Disinfectant only applies to objects, not human body

### CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FREQUENCY

- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least once in 24 hours
- Clean and disinfect dirty surfaces and empty garbage containers daily
- Requirements do not apply to spaces not used by students, staff or visitors
- These recommendations determined by BC Ministry of Health, BC Centre for Disease Control and Provincial Health Services Authority

### FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

- Frequently touched surfaces include:
  - Items used by large numbers including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet handles, toilet handles
  - Shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards, glassware, kitchen or PE equipment etc..)
    - Appliances and service counters
  - Toys and manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (playdough, sand, soft items) - can be used if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.
  - Carpets and rugs can be used



- No evidence that COVID 19 transmitted via textbooks, paper or paper based products.
- **Limiting access to water fountains is no longer recommended.**
  - All water filling stations will be operational in schools. Water bubblers will be restricted at this time.
- **School communicable disease plan should not include restricting access to water, washrooms or other spaces that support student learning and well being (e.g. gymnasiums, libraries, support rooms etc.). Schools should return to full operations of all spaces.**

#### CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BODILY FLUIDS

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or bodily fluids (eg. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine)
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves

#### LAUNDRY

- Laundry should be placed in a basket with a plastic liner
- Gloves are optional - if wearing, ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after use. Clean hands with soap and water after removing gloves.

#### VISITOR ACCESS/COMMUNITY USE

- Schools will leave front doors unlocked for visitor access, but will encourage visitors to make appointments. Principals will establish protocols to ensure controlled, safe environments for visitors. Visitor access may be restricted by local or provincial public health orders.
- Remaining doors will be locked with the following exceptions:
  - before school to allow for multiple student entry points.
  - at lunch to allow for multiple student entry points
- Schools are responsible for ensuring that visitors are aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements, and have completed a daily health check, prior to entering the school. Please post information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors by the entrance of the school, the school's website, and included in communication to students and families
- Schools must have a sign-in and sign-out process for all visitors and staff not typically on-site
- All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are in school.
- Visitors access should be limited to those areas required for the purpose of the visit. Parents/Guardians should be encouraged to drop-off/pick-up students outside of the school.
- After hour community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:
  - Use must occur in line with those activities permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders
  - Diligent hand hygiene
  - Respiratory etiquette
  - 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
- Community users are responsible for collecting names and contact information of participants to support contact tracing activities by the local health authority.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- Repeated and consistent messaging/communication to parents that schools are low risk with health and safety measures in place is critical to maximize student attendance.
- Additional guidance regarding students from First nations communities, and students and parent/caregivers with immune compromise or medical complexity is available in the K-12 Education Recovery Plan (link in the resource section of this document)

## ILLNESS & SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

### DAILY HEALTH CHECK

- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school.
  - Parents/caregivers can use the provincial [K-12 Health Check app](#) for daily assessment of symptoms
  - Staff and other adults should complete a daily health check prior to entering the school
  - If a student, staff or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school

## SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

- School districts are responsible to support schools and adult-only worksites/offices in developing protocols that:
  - Ensure staff and adults entering the school/worksites are aware of their responsibility to complete a daily health check prior to entering the school/worksites and to stay home if sick
  - Clearly communicate with parents/caregivers their responsibility to complete a daily health check with their child and keep them home if they are sick
  - Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick at school/work to be sent home as soon as possible
    - Ensure there is a space for students/staff who are can't leave the building immediately (at least 2M separation). Provide non-medical mask
      - Supervision must be provided for younger children
      - Staff supervising must wear non-medical mask, maintain physical distance and practice hand hygiene
      - Avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible
    - Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect surfaces/equipment which bodily fluids may have been in contact with while ill (desk, bathroom used etc...) prior to surfaces being used by others. Cleaning/disinfecting entire room of the person is not required
  - Staff and students return to school/work in line with the guidance in the Staying Home, Self Isolation and Symptoms section below.
- A health-care provider note is NOT required to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practices.

