

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam)
Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

<https://sd43-bc-ca.zoom.us/j/65583241194?pwd=MDJsaHBLUVVZYkc0UHhsVIZ3Yjkxdz09>

Our mission is to ensure quality learning opportunities for all students of all ages

**September 8, 2020
7:00 p.m.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY

Trustee Watkins

Today we acknowledge the Traditional Territory and honour the Ancestors and all relations who walked this land long before we were gathered here today. We would like to acknowledge, with gratitude, this beautiful place where we live, work, play and learn – the Coast Salish Nations. All My Relations.

A. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

B. INTRODUCTIONS

C. DELEGATIONS / PRESENTATIONS

D. EDUCATION

E. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (7:05 pm)

- a) Approval of June 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- b) Trustee Calendar Planning Report for Information (*Pages 3-6*)
- c) Trustee Reports for Information (*Pages 7-11*)

F. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS DELEGATIONS

G. DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS (7:10 pm)

- a) Superintendent
 - i) SD43's K-12 Restart Plan Patricia Gartland
(30 minutes)
(*Pages 12-139*)
 - ii) News & Events (10 minutes)
 - iii) School Based Gradual Transitional Support Stephen Whiffin
(10 minutes: Presentation/
10 minutes: Trustee Questions)
(*Pages 140-141*)

- G. DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS CONT'D (8:10pm)**
- iv) International Education Review & Update
(Pages 142-144) Geoffrey Johnston/Jean Wong
(20 minutes)
 - v) Continuing Education Summer Report
(Pages 143-151) Mike McGlenen/Murray Peters
(10 minutes)
 - b) Secretary-Treasurer
 - i) Construction Contract Awards
(Page 152) Chris Nicolls
(5 minutes)
 - ii) K-12 Restart Plan – Custodial Services
(Pages 153-154) Ivano Cecchini
(10 minutes)
 - iii) K-12 Restart Plan: Health, Safety and Other Initiatives
(Pages 155-158) Chris Nicolls
(10 minutes)
- H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (9:05 pm)**
- a) School Site Acquisition Charge Bylaw
(Pages 159-166) Nita Mikl
(10 minutes)
- I. QUESTION PERIOD (9:15 pm)** *(10 minutes)*
(for questions that relate to agenda items only)
- a) Trustees
 - b) Gallery
- J. NEW BUSINESS (9:25 pm)**
- a) Consideration of Board of Education Meeting Arrangements
(Pages 167-168) Chair Kerri Palmer Isaak
(10 minutes)
- K. NOTICES OF MOTION**
- L. ITEMS OF TRUSTEE BUSINESS**
- M. QUESTION PERIOD (9:35 pm)** *(10 minutes)*
(for questions that relate to agenda items only)
- a) Trustees
 - b) Gallery
- N. ADJOURNMENT (9:25 pm)**

ANNOUNCEMENT

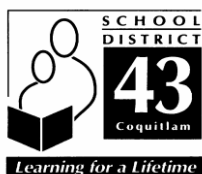
Next Public Board Meeting: September 29, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

Location: District Office (Board Room), 550 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, BC

Contacts regarding agenda items: Kerri Palmer Isaak, Chair – 604-939-9201

Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO – 604-939-9201

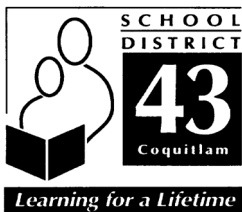
Jennifer Toderas, Executive Assistant – 604-939-9201



BOARD OF EDUCATION Calendar Planning September 8, 2020

DATE	MEETING	LOCATION	TIME
SEPTEMBER 2020			
15	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	Microsoft Teams	4:00pm
22	SD43 Education Foundation AGM	Microsoft Teams	5:00pm
29	Board Meeting	ZOOM	7:00pm
OCTOBER 2020			
13	Board Meeting	ZOOM	7:00pm
15	BCSTA Board Chairs Meeting	TBA	
16	BCSTA Partner Liaison Meeting	TBA	
16	SD43/MLA/MP Liaison Meeting	ZOOM	1:00 pm
20	Board Working Session	ZOOM	4:00pm
20	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	Microsoft Teams	5:30pm
23-24	Provincial Council	Zoom	All day
27	Board Meeting	ZOOM	7:00pm
30	BCSTA Partner Liaison Meeting	TBA	
NOVEMBER 2020			
2-3	BCPSEA Symposium	TBA	
3	SD43/Village of Anmore/Village of Belcarra Liaison Meeting	TBA	4:00pm
10	SD43/City of Port Coquitlam Liaison Meeting	TBA	4:00pm
17	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	District Office, Board Room	4:00pm
17	Board Working Session	Gallery Room, Winslow Centre	5:00pm
19	Employee Long Service Recognition Event	Westwood Plateau Golf Club	4:00pm
24	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
26-28	BCSTA - Trustee Academy	TBA	
DECEMBER 2020			
1	SD43/City of Coquitlam Liaison Meeting	TBA	4:00pm
21-Jan 1	<i>Winter Break</i>		

JANUARY 2021			
19	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
26	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	District Office, Board Room	4:00pm
30-31	BCPSEA - Annual General Meeting	TBA	
FEBRUARY 2021			
9	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
16	Board Meeting (Special)	District Office, Board Room	6:30pm
19-20	BCSTA Provincial Council	TBA	
MARCH 2021			
2	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
22-Apr 1	<i>Spring Break</i>		
APRIL 2021			
6	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	District Office, Board Room	4:00pm
13	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
15-18	BCSTA – Annual General Meeting	TBA	
20	Board Meeting (Special)	District Office, Board Room	6:30pm
27	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
MAY 2021			
4	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	District Office, Board Room	4:00pm
11	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm
JUNE 2021			
10	District Retirement Event	TBC	
22	Finance and Audit Committee Meeting	District Office, Board Room	4:00pm
29	Board Meeting	District Office, Board Room	7:00pm



