



SD10 (Arrow Lakes) District Protocol Supporting Students In-person in Schools during COVID-19

Overview

School Districts have been directed by the Ministry of Education to explore and provide in-person instruction for vulnerable students, students with diverse needs and children of Essential Service Workers (ESWs) within the [Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) established by BC Centre for Disease Control and the Ministry of Health. These guidelines state that “It is anticipated that most children requiring in-person instruction in K-12 school settings will be the children of essential service workers requiring school care, those in remote locations, vulnerable students requiring in-person support, and learners with diverse needs.”

The guidelines further state that, “It is up to individual school districts ... through their local planning processes to determine the optimal balance between virtual and face-to-face opportunities for students.”

The purpose of this protocol therefore, is to provide some consistent guidance to schools within SD 10 to determine

- 1) who are vulnerable learners or learners requiring in person support,
- 2) how to keep the learners and staff safe using common infection control protocols, and
- 3) how to ensure that the learning, mental health, and socio-emotional needs of our most vulnerable learners can be met to the highest degree possible within public health restrictions and using health and safety guidelines

1. Four Core Provincial Principles for all K-12 settings

The Ministry of Education has designed four principles to guide districts in their COVID-19 response:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential workers.
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

2. In-person support guided by Principle 1 – a Healthy and Safe Environment

Principle 1: Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.

i. Student, Parent and Employee Wellness

Student Wellness

- If students are showing any symptoms of illness, they should not come to the school → **If you are ill, stay at home.**
 - If a student demonstrates symptoms of illness while at school, parents will be contacted and the student will be sent home.

- All students will be taught and reminded about hand washing, physical distancing, and cough etiquette

Parent Wellness

- In order to effectively practice physical distancing, parents will drop children off and pick them up at a designated location outside the school
- Although we appreciate our parents presence in our schools, at this time parents will not be in schools with their children
- If a parent is demonstrating symptoms of illness, the school encourages them to practice health guidelines at home and monitor their children's health

Employee Wellness

- If employees are showing any symptoms of illness, they should not come to work and should access their sick leave.
 - **If you are ill, stay at home.**
- If an employee shows symptoms of COVID-19 illness while at work, they are encouraged to go home and access their sick leave.
- If a member of the employee's household is demonstrating symptoms of illness, the school encourages them to practice health guidelines at home

ii. School and School District Infection Control

a. School District Infection Control Measures

- The School District will follow the [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) BCCDC Protocol and [Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (pages 2 - 5) and will ensure that all staff are fluent in these public health guidelines for infection control
- The School District will maintain enhanced custodial cleaning during the school day, in particular on high touch surfaces as well as after school hours
- Custodial hours may be adjusted to coordinate with in-person learning and other CUPE staff (eg: bus drivers with custodial training) may be redeployed to enhance custodial services
- All School District sites will maintain enhanced cleaning and disinfection including:
 - Hand hygiene
 - Wiping down high touch surfaces before any in-person meetings and after a space is utilized

b. School-based Infection Control Measures

- Washrooms to be used by students will be clearly identified. A hygiene station may be considered for these locations to ensure hand hygiene after using high touch surfaces such as faucets, toilets, doors, etc.
- The School District and schools will ensure that supplies of disinfectants and hand-sanitizers for hygiene stations are monitored and maintained daily
- The use of gloves is not recommended by Public Health for K-12 employees, with the exception of custodians who regularly wear disposable gloves and employees who are in contact with bodily fluids as result of their work in personal care with learners with complex needs or toileting for early learners
 - These employees are trained in proper use of gloves for infection control

- Hands should be washed before putting on gloves and after taking them off with correct procedures followed for infection control as trained
- Employees who have been trained in personal care protocols are the ones who should work with learners whose needs include personal care
- Infection control to support vulnerable students, students with diverse learning needs, and health and safety of employees will be planned in school-based team meetings and may include:
 - Instruction and planning for students and employees in hand hygiene and cough etiquette
 - Instruction, planning and coaching for students and employees in physical distancing
 - Employee use of gloves to deal with bodily fluids to support particular students with complex needs who require toileting and personal care as identified above
- School-based teams will regularly meet to re-assess infection control needs at their site