## STAYING HOME, SELF ISOLATION AND SYMPTOMS

### STAY HOME WHEN REQUIRED TO SELF ISOLATE

- Students, staff or other adults **must stay home if they are required to self-isolate**
- Additional information on self-isolation is available from [BCCDC](#)

### SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

- Students, staff or other adults should stay at home when sick. Please use the following resources regarding specific symptoms of illness:
  - Parents and Caregivers can use the [K-12 Health Check app](#)
  - Staff and adults refer to BCCDC's [When to get tested for COVID-19](#)
  - All can also use the [Self-Assessment Tool](#) or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider
- Returning to school after illness depends on type of symptoms experienced, if a COVID-19 test is recommended, and type of illness they had. See Appendix A - COVID 19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School for more information
- Staff and students who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition continue to attend school. No medical is required for pre-existing conditions
- New or unexplained symptoms should be require assessment by a health care provider
- Students or staff may attend school if a member of the household develops symptoms of illness, provided that the staff/student has no symptoms themselves.
- If a household member tests positive for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they may return to school

### PROTOCOLS FOR MANAGING ILLNESS AT SCHOOLS

Refer to the [COVID 19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff](#) for more information

### HAND HYGIENE

**Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.** Follow these guidelines to ensure effective hand hygiene in schools:

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Hand washing should occur upon entry of school, before/after breaks, after eating or using washroom and using frequently touched shared equipment
- Use hand-washing sites and/or alcohol based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol where sinks are not available
  - School should use the purchase order system to order from our pre-approved vendor
- Promote importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly and ensure hand-washing supplies are well stocked (paper towels, soap, appropriate sanitizer).
- Please assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed
- If hands are visibly dirty, soap and water is preferred over alcohol-based hand rub

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive at school</li> <li>• Before and after breaks</li> <li>• Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker)</li> <li>• Before and after using indoor learning space used by multiple classes with shared equipment</li> <li>• After using toilet, sneezing or coughing into hands, or when visibly dirty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive at school</li> <li>• Before and after breaks</li> <li>• Before and after eating and drinking, handling of any food or assisting students with eating</li> <li>• Before and after giving medication to student or self</li> <li>• After using toilet or contact with any bodily fluids</li> <li>• After cleaning tasks, removing gloves, handling garbage or when hands visibly dirty.</li> </ul>

### RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Students and staff should cough and sneeze into elbow, sleeve or tissue. Please throw away tissues and perform hand hygiene immediately.

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- PPE including masks can provide additional protection. Non-medical masks and face coverings (collectively called masks) have role in preventing spread of COVID 19.
- Those wearing masks should continue to respect others personal space
- Masks are not used in place of other safety measures detailed in this document

### K-12 STAFF

- All K-12 staff required to wear masks indoors and on school buses
- Supporting students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care may require staff to be in close proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune suppressed student
  - People in these scenario's must wear a mask when providing this service and the service cannot be provided from behind a physical barrier. Additional PPE over and above the needed for routine practices is not necessary
  - Health service providers are encouraged to work with their employer to confirm what PPE is recommended for the services they provide in school
  - Parents/caregivers or children considered higher risk of severe illness due to COVID 19 encouraged to consult health care provider to determine child's level or risk
  - Please see *Guidelines for Staff Working with Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities where Physical Contact may be Required* section for support in this document

## K-12 STUDENTS

- All students in Grades 4-12 required to wear a mask or face shield indoors and on school buses
- Students in Grade K-3 encouraged to wear mask indoors and on school buses, but not required to do so. Wearing mask remains personal or family/caregiver choice. Please respect choice
- Staff should use positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in use of masks, and must not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature. See *Supportive School Environments* section for more information.
- Use of masks does not replace more effective prevention and exposure control measures like:
  - Ensuring students and staff conduct daily health check and stay home when sick
  - Daily cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces; and
  - Frequent hand hygiene
- All visitors are required to wear non-medical masks when inside a school

## EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS

- Mask requirement does not apply to staff, students and visitors in the following circumstances:
  - Person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health and behavioural reasons
  - Person unable to put on or remove mask without assistance of another person
  - If mask is removed temporarily to identify a person
  - If mask is removed temporarily to engage in educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (instrument, high intensity PE etc...)
  - If person is eating or drinking or behind a barrier
  - If providing service to person with diverse ability where visual cues, facial expressions, lip reading/movements are important
- Public Health recommends staff and visitors at non-school sites wear masks indoor common/shared spaces if they are not fully vaccinated. Staff and visitors at non-school sites must adhere to provincial health recommendations or orders for workplaces requiring increased mask use.
- Schools must not require a health-care note to confirm if 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.