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
DATE: September 8, 2020
SUBJECT: Record of In Camera Meetings

As per Section 72(3) of the *School Act*, the Board of Education reports that the following items were addressed at in camera meetings:

Special In Camera meeting held on June 16, 2020:

1. Personnel matter
2. Other matters

In Camera meeting held on June 16, 2020:

1. Approval of previous minutes
2. Land matters
3. Financial matter
4. Other matters

Special In Camera meeting held on June 23, 2020:

1. Personnel matter
2. Other matter

Special In Camera meeting held on July 7, 2020:

1. Other matter

Special In Camera meeting held on July 29, 2020:

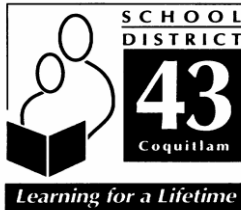
1. Other matter

Special In Camera meeting held on August 19, 2020:

1. Other matters
2. Land Matter

Special In Camera meeting held on August 25, 2020:

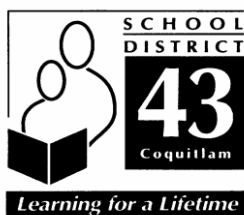
1. Other matter



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
TRUSTEE REPORT
September 8, 2020**

Trustee Blatherwick participated in the following activities, events and meetings:

- June 14 - Anti-Racism in Education, A Virtual Town Hall Meeting, Coastal Research, Education, and Advocacy Network
- June 14 - Spring into Summer Food Drive, Save on Foods Coquitlam
- June 17 - BCSTA Metro Branch Meeting, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 19 - Tri-Cities Community Action Team (Opioid Crisis), Online Zoom Meeting June 22 - City of Port Moody Liaison Meeting, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 23 - Special In Camera Meeting, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 23 - Liaison Meeting Port Moody City Council, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 24 - What does Racism Look Like? TriCities Local Immigration Partnership and Immigration Canada, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 25 - BCSTA All Trustees meeting, Online Zoom Meeting
- June 27 - Spring into Summer Food Drive, Save on Foods Coquitlam
- June 30 - CERA AGM, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 2 - Unpacking Systemic Racism: How does it live within you?, Hollyhock Non Profit, Zoom Online Meeting
- July 7 - Board of Education Facilities Tour: Minnehada Middle School, Westwood Elementary, Central Elementary, Scott Creek Middle, Works Yard
- July 7 - Special In Camera Meeting 1 (Appeal), Online Zoom Meeting
- July 7 - Special In Camera Meeting 2, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 9 - Why Does Racism Still Exist, TriCities Local Immigration Partnership and Immigration Canada, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 16 - Women's Collaborative Hub, Circles for Change, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 17 - TC CAT on Opioid Addiction, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 24 - Tri Cities Child Care Task Force, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 29 - Special In Camera Meeting, Online Zoom Meeting
- July 29 - E-Tek Talk, Online Zoom Meeting
- August 16 – Black Lives Matter Peaceful Protest, Port Moody, Rocky Point Park
- August 19 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- August 21 – TriCities Community Action Team Opioid Crisis, Online Zoom Meeting
- August 25 – Special In Camera Board Meeting – Student Appeal
- August 26 – Learning Without Boundaries, District Meeting, Online Teams Meeting
- September 1 – SD43 Meeting with MLAs on School Re-Opening, Online Zoom Meeting



BOARD OF EDUCATION
TRUSTEE REPORT
September 8, 2020

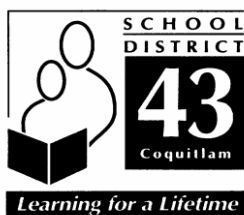
Trustee *Carol Cahoon* participated in the following activities, events and meetings:

- June 11 – British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) Professional Learning Committee (PLC) meeting, Zoom
- June 11 – CF Treasurer Month End Review, Sharepoint
- June 12 – Coquitlam Foundation (CF) Treasurer meetings, Microsoft (MS) Teams
- June 16 – SD43 Special In-Camera & Regular In-Camera Board Meeting, MSTeams
- June 16 – SD43 Regular Public Board Meeting, Zoom
- June 17 – BCSTA Monthly Metro Branch Meeting, Zoom
- June 18 – SD43 Inquiry Hub Virtual Grad Ceremony, Online Invite
- June 22 – CF Treasurer meetings, MS Teams
- June 23 – CF Treasurer & Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) meeting – Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) “Data Privacy Webinar”, Zoom
- June 23 – BCSTA - PLC Meeting, Zoom
- June 23 – SD43 Special In-Camera Board Meeting, MSTeams
- June 23 – SD43 & Port Moody City Council Closed & Liaison Meetings, Zoom
- June 24 – CF Treasurer meetings, Phone & physically distanced
- June 24 – PLEA Annual General Meeting (AGM), Zoom
- June 25 – CF Treasurer duties, RBC Bank
- June 25 – BCSTA Board of Directors & Provincial School Trustees Question & Answer Session, Zoom
- June 29 – CF Treasurer meeting with the new Executive Director to discuss the process of distributing the CFC-ECSF (\$254,610) to the local Tri-Cities Community and other duties
- June 30 – CF Treasurer & bookkeeper distribute portion of the CFC-ECSF via EFTs
- July 6 – CF Treasurer Month End review, Sharepoint
- July 7 – SD43 Board of Education Facilities Tour:
 - Scott Creek Middle School, Coquitlam
 - Westwood Elementary School, Port Coquitlam
 - Minnehada Middle School, Port Coquitlam
 - Maintenance Shop, Port Coquitlam
 - Central Elementary School, Port Coquitlam
- July 7 – SD43 Special In-Camera Board Meetings, School Board Office & MS Teams
- July 9 & 10 – CF Treasurer review and signing of documents to begin the Audit for June 30 Year End and distributing another portion of the CFC-ECSF to the Tri-Cities Community
- July 14 – KPMG Empowering Diverse Workplaces: Learning about Emotional Tax, Catalyst Adobe Connect
- July 15 – CF Treasurer Y/E Audit – 1st accountant information request worksheet & document review
- July 16 – Tri-Cities Middle Childhood Matters (MCM) Committee Meeting, Zoom
- July 16 – CF Treasurer CFC-ECSF and Scholarship fund distributions, in person and online

