



World Class Learning in a Rural Environment

# School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) Communicable Disease Plan

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**Information for Students, Parents and Staff**

January 2022

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## Introduction

On August 24th, 2021, the Ministry of Education introduced the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for the K-12 Settings](#). Based on guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control, K-12 students can participate in full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools. These new guidelines outline a return to school that all school districts in British Columbia are expected to implement.

All school districts are required to have Communicable Disease (CD) Prevention plans in place, which focus on reducing the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

This CD Plan is effective September 1, 2021 and replaces all existing COVID-19 Safety Plans.

## Key Principles

- All schools and district facilities are to adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, BC Centre for Disease Control, and WorkSafeBC.
- Schools should implement psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice alongside physical health and safety measures.
- Ongoing communication with school leaders, community partners, Indigenous rightsholders, parents, caregivers, students, unions, and employees will take place.
- Schools continue to be low-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission even with increased risk of COVID-19 in some communities.
- Adhering to local Public Health Orders (Interior Health Region) where directed.

## Guiding Documents

This Communicable Disease Plan is to be implemented in alignment and with the support of the following guiding documents:

1. [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
  - a) [Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
2. [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
3. [K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#)
4. [WorkSafeBC's Communicable disease prevention: A Guide for Employers](#)

In the case of any variance between guidelines including this CD Plan, schools and school districts will follow the guidelines outlined in the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#).

## Communicable Disease Prevention

Communicable disease prevention focuses on basic risk reduction principles to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of communicable diseases including COVID-19. The fundamental components of communicable disease prevention include both ongoing measures to always maintain, and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health officials during periods of elevated risk. School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) will regularly monitor and review communicable disease information from public health authorities and update the school community of any changes affecting school and school related activities, including updating the CD Plan as required.

## Ongoing Prevention Measures

Preventing communicable diseases involves taking ongoing measures to reduce the risk of communicable

disease in the workplace. The following information outlines ongoing practices that are implemented at SD10 schools and facilities to prevent and in response to a communicable disease outbreak.

### 1. Daily Health Check

- All employees and students must continue to do a daily health self-assessment. Daily health assessment resources can be found on the SD10 Website or by clicking on the following links:
  - For students: [K-12 Health Check \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/k-12/health-check)
  - For staff and visitors: [Daily Health Check Form](#) or [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#)

### 2. Supporting employees and students to stay home when sick

- If you are ill or have symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g. fever and/or chills, recent onset of coughing, diarrhea):
  - please stay home
  - notify the school principal or vice principal of your absence
  - consult the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) to see if you should get tested, and contact 811 if you require medical advice
- When persons experiencing symptoms of illness can return to work or school please see section [Returning to School after Illness](#)

### 3. Positive and Inclusive Approaches

- In all practices and implementation of prevention measures, positive and inclusive approaches aligned with existing school/sector practices will be used.

### 4. Promoting handwashing and hygiene practices

- All persons should wash their hands regularly or use hand sanitizers if a washroom or sink is not readily available. *Key times to wash hands:* [When and How to Wash Your Hands / Handwashing / CDC](#)
- All persons should practice cough and sneeze etiquette by covering their mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.

### 5. Space Arrangements

- Strategies will be implemented to help prevent crowding during class transition and during break times.
- Common spaces, classrooms and learning environments will implement strategies to maximum space between people and limit face-to-face seating arrangements.

### 6. Gatherings, Meetings, and Events

- Staff only gatherings will be held virtually.
- School gatherings and events will be held virtually wherever possible. If gatherings and events must be in person, attendance should be minimized as much as possible and not exceed 50% of the operating capacity.
- Sports tournaments will be paused.
- Spectators will not be permitted to attend.

### 7. Regular Cleaning Program

- Daily cleaning programs and disinfection practices, including frequently touched surfaces will be completed at all school sites, including school busses at least once in a 24-hour period.
- Garbage containers are required to be emptied daily.
- Enhanced cleaning will be implemented where required and/or when directed by public health officials during periods of elevated risk.

## 8. Building Ventilation

- SD10's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort of workers (Part 4 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.)
- Site based safety plans should be in place to respond to situations when a school/worksite's ventilation system is temporarily compromised.
- Site based safety plans should also consider response measures in situations such as heat waves or wildfire smoke using BCCDC resources: [Wildfire Smoke \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca) and [Heat Event Response Planning \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca).
- If using portable fans or air conditioning units, they should be set up to move air downward and not blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to other occupants of a room. Avoid horizontal cross breezes.

## 9. Personal Protective Equipment

- All K-12 staff, students Grades K-12 and school visitors are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses unless they fall under one of the exceptions as identified in the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov2/health/communicable_disease_guidelines_for_k-12_settings).
- Schools will provide reminders to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff as appropriate, regarding wearing masks, and regarding the importance of proper fit of masks.
- Schools will implement alternative strategies as appropriate, based on additional prevention measures for those with mask exemptions.
- School bus drivers are required to wear a face mask on the school bus, except while driving.
- SD10 will provide non-medical masks for staff and students as required.