## MASK TIPS:

- Support students and staff on how to properly put on, wear, take off and store non-medical masks and face coverings. Find additional info at the [BCCDC Website](#) and the [Government of Canada Website](#)
- Medical-grade masks are not required within school settings for general use
- Face shields do not replace medical masks.

## GENERAL VENTILATION AND AIR CIRCULATION

- No evidence at this time that a functioning ventilation system contributes to spread of COVID 19
- Quality ventilation cannot protect people from exposure COVID -19, however it can reduce risk used in addition to other preventive measures.
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems must meet standards and specifications for ongoing comfort for workers. Resource [Part 4 of the OHS Regulation](#)
- School districts should maintain HVAC systems for proper operation and ensure that:
  - Schools with recycled/recirculated air systems upgrade filters to MERV 13 filter or higher if possible
  - Schools with fresh air intake systems increase their average air exchanges as detailed on the [ASHRAE website](#) and the [Rocky Point Engineering Ltd Website](#)
- School district and site-based plans should have plan for when school/worksite's ventilation system is compromised (See Appendix C for the Disruption in School Ventilation Plan).
- In order to improve ventilation, schools should consider:
  - Moving classes/activities outdoors when weather and space permits
  - Increasing air exchanges by adjusting HVAC
  - Managing air distribution through building automation systems
  - Open windows as much as possible
- Avoid use of portable air conditioners with doors and windows closed in unventilated spaces

## EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION DRILLS

- Schools should continue to practice emergency procedures, including six fire drills and two lockdown drills required annually
  - Staff should be notified in advance of emergency/evacuation drills
  - Schools are required to review fire safety plans on a minimum annual basis, as per the BC Fire Code, to "ensure it takes account of the changes in use and other characteristics of the building". Changes should be developed in cooperation with the fire department.
  - Emergency procedures may require modification to adhere to communicable disease plans. In case of an actual emergency, procedure modifications may be suspended to ensure for a timely, efficient safe response.

## COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING/ORIENTATION

- School Districts must communicate guidance, recommendations and Orders from regional Medical Health Officers and the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), including COVID -19 resources.
- Schools must ensure communication of communicable disease measures is relayed in multiple formats for ease of understanding (Visual representation, sign language etc...)
- School and District communication should include evidence-based information to provide awareness that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from students is minimal and to help address inaccurate information that may be circulating in the community
- Provide health and safety orientation for all staff, parents/caregivers, students and adults. See the Communicable Disease Plan Orientation Checklist (Appendix B) for considerations in planning Health and Safety orientation for staff and students

- School districts should provide COVID-19 safety orientation opportunities for staff prior to students arriving for the first day of school, in consultation with their local unions and staff health and safety representatives.
- As per WorkSafe BC guidance, employers need to involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for the workplace. Ensure active Site health and safety committees that meet regularly are included in school/district planning efforts.

## SIGNAGE AND POSTERS

- Please refer to the [B.C.'s COVID-19 Safe Schools website](#) and [Queen's Printer COVID-19 Signage Catalogue](#) for signage and posters

## CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES

- All curriculum, program and activities should operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines, including school-led activities off campus.
- Equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines outlined in this document
  - Equipment that touches the mouth should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between use
- Hand hygiene is practiced before and after using equipment and when hands are dirty
- Please follow guidelines outlined in this document