- July 17 to July 23 - Away
- July 27 & 28 – CF Treasurer & bookkeeper review CFC-ECSF status and outstanding distributions along with other CF related finance tasks
- July 29 – SD43 Special In-Camera Meeting, MSTeams
- Aug 14 – CF Treasurer worked on 2nd accountants request for additional information and documents to complete the CF's F2020 audit
- Aug 7 – CF Treasurer EFT distribution another portion of the CFC-ECSF to the Tri-Cities Community
- Aug 19 – SD43 Special In-Camera Meeting, MSTeams
- Aug 24 – PLEA KidStart/Children of the Street Committee agenda planning, Zoom
- Aug 25 – CF Treasurer final distribution of CFC-ECSF to the Tri-Cities Community
- Aug 26 – SD43 Learning Without Boundaries Annual “Welcome Back” meeting, MSTeams & Keynote Speaker, Dr. Fullan Presentation
- Aug 26 – CF Treasurer Scholarship award and miscellaneous cheque signing and distribution
- Aug 27 – CF Treasurer Y/E Audit – 2nd accountant information request worksheet & document review
- Sept 4 – CF Treasurer final responses to accountants F2020 YE audit questions and review of draft financial statements and adjusting journal entries
- Aug 28 to Sept 7 – Away

UPCOMING EVENTS:

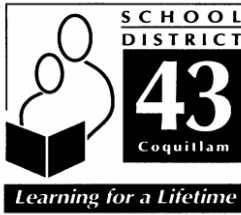
- Sept 17 - Coquitlam Foundation AGM



BOARD OF EDUCATION
TRUSTEE REPORT
September 8, 2020

Trustee Lisa Park participated in the following activities, events and meetings:

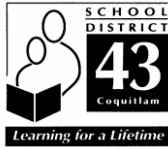
- June 16, 2020 – In Camera Meeting and In Service Board Meeting, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- June 16, 2020 - Public Board Meeting, Zoom Meeting
- June 17, 2020 BCSTA Metro Branch Meeting, Zoom Meeting
- June 23, 2020 Special In Camera Board Meeting, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- June 23, 2020 Liaison Meeting- City of Port Moody, Zoom Meeting
- June 25, 2020 BCSTA – Trustee Q&A, Zoom Meeting
- July 7, 2020 Special In Camera Meeting-Student Appeal, Zoom Meeting
- July 7, 2020 Special In Camera Meeting, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- July 24, 2020 Childcare Task Force Meeting, Zoom Meeting
- July 29, 2020 Special In Camera Board Meeting, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- August 19, 2020 Special In Camera Board Meeting, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- August 25, 2020 Special In Camera Board Meeting – Student Appeal, Gallery Room, Winslow Centre, Coquitlam
- August 26, 2020 LWB- Welcome Back Meeting 2020, Microsoft Teams Meeting
- August 26, 2020 Dr. Fullan Presentation, Zoom Meeting
- September 1, 2020 SD43/MLA Meeting, Zoom Meeting



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
TRUSTEE REPORT
September 8, 2020**

Vice Chair Craig Woods participated in the following activities, events and meetings:

- June 16, 2020 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- June 16, 2020 – In Camera and In Service Board meetings
- June 16, 2020 – Public Board Meeting
- June 23, 2020 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- June 23, 2020 – Liaison Meeting with City of Port Moody
- June 25, 2020 – BCSTA Q&A Session for all Trustees
- July 7, 2020 – Board of Education Facilities Tour
- July 29, 2020 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- August 19, 2020 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- August 25, 2020 – Special In Camera Board Meeting
- Sept 1, 2020 – Board Agenda Setting Meeting



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent

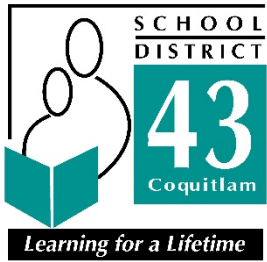
DATE: September 8th, 2020

SUBJECT: **SD43 K-12 Restart Plan**

COPIED TO: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO; District Leadership Team

Recommended Action: The following is provided for information.

Background: The attached documents will be referenced during the overview of the SD43 K-12 Restart Plan presentation by Superintendent Patricia Gartland. These documents form the basis of the plans being implemented by SD43 and include our restart plan document that has been approved by the Ministry of Education.



550 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, British Columbia V3J 6A7 • Phone 604-939-9201 • Fax: 604-939-7828

August 26, 2020

Dear SD43 Families,

I am writing to inform you of the SD43 plans for the Stage 2 reopening of district schools for September 2020.

SD43 leadership, administration and staff have worked hard over the past couple of months to create safe and controlled environments for our children. Schools have been cleaned, protocols have been put in place and procedures have been developed to provide the best possible conditions for students and staff to safely return to school. All local SD43 planning has been within the guidelines prepared by the Provincial Health Officer and the Ministry of Education. School districts received operational guidelines for school restart and all this information has been made available to SD43 families on school websites, in addition to the district FAQ page at www.sd43.bc.ca/faq.

We are excited to welcome your child into our controlled and supervised learning spaces on September 10th and we are pleased to share with you an overview of our robust COVID-19 safety plan measures in this letter, with more details and updates to come from your school principal over the coming weeks.