c. Controlling and Monitoring Access to School District Buildings

- Schools and the School District will continue to control access by scheduling visits to School District buildings (ie: by appointment)
 - School secretary or principals and vice-principals will maintain a daily master schedule of scheduled in-person visits to the school
 - School secretaries and principals and vice-principals will share this information with staff via email, in-person or other school communication
 - Any external construction or maintenance contractors who access the District buildings will be given a schedule which is clearly communicated to principals and vice-principals who will then communicate with impacted staff
- A master schedule of students attending schools in-person will take into consideration the need to for physical distancing, safe numbers of students in a particular space and the total numbers in the building at any given time
- A sign in sheet along with a hand hygiene station at the main entry door of the school may be used dependent on the needs and size of the school community
- District staff will continue to access school and district buildings and if the school protocol has a sign-in procedure, will follow that procedure

3. Determining which learners are to be supported in-person at schools

Guidance for Schools in Determining In-person learning and support in accordance with Ministry Principles 2, 3 and 4:

2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential workers (*See District Protocol S-21 – Provision of In-School Care for Essential Service Workers*)
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

i. Our school contexts are all different, requiring contextual responses and autonomy

Our district schools are geographically dispersed and encompass a range of communities which each present a range of vulnerability factors. Some of our schools by the very nature of their remoteness or the remoteness of the surrounding areas to the school in which families live, are vulnerable. Some of our

school communities have higher vulnerability due to poverty and family support for children. Some of our schools have higher numbers of students who are identified with vulnerabilities due to diverse learning needs or significant mental health needs.

ii. School communities to plan and identify who needs in-person support

With the exception of mandated school care for children of ESWs, school communities will plan for and identify which learners will have some support in-person. Both the school staff and the parents and learners will determine which children and youth are to be supported in person for their learning within a common set of guidelines informed by the Ministry of Education, Public Health and the BCCDC as referenced in the [Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#).

For example, schools should support some in-person instruction in remote schools, for vulnerable learners (those with mental health or socio-emotional needs, families that need additional support in learning, those who do not have access to Internet for remote learning), for students with diverse and complex learning needs. School care for 5-12 year old children of essential service workers shall be provided where needed by ESWs.

iii. Process at the school level to determine in-school support

- Individual schools will meet and collaboratively determine which students/services necessitate on-site presence and communicate with their student and parent community. This process will be revisited regularly to ensure that in-person support is there for students who need it when they need it.
- If students or parents contact the school and identify vulnerability needs which are best addressed by being in-person in schools, the school will consider these needs in alignment with the Ministry's [FAQs for Parents on Continuity of Learning Section 3: Support for Students with Disabilities and Diverse \(Special\) Needs](#) and the [Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)

iv. Questions for school communities to consider in assessing in-person learning

The following questions for school communities may assist considerations in assessing need for in-person learning and vulnerability:

- For diverse learners: Are the learning needs of the student being met remotely? Is there equity in instruction or would in-person support help the child or youth to learn and ensure that learning gaps are not increased as a result of remote learning?
- For remote schools or remote families: Is there equity and access for all learners to learn and get the supports that they need? Does the family have access to Internet? Could access to in-person support at their local school (eg: Burton, Edgewood and New Denver) help address equity and access?
- For DL learners: Are the blended learning supports that DL students typically have in their learning with in-person access to teachers, needed at this time? Which learners are vulnerable in the DL learning community and need help?
- For Grade 12s and other senior secondary learners: Are learners all engaging with remote learning and showing success and progress? Is in-person learning support needed to ensure that grads remain on track for graduation and that post-secondary goals are not compromised? Do Grade 12s need in-person support with scholarship applications?

- For learners with mental health needs: Are learners managing in remote learning? Is in-person one to one or small group counselling needed to help these learners manage and navigate towards greater well-being? Would in-person support with classroom teachers better support the well-being of vulnerable learners?
- For learners who are not engaging with learning: Are learners “attending” and engaging in remote learning? Are they progressing in their learning? Is in-person learning support by teachers or support staff needed to ensure that equity and access is maintained for these learners?
- For ordinarily high-achieving students: Are learners who typically perform strongly in class settings struggling in remote learning environments? What measures have been put in place to support their learning? Is some in-person support needed for these learners?

Related Documents

[Public Health Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)

[FAQs for Parents on Continuity of Learning Section 3: Support for Students with Disabilities and Diverse \(Special\) Needs](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#)

[Public Health Guidance for Childcare Facilities](#)

District Protocol S-21 – Provision of In-School Care for Essential Service Workers