Curricular Program	Protocols
Dual Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students taking dual credit courses in post-secondary institutions must follow communicable disease plans set out by the post-secondary</li> <li>• See <a href="#">BC Government Website</a> for info on specific institutions</li> </ul>
Field Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools must follow existing procedures as well as guidance in this document</li> <li>• Volunteers must be trained and adhere to health and safety guidelines</li> <li>• Alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including international travel</li> <li>• Schools should consider guidance from <a href="#">BCCDC</a> and <a href="#">BC Camps Association</a> for overnight trips that include group accommodation</li> </ul>
Food/Culinary Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning for students</li> </ul> <p><b>Food Safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements</li> <li>• Implement cleaning and disinfecting measures outlined in this document</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">FOODSAFE</a> Level 1 is a helpful resource for those seeking education and training on foodsafe practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Protocols:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice diligent hand hygiene by following procedures outlines in this document (20 seconds, soap and water etc...)</li> <li>• Refer to Cleaning and Disinfecting section for protocols</li> <li>• For laundry, follow instructions provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of these guidelines</li> </ul>
<b>Food Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools can continue food services, including for sale</li> <li>• Some schools offer food services that are regulated under the <a href="#">Food Premises Regulation</a>. These are typically cafeterias. If food service provided in schools that are regulated under the Food Premises Regulation, no additional requirements other than what is in this document is required</li> <li>• For food contact services, schools should ensure sanitizers and disinfectants used are approved in a food service application and are appropriate for use against COVID-19. Additional information is available on the <a href="#">BCCDC website</a></li> <li>• Schools continue to accept food donations to support learning, programs or clubs</li> <li>• Schools emphasize that food should not be shared</li> <li>• School meal programs follow regular operating practices</li> </ul>
<b>Fundraisers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue offering fundraisers in line with guidelines in this document. Ensure food fundraisers align with Food Guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Kindergarten Program and Entry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicable disease prevention measures information must be in place as part of communications to students and their families prior to school start</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers must follow visitor guidelines</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for Kindergarten students to learn and practice respecting personal space as it may be new to them</li> <li>• Gently remind and support students as they learn expectations</li> <li>• Carpets and rugs can be used</li> <li>• Ensure hand hygiene is practiced when using frequently touched items such as toys and manipulatives</li> </ul>



<p><b>Music Programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12 staff and Grades 4-12 students wear masks when indoors and no barrier present.</li> <li>• Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask</li> <li>• Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should practice proper hand hygiene before and after music equipment use. Do not share equipment that touches the mouth unless it is cleaned and disinfected</li> <li>• Use <a href="#">Guidance for Music Classes in British Columbia: COVID-19 and Pandemic Recovery</a> as a resource in case of discrepancy in guidance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shared Office Space for Staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines in this document used to determine measures in staff-only spaces</li> <li>• <a href="#">WorkSafe BC Guidance for Workplaces</a> used to determine measures for non-school spaces operated by school district or district authority</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Health Education (PHE)/Outdoor Programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread out students and staff within available space and encourage outdoor activities as much as possible</li> <li>• K-12 Staff and Grades 4-12 students expected to wear masks where barrier is not present</li> <li>• High-intensity activities - Students not required to wear masks as this is personal choice. Staff encouraged to move high-intensity physical activities outside whenever possible</li> <li>• Low intensity activities - students required to wear masks when indoors with no barrier present</li> <li>• Shared equipment can be used if it is cleaned and disinfected as per guidelines in this document</li> <li>• Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should practice proper hand hygiene before and after equipment use. Do not share equipment that touches the mouth unless it is cleaned and disinfected</li> </ul>
<p><b>Playgrounds</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. Playgrounds are a safe environment.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play</li> <li>• Minimize unintentional physical contact between students</li> <li>• Sand and water can be used for play if children wash hands before and after play. There is no evidence showing the virus survives on sand, in water or playdough</li> </ul>

**School Libraries/Learning Commons**

- No evidence at this time that COVID-19 is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. No need to limit distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers are low risk items.
- Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal - there is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time
- See [BCTLA Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Commons Resources to Meet COVID-19 Requirements](#) for guidance.