For All Students

- The first few days of school will be an orientation period where students are coached on the protocols and procedures that are integral to the safe return to school.
- We are planning for students to attend school every day.
- Some schools may include staggered start and dismissal times, staggered lunch and other breaks, as well as controlled traffic flow to decrease contacts and hallway interactions.
- Students will be in learning groups/cohorts to reduce and manage the numbers of close contacts at school.
- No school-wide assemblies or other large gatherings will be held.
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged.
- Regular handwashing will be actively promoted. Handwashing stations have been identified within school buildings and additional stations have been added where needed, like near portables or areas away from washrooms and other permanent sinks.
- Hand sanitizer has been purchased and provided to all SD43 buildings and its use will be encouraged.
- Water fountains have been turned off and students are encouraged to bring refillable water bottles for personal use. Also, students will be strongly discouraged from sharing water bottles or any food items.
- Enhanced cleaning of buildings and high traffic areas are prioritized.
- At home, prior to leaving for school, students should undergo a daily health check with a responsible adult. If a student feels unwell or exhibits any symptoms such as coughing, sneezing or fever, that child should not attend school.

For Elementary Students

Students and staff are being grouped into cohorts that essentially consist of their class, teacher and required support staff, making a group smaller than the provincially recommended 60 individuals. Within this learning group, individual physical distancing is not required but physical contact will be limited. Staggered start times, break times and end times

will be implemented to distance cohorts from each other in addition to physical distancing measures such as entry and exit points around the school that are not in close proximity to each other. It is requested that parents/guardians drop off students while maintaining physical distancing from other members of the school community and that they vacate the area as quickly as possible to reduce potential contact with others.

Age-appropriate handwashing and hygiene will be taught and reinforced upon entry to school buildings (in the morning and upon return from breaks, etc.), expectations will be outlined around the restricted movement within the school and physical distancing measures will be reinforced.

For Middle Students

Middle schools will operate on the same model as elementary schools around learning groups/cohorts, protocols and procedures. Face masks for students and staff will be made available and, though their use is optional, the use of masks in areas of the school where physical distancing is difficult to maintain such as hallways and common areas will be strongly recommended. Exploration classes will be offered in a modified format.

For Secondary Students

Face masks for students and staff will be made available and, though their use is optional, the use of masks in areas of the school where physical distancing is difficult to maintain such as hallways and common areas will be strongly recommended.

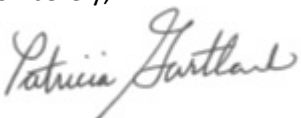
Students have again been grouped into cohorts smaller than the provincial recommendation of 120. Details specific to your school will be forthcoming but the major change involves a switch to a 'quarter system' to divide the school year, consisting of 4 terms, instead of the usual 2. This quarter system is designed to allow for much smaller learning groups while maintaining as many course selections as possible. Once students are slotted into their learning groups and quarter schedule, no changes can be made in order to limit contacts between students. Once a quarter is complete, students will be assigned to new classes and cohorts and then maintain that learning group until the end of that quarter term. Again, school-specific information on cohorts and timetables will be provided directly to families via school principals.

In Conclusion

I understand you may still have questions specific to your family's circumstances. Our school principals are committed to supporting parents/guardians in making informed choices regarding their child's education. Principals will address concerns on a case-by-case basis in regard to options for immunocompromised students and families or those students with special needs. Options may include gradual entry and return to school, expanded access to the district Hospital Homebound program and/or expansion of district Distributed Learning programs. Additional health and safety information will be shared by school principals over the coming weeks as direct communication continues.

Once again, I am grateful for the incredible staff in SD43 that continues to rise to the new challenges presented during this health crisis. We all understand how important it is for our children to attend school with their peers and recognize how critical this is for their personal, intellectual, and social development. I also appreciate the faith and trust placed in the district by our communities to safely provide education to local children. I look forward to welcoming our students, families and staff to the 2020-21 school year and appreciate your patience and flexibility as we plan for a safe and successful opening!

Sincerely,



Patricia Gartland
Superintendent of Schools, CEO

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
ORDER OF THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

School Act

Ministerial Order No. M302

I, Rob Fleming, Minister of Education, order that, effective September 1, 2020, the Enhancing Student Learning Reporting Order is made as set out in the attached schedule.

August 11, 2020

Date



Minister of Education

(This part is for administrative purposes only and is not part of the Order.)

Authority under which this Order is made:

School Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 412, ss. 81 and 168 (2) (t)

Schedule

ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING REPORTING ORDER

Interpretation

1 In this order,

“**board**” includes a francophone education authority;

“**Indigenous peoples**” has the same meaning as “aboriginal peoples of Canada”, as defined in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;

“**Indigenous student**” means an individual who self-identifies as a member of an Indigenous people, is of school age and meets the definition of student under section 1 of the *School Act*, and

“**reserve**” means a reserve as defined in the *Indian Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. I-5.

Annual enhancing student learning report

2 Each year, a board must prepare and submit to the Minister a report completed in accordance with this order between June 30 and September 30, or a date otherwise determined by the Minister.

3 A report completed under section 2 must include the following information regarding student performance, including outcomes and measures as set out below:

(a) Intellectual Development

Educational Outcome 1	Students will meet or exceed literacy expectations for each grade level.
Measure 1.1	Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students in grades 4 and 7 on-track or extending literacy expectations as specified in provincial assessments.
Measure 1.2	Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students proficient or extending literacy expectations as specified in the Grade 10 literacy assessments.
Educational Outcome 2	Students will meet or exceed numeracy expectations for each grade level.
Measure 2.1	Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students in grades 4 and 7 on-track or extending numeracy expectations as specified in provincial assessments.
Measure 2.2	Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students proficient or extending numeracy expectations as specified in the Grade 10 numeracy assessments.

Measure 2.3	Number and percentage of students who are completing grade to grade transitions on time
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(b) Human and Social Development

Educational Outcome 3	Students will feel welcome, safe and connected to their school.
Measure 3.1	Number and percentage of students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel welcome, safe, and have a sense of belonging in their school.
Measure 3.2	Number and percentage of students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel there are two or more adults at their school who care about them.

