



World Class Learning in a Rural Environment

School District 10 (Arrow Lakes) Communicable Disease Plan



Information for Students, Parents and Staff

March 28, 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 rights holders, 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](#)
2. [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)
3. [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 should 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:
 - Staff, parents/caregivers and students can utilize the [Daily Health Check and What to Do When Sick for daily assessment of symptoms.](#)

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. Ensuring 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. 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.

6. 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 \(bccdc.ca\)](#) and [Heat Event Response Planning \(bccdc.ca\)](#).
- 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.

7. Personal Protective Equipment

- The decision to wear a mask or a face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and respectful.

- Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who become ill at school.

8. Managing Visitor Access

- 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 safety protocols.

9. 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 update. 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.
7. Advise the parent/care giver to seek guidance regarding testing for COVID-19, and stay home until symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in school-related activities.

Returning to School After Illness

When a staff, student or other adult can return to school depends on the symptoms they experience and, if they have tested positive for COVID-19 and/or improvement of their symptoms. For more information, please see the Daily Health Check and What to do When Sick Tool: [daily-health-check-jan-2022.pdf](https://sd10.bc.ca/daily-health-check-jan-2022.pdf) (sd10.bc.ca)

1. Students and staff who experience symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal.
2. Students and staff may attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness and/or has tested positive for COVID-19, provided that the student or staff does not have symptoms themselves
3. 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.
4. Students (and parents/care givers) are required to adhere to the standard procedures for communicating student absences to their school.