**School Sports**

- Intra-and inter-school programs, activities, sports academies and events can continue in alignment with the following guidance:
- Requirements of relevant local, regional and provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events
- Masks work by K-12 staff and Grades 4-12 students when indoors with no barrier present.
- High-intensity activities - Students not required to wear masks as this is personal choice. Staff encouraged to move high-intensity physical activities outside whenever possible
- Low intensity activities - students required to wear masks when indoors with no barrier present
- Use all available space and spread out as much as possible
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected and students should practice proper hand hygiene before and after equipment use. Do not share equipment that touches the mouth unless it is cleaned and disinfected.
- Use proper respiratory etiquette
- Sports activities should be held whenever possible
- See Visitor Access/Community Use section for more information on protocols
- See [Return to School Sports Plan from BC School Sports](#) for additional information.
- Schools are expected to follow the Ministry of Education guidelines outlined in this document in any discrepancy in guidance.

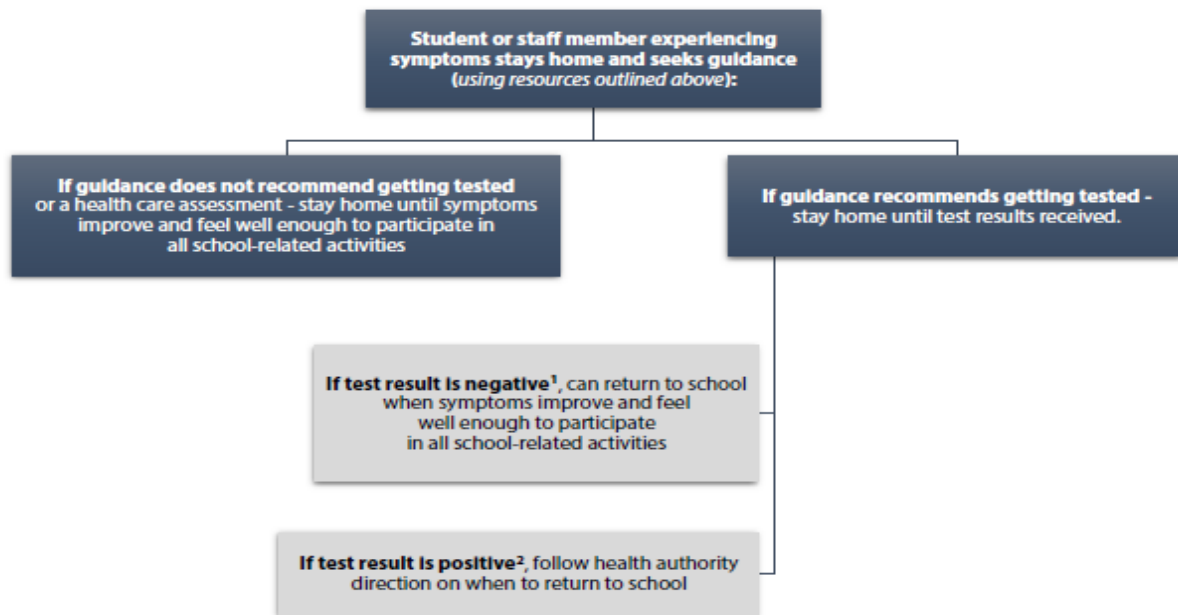
<p><b>Trades in Training Programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue with post-secondary institutions for Trades in Training is crucial</li> <li>• Ensure staff and students in the K-12 school and post-secondary institution are aware of communicable disease measures in place</li> <li>• Practice diligent student self-assessment of health when transitioning between secondary school and post-secondary institution</li> <li>• Information for workers available on the WorkSafe BC <a href="#">Communicable Disease Prevention</a> webpage, including <a href="#">COVID-19 and Communicable Disease Information for Workers</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Theatre, Film and Dance Programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use all available space and spread out as much as possible</li> <li>• K-12 staff required to wear masks during these programs when indoors and no barrier present</li> <li>• K-12 students required to wear masks during these programs when indoors and barrier is not present, except during high-intensity physical activity</li> <li>• Shared equipment such as set pieces, props, cameras etc. should be cleaned and disinfected as per cleaning and disinfecting guidelines in this document</li> <li>• Students practice hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment</li> <li>• For more information and resource, visit <a href="#">Association of BC Drama Educators (ABCDE) Website</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Experience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers must follow current guidelines from Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafe BC.</li> <li>• Schools can engage in work placements considering:</li> <li>• Schools and districts are covered with the required, valid workplace insurance for placements at standard worksites and follow WorkSafe BC guidelines</li> <li>• Information is available on WorkSafe BC <a href="#">Communicable Disease Prevention</a> webpage including <a href="#">COVID-19 and Communicable Disease Information for Workers</a></li> <li>• Follow standards in the <a href="#">Work Experience Program Guide</a></li> <li>• Schools and districts will assess and determine if it is safe to continue existing work placements or begin new placements</li> <li>• Ensure parents/guardians sign off on all new placements</li> <li>• Students and support workers who accompany special needs students to work sites, life skills and locations will adhere to the communicable disease prevention plan of the workplace including wearing PPE if required</li> </ul>