(c) Career Development

Educational Outcome 4	Students will graduate.
Measure 4.1	Number and percentage of resident students who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8.
Educational Outcome 5	Students will have the core competencies to achieve their career and life goals.
Measure 5.1	Number and percentage of students transitioning to Canadian post-secondary institutions within 1 and 3 years

4 The report prepared in accordance with sections 2 and 3 must establish categories for each of the following student populations and report on those categories separately:

- (a) Indigenous students
 - (i) living on reserve, and
 - (ii) living off reserve;
- (b) children and youth in care; and
- (c) students with disabilities or diverse abilities.

5 The report completed under section 2 will also include information relating to the board's approach to continuous improvement of student achievement.

6 The report completed under section 2 must not exceed 10 pages in length.

SUPPORTING THE K-12 EDUCATION RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN B.C.

Operational Guidelines for School Districts and Independent School Authorities

Updated AUGUST 28 | 2020

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Introduction

School districts and independent school authorities play a vital role in providing educational opportunities and other community supports while helping to “flatten the curve” of COVID-19 transmission in B.C. This includes developing plans and using alternative delivery methods to provide curriculum, instruction and assistance to students and families, while being responsive to changing circumstances.

The K-12 sector is working under the guidance of public health officials to ensure educational services and supports are delivered in a manner that prioritizes safety for students, families and staff. Consistent attention to, and application of, preventative measures must remain top of mind.

As schools and classrooms enhance the flexible and innovative ways they accommodate the needs of their communities, it is important to ensure that all partners understand that learning environments and related services may look different from regular operations. Efforts to achieve provincial consistency must be balanced with the understanding that local circumstances may require different approaches between schools and communities and that “learning involves patience and time.” ([First Peoples Principles of Learning](#)).

In these challenging circumstances, it is important that the Ministry, K-12 education partners, schools/school districts, public health, local governments, First Nations, the Métis Nation and community agencies continue to work together. Coordinating activities, sharing information and resources, and engaging with all rightsholders, stakeholders and partners supports the implementation of effective approaches locally and across the province.

Purpose

This guide provides direction to school districts and independent school authorities in developing plans to deliver educational opportunities and supports in the context of COVID-19 by:

- clarifying provincial expectations;
- providing guidance across a number of key topics; and
- including links to additional information and resources that can support local decision-making and communications with partners.

School districts/authorities are encouraged to review this guide through a compassionate and trauma-informed leadership lens, one that places people (and their mental and social-emotional well-being) at the centre of planning, and that recognizes the importance of meeting students and staff where they are.

Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the provincial response, the Ministry will continue to update this document with new information, resources and

promising practices as they become available. Updates will be highlighted so that new information can be quickly accessed.

Context

The Ministry of Education follows the direction of the Ministry of Health and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer regarding all public health-related issues. On March 17, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer, the Provincial Government directed all K-12 public and independent schools to immediately suspend in-class instruction.

On March 18, 2020, the Provincial Government declared a Provincial State of Emergency to support its response to COVID-19. During a Provincial State of Emergency:

- The Provincial Health Officer can make [orders](#) as needed, that the public must follow.
- It is possible that the Provincial Government will be empowered under the *Emergency Program Act* to make decisions about the operations of school districts/independent school authorities and the use of school facilities.

On May 6, 2020, the Provincial Government announced [BC's Restart Plan](#), which involves a gradual resumption of social and economic activity while continuing to employ preventative measures to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. The Plan includes a five-stage return to full in-class instruction in K-12 schools, guided by strict health and safety standards. Visit the *K-12 Restart Plan* section for more information.

School districts and independent school authorities have considerable flexibility in how they deliver educational opportunities and supports to meet the unique needs and circumstances of their school communities. However, service delivery must always operate within current guidance from local and provincial medical health officers.

Additional legal authorities related to public health and K-12 schools:

- The *Public Health Act* and the *School Act* permit a school medical health officer to investigate and close a public or independent school if the health or safety of students is at risk.
- The *Public Health Act* requires that prior to making an advisory report public, the medical health officer must consult the Board of Education and the Provincial Health Officer.¹
- Under the *School Act*, if a teacher, principal/vice-principal or director of instruction suspect that a student is suffering from a communicable disease, they:
 - must report the matter to the school medical health officer, the school principal and the school superintendent; and

¹ The Public Health Act does not include provisions regarding consulting with independent school authorities.

- may exclude the student from school until a certificate is obtained for the student from the school medical health officer or a private medical or nurse practitioner permitting the student to return to school.

If a student is excluded from school under these circumstances, the board of education must continue to make an educational program available to that student.

- A superintendent, independent school authority, or principal may restrict an employee's access to a school or school district site subject to review by a medical health officer when the presence of the employee is believed to pose a danger or risk.

Maintaining a High Bar for K-12 Education

Throughout all stages of the pandemic, school districts and independent school authorities are expected to maintain the high educational standards set out in the [K-12 legislative framework](#), the [Policy for Student Success](#) and the [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning](#).

K-12 Education Restart Plan

The Ministry recognizes the importance of having students in the classroom to minimize learning gaps and to provide the academic, social and emotional supports which are essential for every learner. Maximizing in-class instruction for all students within current health and safety guidelines for schools is a crucial part of [BC's Restart Plan](#). For many students, school is a safe and welcoming space that provides access to supports that may not be available in their home environment.

Remote learning can meet the urgent need for continuity of learning during suspension of in-class instruction; however, this mode of instruction is not ideal for all students. The majority of students learn best in a classroom with direct contact with teachers, other professional staff and peers. Schools play a key role in the lives of students, who deserve every opportunity to maximize their capacities for growth and development.

It is also important to note that a full return to in-class instruction may not be a linear process due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. School districts and independent school authorities must be prepared to respond quickly to changing circumstances (e.g. additional outbreaks) and to intensify health and safety measures and even adjust instructional delivery schedules if and when required based on public health guidance.