## 10. Managing Visitor Access

- Visitors will be limited to those that are supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing.
- Visitor access to schools will be managed in accordance with local or provincial health guidelines.
- Visitors will be made aware of the Communicable Disease Plan and other relevant protocols.
- Schools are required to ensure a sign-in/out process is in place for all visitors as well as itinerant staff.

## 11. Supporting Vaccinations

- SD10 will work with Interior Health to:
  - Share evidence-based information (e.g. from BCCDC and ImmunizeBC), and details on how and where people can get vaccinated, with staff, students and families
  - Explore opportunities to establish school-based COVID-19 vaccinations clinics to help increase community uptake. This includes provision of space within schools for public health nurses or other qualified health personnel to carry out their duties (including immunization).

## Responding to Elevated Risk

The level of risk of certain communicable disease, including COVID-19, may elevate from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This can occur at a local or a regional level or within a workplace. In addition to maintaining the ongoing prevention measures, SD10 will:

- monitor public health information and be responsive to any further directives from the local medical health officer or provincial health officer which could include for example, implementing enhanced cleaning measures, distancing requirements or masking guidance.
- Communicate additional measures during periods of elevated risk to the school community and all SD10 stakeholders.

## Communication and Monitoring

- This Communicable Disease Plan will be available on the School District Website on the [COVID-19 Information Updates and Resources \(sd10.bc.ca\)](https://sd10.bc.ca) web page and all School Websites will link to this page.
- All staff will be provided with the Communicable Disease Plan and an orientation including information regarding prevention measures, practices, regional differences, and policies for managing communicable disease.
- A copy of the CD Plan will be available at the primary entrance and in staff rooms of school district facilities.
- Prevention measures will be reinforced through signage and visual cues, communications medias, and other communication tools on a regular basis.
- The ongoing review and evaluation of the CD plan will involve school based OHS committees and the District Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
- Monitoring of the ongoing prevention measures is a shared responsibility.
- Individuals are encouraged to report any health and safety concerns directly to their supervisor. Individuals may also contact their union representative or school based OH safety committee.

## Appendix A – Safe Work Procedures

### Students and Staff Showing Symptoms While at Work/School

This safe work procedure establishes how to safely move a student or staff member to the designated sick area if they become ill.

If individuals begin to experience symptoms while attending work or school, schools should:

1. Promptly separate the student or staff with symptoms in an area separate from others, with adequate ventilation until they can go home.
  - i. This room should not be one that is commonly used for other purposes (i.e., the lunchroom). It should not be a space through which others regularly pass. It is not necessary for this room to have a separate air supply (HVAC) system.
  - ii. Ill persons should be placed in well-ventilated areas and where minimum physical distancing can be maintained between the ill person and others.
2. Provide a mask to the person experiencing symptoms to wear if they can tolerate it.
3. Limit the number of staff designated to care for ill persons until they can be sent home.
  - i. These caregivers should not be at increased risk of viral infection complications (i.e., pregnant women or persons that have a chronic illness), and they should be familiar with infection control recommendations to prevent the spread of the virus.
4. Contact parent/care giver, or in the case of staff, a family member if appropriate, to make arrangements to have the staff or student picked up as soon as is feasible.
  - i. Some students or staff may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such it will be important to consider alternate or additional spaces for any others who may start to experience symptoms while attending work or school.
5. Notify custodial staff that the isolation room has been used.
6. Post signage on the door of the isolation room 'for cleaning' until the custodian is able to clean the room.

### Sign In/Out Procedure for Itinerant Staff

This safe work procedure is to direct non-school based staff in how to arrive and depart a school site.

1. The main entrance is to be used by all non-school based staff when first entering the building (even if other doors may need to be used to move equipment or material).
2. When at the site make use of the non-medical mask and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff and students.
3. Follow sign-in and hand washing instructions posted at the main entrance.
4. Report to the office and sign in.
5. Read through any posted site rules.
6. When finished at the site please sign out.

### Returning to School After Illness

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. Students and staff are encouraged to check the K-12 Health Check app and BCCDC's When to get tested for COVID-19 resource for specific guidance. Persons can also contact 8-1-1 or their health care provider.

1. A student or staff experiencing symptoms of communicable disease is required to stay home and seek medical health guidance (note resources above).

- i. If medical guidance does not recommend getting tested or a health care assessment, the student or staff is asked to stay home until symptoms improve.
  - ii. If guidance recommends getting tested, the student or staff is required to stay home until tests results are received.
    - a. If test result is negative, the student or staff can return to school when symptoms improve and when they are well enough to participate in all school related activities
    - b. If test result is positive, the student or staff are required to follow health authority direction on when to return to school
2. Staff are required to adhere to the standard leave of absence procedures when needing to be absent from school for illness or injury related reasons.
  3. Students (and parents/care givers) are required to adhere to the standard procedures for communicating student absences to their school.