<b>Extra Curricular Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can occur in alignment with the guidelines in this document and requirements of relevant local, regional and provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events</li></ul>
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## Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School

### Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School

When a student, staff or other adult can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced and if a COVID-19 test is recommended. See the [K-12 Health Check app](#) and BCCDC "[When to get tested for COVID-19](#)" resource for specific guidance. Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online [Self-Assessment Tool](#), or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.



1. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. [BCCDC](#) has information on receiving negative test results.
2. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test. Visit the [BCCDC website](#) for more information on [positive test results](#).

## Appendix B: Communicable Disease Plan Orientation Checklist

### Appendix B: Communicable Disease Plan Orientation Checklist

This checklist is intended to support school districts and independent school authorities in planning ongoing communicable disease orientation for staff (including newly hired staff and staff who changed worksites), other adults (including volunteers and teacher candidates in practicums) and students. Orientation sessions should provide a comprehensive overview of the key principles and guidelines outlined in the resources listed below, as well as information on how these principles and guidelines will be implemented at the school level:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Communicable Disease Prevention: A Guide for Employers](#)
- School/district communicable disease plan

Schools and school districts should ensure their Joint Health and Safety Committee is established prior to the orientation session. At the beginning of the school year, schools/school districts are encouraged to hold Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings more frequently to help identify and address any safety concerns in a timely manner.

#### CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

Adopt a trauma-informed approach:

- where possible, have an employee trained in trauma-informed practice deliver some of the orientation
- conduct needs-based assessments and regular 'check-ins' after the orientation session, and provide contact information to students/staff for requesting additional supports
- provide information on how to access counselling services during school start up
- for staff: consider sharing the [Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal](#) webinar link. This free webinar developed by the Ministry of Education is intended to provide teachers, education assistants, and administrators with information, ideas and strategies that they can use to create compassionate spaces for students.

Highlight the process used to develop the school/district plan (e.g., alignment with provincial direction, engagement at the local level) and the provincial guidelines:

- Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., the latest research, guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, and evidence that children are at a lower risk of developing and transmitting COVID-19, K-12 students can safely participate in full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.
- The Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings have been developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the BC Centre for Disease Control, Indigenous rightsholders and education partners, including district/school leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents.
- These guidelines are based on the public health guidance developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

- Discuss the importance of implementing communicable disease prevention measures that promote equity and inclusion, and outline how these principles are reflected in the school/district plan
- Review the provincial K-12 guidelines and school/district plan, and describe what a school day will look like with the new guidelines (e.g. interactions between peers and staff, traffic flow throughout the school, transition time, recess/lunch, etc.)
- Outline how prevention and exposure control measures are being implemented in schools to ensure student and staff safety (see the [Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures](#) section for more information)
- Discuss measures for gatherings and events; provide opportunities for staff and students to put forward alternatives to continue to support events in a different format if needed (e.g., virtual events)
- Discuss preparation for potential transitions (e.g. regional public health order)
- Review school emergency and evacuation procedures (e.g., fire drill) considering relevant guidelines (see the [Emergency and Evacuation Drills](#) section for more information)
- Outline individual responsibilities (e.g., daily health check, stay home if sick, etc.) and remind everyone to do their part (e.g., practice diligent hand hygiene on a regular basis)
- Outline measures in place to support students and staff who are immune compromised
- Implement strategies to ensure staff and students who cannot attend orientation are made aware of communicable disease protocols (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on communicable disease plans)
- Provide enough time and space for staff, students and families to review the school/district communicable disease plan, ask questions, and provide input; provide contact information for any future questions that may arise
- Describe the process to address concerns and suggestions regarding the communicable disease plan (e.g., suggestions to support continuous improvement)
- Outline the process in place to assess and revise the school/district safety plan on an ongoing basis as well as how staff, students and families will be made aware of any changes in the plan
- Communicate proactively and on an ongoing basis about the changes made to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure staff, students and families are informed in a timely manner
- Provide a list of resources and links for more information (e.g., [BCCDC resources](#), [resources from the Government of Canada](#), guidelines developed by provincial associations, [Ministry-developed trauma-informed practice resources](#) or other resources such as [videos from the BC Health Emergency Services](#))