The Ministry's five-stage approach supports school districts and independent school authorities in maintaining high standards of educational instruction while lowering the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Strategies and actions needed to support educational programs and operations of schools during this time:

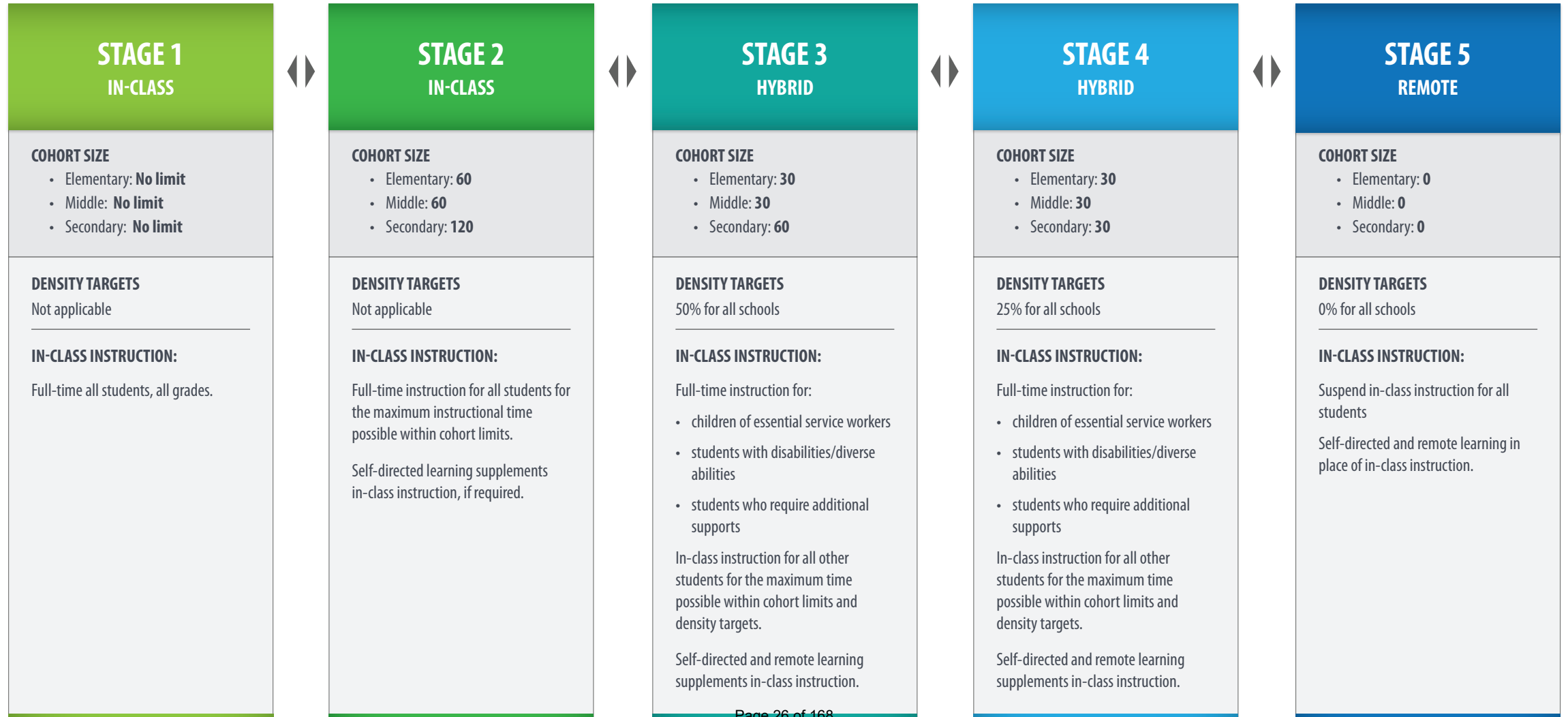
- are supported by COVID-19 research and evidence;
- are informed by practices in other jurisdictions;
- can expand and contract to align with government pandemic management measures and orders; and
- can be applied provincially, regionally and/or locally.

Guiding Principles

As the Ministry works with school districts and independent school authorities to implement the K-12 Education Restart Plan, actions will continue to be guided by the principles collaboratively established at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

FIVE STAGES FRAMEWORK FOR K-12 EDUCATION



Expectations for Each Stage

A summary of expectations for school districts and independent school authorities for each of the five Stages is [available online](#). Expectations can be displayed by Stage or by the following categories:

- Instructional Delivery
- Curriculum, Report Cards and Assessment
- Health and Safety
- Students Requiring Additional Support
- Children of Essential Service Workers

Health & Safety Standards and Guidelines for K-12

Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings

The BC Centre for Disease Control has released [public health guidance for schools and school districts](#) to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, families and staff. The guidance document identifies key infection prevention and exposure control practices to implement, as well as actions to take if a student or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19.

WorkSafeBC Guidelines

WorkSafeBC has produced [Education \(K-12\): Protocols for Returning to Operation](#) to support safe workplace operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resource includes details for creating a COVID-19 safety plan and specific protocols for K-12 education intended to reflect current public health guidance for K-12 schools. The guide also offers information on resolving concerns about unsafe work, health and safety resources, and key contacts for questions about workplace exposure to COVID-19.

Provincial K-12 Health and Safety Guidelines

The [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12](#) were developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with education partners and outline the principles and requirements for prioritizing safe learning environments. The guidelines outline key health and safety requirements for B.C. schools and address topics including:

- Learning groups and physical distancing
- Student transportation on buses
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Illness and self-assessment policies and protocols
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Personal protective equipment
- Considerations for curriculum, programs and activities

Governance and Planning

Governance

The Emergency Program Act (EPA) authorizes provincial and local levels of government to declare states of emergency. In some situations, orders could be made under the EPA that would allow local or provincial governments to make decisions about the operations of school districts/independent school authorities and the use of school facilities during that time period. If necessary, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General can override a local government's authority, however the preferred approach is for local and provincial levels of government to work together to develop a coordinated response.

First Nations have responsibility for the education of their citizens. How First Nations address learning during the COVID-19 pandemic will vary from community to community.

Within the K-12 sector, coordination of decision-making at the local and provincial level supports application of best practices and makes optimal use of limited resources during a pandemic event. Boards of education and independent school authorities should work closely with the Ministry of Education and relevant provincial K-12 education organizations (including but not limited to BCSTA, BCSSA, BCASBO, BCPVPA, BCCPAC, BCTF, CUPE, FISA, FNEESC, FNSEA, MNBC) to share information, align approaches, and follow the guidance of their local health authority and the Provincial Health Officer to support the health and safety of students, families and staff.

Reviewing and updating internal governance processes is another important step in the initial planning phases. Proactive measures involving boards of education and senior management can help preserve community trust in educational institutions.

Meetings

Boards of education and independent school authorities have the flexibility to conduct meetings via phone or electronic means², and to update relevant policies and bylaws as required. For boards of education, the secretary-treasurer (or another employee designated by the board) must be present at the time that a decision of the board is rendered and must record any decision.

Boards of education also have the flexibility to use video or audio streaming technology to enable members of the public to listen to or watch board meetings.³ For the parts of the board meeting designated for public questions and comments, the board can accept questions by phone, email or the chat feature available with some video conference programs.

² The *School Act* enables a board to allow trustees to participate in or attend a meeting of the board by telephone or other means of communication if all trustees and other persons participating in or attending the meeting are able to communicate with each other. Trustees who attend a board meeting via electronic means are counted for the purposes of establishing a quorum.

³ Under the *School Act*, a board of education can enable members of the public to participate in a board meeting electronically rather than having the public attend a board meeting in-person.

In-person meetings must be conducted in accordance with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer including recommended hygiene protocols and physical distancing.

Additional Considerations for Boards/Authorities

- Review hours of operation for and public access to school/board offices, to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- Ensure school board/school offices follow thorough cleaning and hygiene protocols.
- Follow guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafe BC concerning preventative measures related to COVID-19 (see *Health and Safety* section for more details).

Planning and Advisory Teams

Clarifying roles and responsibilities and engaging key rightsholders and stakeholders throughout the planning process is critical to the success of service delivery during a pandemic event.

School districts and independent school authorities should create and maintain a **core planning team** of key personnel with clear roles and functions. Membership may include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Senior Management Team
- Human Resources
- Facilities
- Information Technology
- Finance
- Learning/Instruction
- Indigenous Education
- Student Support Services
- School Principal/Head of School representative(s)
- Local/regional emergency planning representative(s)
- Indigenous community/education representative(s)
- Local union representatives

In addition to clearly defining roles and responsibilities, important considerations for the **core planning team** include establishing primary contacts to liaise with schools and with the Ministry, ensuring each school has designated its own lead contact and alternates in case original planning team members are not available.

Establishing a separate **rightsholder/stakeholder advisory team** helps to engage key members of the school community in a collaborative planning process, bring in a greater diversity of perspectives to help identify potential issues and opportunities, and support overall implementation. Members should include local union representatives (e.g. BCTF, CUPE), school/district parent advisory council chair, First Nations and Métis Nation

community leadership, Indigenous Education Council members, Indigenous community delegates and other key partner agencies.

Boards of education or independent school authorities who have a Local Education Agreement with one or more First Nations must ensure those First Nations are engaged in meaningful consultation above and beyond any role they may play on an advisory team. Boards/authorities must work directly with those First Nations to develop plans for educational instruction for any Indigenous students living on-reserve and attending public or independent schools.

Boards/authorities must also work directly with the Métis Nation to develop plans for educational instruction for Métis students attending public and independent schools.

Communications

Development of a clear and comprehensive communications plan is an essential component of service planning during a pandemic. Strong lines of direct communication between districts/authorities; First Nations, the Métis Nation, Indigenous communities, unions and local schools; and between school administrators and staff and families; can significantly help to reduce stress and increase trust within the school community.

School districts and independent school authorities should develop and regularly update their communication plans in collaboration with their regional health authority, First Nations, the Métis Nation, Indigenous communities, unions and local schools.

Communication plan components should include:

- Identification of spokespersons for the district/authority (e.g. board chair, superintendent).
- Opportunity for Indigenous rightsholders and unions to provide input on communication processes.
- A protocol for screening, directing and responding to media inquiries as quickly as possible.
- Processes and key messages for communicating with parents/caregivers, including those who are homeschooling.
 - Communications should be developed and managed by the district/authority office to ensure consistency of messaging.
 - Exceptions include staff communications with parents/caregivers as part of their instructional duties (e.g. student assignments), however clear guidance should be provided to staff regarding sharing information beyond that which pertains to the individual student or class learning dynamic.
 - School district/authority offices should provide clear communication in order to respond to any inaccurate information circulating in their school community.
- A schedule of direct communications to parents/caregivers and staff – consider higher frequency (e.g. daily) during initial and key transition phases of the pandemic event, and then shifting to a less frequent but regular schedule thereafter.
- Clearly labeled communications to the school community as “for information” or “for action”.
- Providing up-to-date information on school/school district websites, and via direct email communications, for parents/caregivers and staff.

Best Practices:

- *Liaise with relevant provincial K-12 education organizations, schools/school districts in the region, local health authority and local government to develop message consistency and/or shared communications.*
- *Create dedicated COVID-19 sections on the school/district website for the public and for staff, including Q&As.*
- *Contact the Ministry for support if needed – by email at or by phone at 236-478-2712.*

- The process for connecting with the regional health authority regarding school/district messaging and media requests related to COVID-19:
 - Public statements and communications to parents/caregivers and staff containing public health messaging, including references to confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 within the school community, must be reviewed and approved by the local health authority prior to release.
 - Media requests regarding confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases, potential exposure at a school or potential risk of transmission within a school setting should be directed to the regional health authority for response.
- The process for keeping the Ministry informed of significant events and associated communications to school communities related to COVID-19. Communications can be directed to the Ministry [by email](#).