#### **CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO STAFF**

- Walk staff (administrators, teachers, teachers teaching on call, support staff, itinerant staff, etc.) through what the first days of school will look like to welcome students back
  - If appropriate, consider involving school staff representatives in the delivery of information pertaining to specific area of expertise
- Ensure orientation includes specific communicable disease protocols for itinerant staff and specialists (e.g., teachers teaching on call, counsellors, education assistants, teacher candidates)
- Include itinerant staff as well as on call and auxiliary staff in orientation sessions

- Implement strategies to ensure staff who work at multiple sites are made aware of communicable disease protocols in each of the sites (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on communicable disease plans for different schools)
- Share procedures and contact information in case of emergencies
- Introduce members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee or any other safety representative (along with their contact information) and outline the committee/representative's role in helping maintain a healthy and safe workplace
- Outline existing processes to address requests, concerns or accommodations related to communicable disease prevention measures.



## APPENDIX C: Ventilation Disruption Procedures

These procedures are meant to be activated when there is a power disruption or ventilation disruption (school wide or individual classroom). Adequate ventilation is a building safety requirement for many reasons including potential to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure in indoor setting.

The level of ventilation to maintain indoor air quality is dependent on many factors (number of occupants, size of the room/area, ceiling height, windows/door openings & the ability to open, activities occurring in space (amount of breathing) type of building. There are many different types of HVAC and ventilation systems throughout the district which will determine what measures are appropriate for that location in addition to other factors such as weather and outdoor air quality that need to be taken into consideration.

If the disruption is short term an effective way to increase short term ventilation is to open the exterior doors and windows to allow for natural ventilation and a cross flow to occur. This may not be possible if the outside temperature is below freezing or the outside air quality health index is high or very high.

Note: each school system is unique, contact the Facility Services Department in the event of a disruption to discuss outside air temperature and air quality for the location.

## Air Quality Links:

Prince George Schools

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi.html?id=AQHI-Prince\\_George](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi.html?id=AQHI-Prince_George)

Valemount

<https://www.iqair.com/ca/canada/british-columbia/valemount>

[McBride use Windy.com Air Quality data](#)

<https://www.windy.com/53.306/-120.166?cams,pm2p5,52.930,-120.166,8,m:e7ZacOS>

Mackenzie use Windy.com Air Quality data

<https://www.windy.com/55.302/-123.136?52.362,-123.135,5,m:fdlacJV>

## Investigate:

- Determine if the disruption is full or partial building?
- If power outage, is a larger area is affected? Is the evacuation location affected?
- Expected time of restoration?
- Type of ventilation system in the school? (unit ventilation of whole building system may be one or both systems in a school)
- Size and how many people in the area (windows (do they open), doors, ceiling height)
- Characteristics of the room/area/building
- Stop gym/exercising, speaking loudly/yelling, singing (minimize aerosols)

## Procedure to Follow in the Event of a Full or Partial Outage of the Ventilation System:

- 1. Call Facility Services Department**
2. Once issue is found and estimated time for restoration is established notify the **Office of the Superintendent**
3. Call an emergency JOHSC meeting to discuss the situation and information provided by HVAC technician/ Facility Services
4. If the disruption is longer than two hours consider implementing the Emergency response plan and evacuating the school.
5. If estimated to be of short duration or if the weather is cooperative,
  - a. Consider moving classrooms outside.
  - b. Consider relocating another area
  - c. Availability to open windows and doors
6. JOHSC use this link to determine the level of risk present.  
<https://www.schoolsafetybc.ca/>  
Click on COVID-19 Resources, School Resources (Site Specific Risk Assessment Form). We're using the risk assessment form for Ventilation.  
Use this link to determine the room dimensions  
<http://staffnet.intranet.sd35.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/03/Dimension-Calculator-for-Area.xlsx>
7. If JOHSC believes that recommended measures are inadequate, contact the Office of the Superintendent.

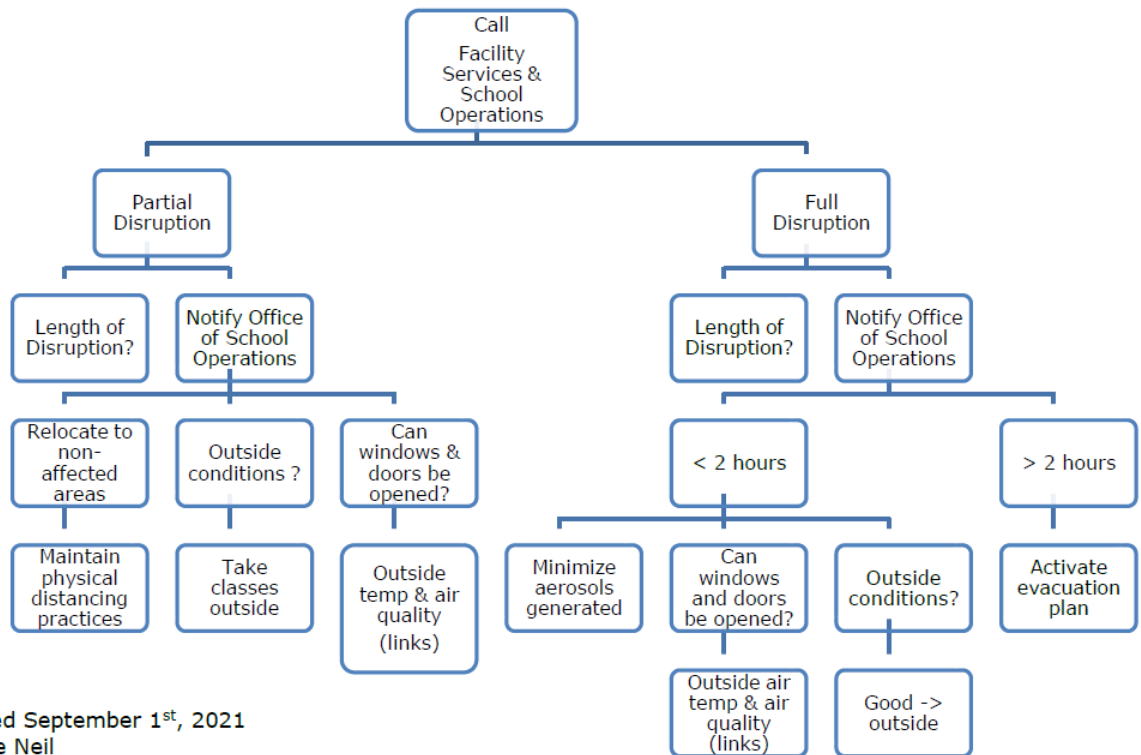
### In the Event of a Power Outage:

Determine if the school's evacuation location has power?

1. Is the power outage a school specific event?
  - a. Call Facility Services
2. How large is the outage? Is the Emergency Evacuation location included in the power outage?
3. Estimated time of restoration?

4. Can windows and doors be opened?
  - a. School specific
  - b. Air Quality outside
  - c. Outside temperature (may need to maintain heat in the building)
  - d. Any additional safety hazards from power outage (bathrooms, handwashing, emergency light duration)
5. Use the risk assessment tool  
<https://www.schoolsafetybc.ca/>

Procedures in the event of a Loss of Ventilation (COVID-19)



Revised September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
 Nadine Neil