Prioritization of Services and Supports

School districts and independent school authorities are required to make in-school instruction available to K-12 students in accordance with the [Expectations for Each Stage](#). For all stages except Stage 5, this includes offering full-time, in-school instruction to children whose parents/caregivers provide essential services in the community, students with disabilities/diverse abilities, and students who require additional supports.

Supports for Children of Essential Service Workers

A key priority in B.C.'s pandemic response plan is to ensure that children of Essential Service Workers (ESWs) are cared for in order that their parents can continue to work.

(Stages 3 to 5)

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has released provincial guidance on the occupations considered [Essential Services](#) and has provided further clarity that education and child care providers should prioritize placements for those children whose parents are employed in:

- Health and Health Services
- Social Services
- Law Enforcement
- First Responders
- Emergency Response

School districts and independent school authorities should follow the definition of Essential Services above to plan in-school services and supports for children of ESWs as follows:

- Tier 1: Health/Health Services, Social Services, Law Enforcement, First Responders and Emergency Response;
 - "Social Services" includes those providing care to children and care to individuals with disabilities as well as child care workers providing care for ESWs.
 - Teachers, administrators and support staff can be considered in this Tier 1 category as part of district/authority planning if they require child care to perform essential duties within the school/district (e.g. care or learning for other ESW children).
- Tier 2: any other occupation on the provincial list of essential services.

For specific occupations under each grouping, please refer to the [provincial list of COVID-19 essential services](#).⁴

⁴ Please note that Social Services encompasses the list of occupations under the "Vulnerable Population Service Providers" heading.

Parameters of Supports – Child Care

(Stage 1)

In this stage, in-class instruction is provided full-time for all K-12 students as per regular operating procedures.

School districts/authorities should no longer be providing extended hours of care for children of Essential Service Workers (ESWs). Community child care services may be available at pre-pandemic levels during this stage.

School districts and independent school authorities that choose to continue to offer before and/or after school child care must pursue a child care license or work directly with an existing licensed child care provider.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities:

- Are there opportunities for school districts/authorities to become licensed school-aged child care providers where existing services are unavailable?

(Stage 2)

In this stage, in-class instruction is provided full-time for all K-12 students for the maximum time possible within established public health [learning group](#) limits. For secondary schools that are not able to offer full-time instruction to all students within the learning group limits, students whose parents are Essential Service Workers (ESWs) should be accommodated if the student has a disability that precludes them from being able to stay at home independently.

School districts/authorities should no longer be providing extended hours of care for children of ESWs. Community child care services may be available at near pre-pandemic levels during this stage.

Parents/caregivers of ESW children should be supported to pursue available local child care options for before and after school care.

School districts and independent school authorities that choose to continue to offer before and/or after school child care must pursue a child care license or work directly with an existing licensed child care provider.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities:

- Are there opportunities for school districts/authorities to become licensed school-aged child care providers where existing services are unavailable?

(Stage 3)

In this stage, school districts and independent school authorities are expected to offer full-time, in-class instruction for children of Essential Service Workers (ESWs) aged 5-12. School districts/authorities are also expected to accommodate children over age 12 if there is an ESW parent who

requires care and the child has a disability that precludes them from being able to stay at home independently.

School districts/authorities are not expected to provide extended hours of care for children of ESWs, but should reach out to community child care providers to coordinate available options for before and after school care and early childhood care (ages 0-5), as required based on local circumstances.

Parents/caregivers of ESW children should be provided with adequate notice of any changes to before and after school care offerings and should be supported to pursue available local child care options.

In unique circumstances, school districts/authorities may choose to continue to offer extended hours of care based on community need and available staffing. If school districts/authorities choose to continue to offer before and after school care, they must pursue a child care license or work directly with an existing licensed child care provider.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities:

- How many ESW families within the school/school district are interested in full-time in-school instruction?
- What opportunities are there to partner with existing child care providers to ensure care for children of ESWs during, before and after school hours?
- Are there opportunities for school districts/authorities to become licensed school-aged child care providers where existing services are unavailable?

(Stage 4)

In this Stage, school districts and independent school authorities are expected to offer full-time, in-class instruction for children of Essential Service Workers (ESWs) aged 5-12. School districts/authorities are also expected to accommodate children over age 12 if there is an ESW parent who requires care and the child has a disability that precludes them from being able to stay at home independently.

School districts/authorities should reach out to community child care providers to coordinate available options for before and after school care and early childhood care (ages 0-5), as required based on local circumstances.

School districts/authorities may choose to offer extended hours of care based on community need and available staffing. In these circumstances, districts/authorities should pursue a child care license or work directly with an existing licensed child care provider.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities:

- How many ESW families within the school/school district are interested in full-time in-school instruction?
- What opportunities are there to partner with existing child care providers to ensure care for children of ESWs (age 0-12) during, before and after school hours?
- Are there opportunities for school districts/authorities to become licensed school-aged child care providers where existing services are unavailable?

- What hours will schools or other centres need to be staffed for parents/caregivers to drop their children off based on the needs of their families?
- What protocols need to be in place in accordance with current health and safety guidelines? What process will a district/authority use to identify sites conducive to these requirements?
- Who is best positioned to staff identified sites and what protocols will be put in place to control site access?
- When and how will learning opportunities be integrated into the scope of services, and who will provide that?

(Stage 5)

In this Stage, in-school instruction and supports are suspended in all K-12 schools.

During this Stage, school districts and independent school authorities should prepare for the transition to Stage 4, including:

- Coordination of spaces, schedules and routines for receiving children of ESWs during school hours.
- Outreach to community child care service providers to coordinate available options for before and after school care and early childhood care (ages 0-5).

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities:

- How many ESW families within the school/school district are interested in full-time in-school instruction?
- What opportunities are there to partner with existing child care providers to ensure care for children of ESWs (age 0-12) during, before and after school hours?
- Are there opportunities for school districts/authorities to become licensed school-aged child care providers where existing services are unavailable?
- What hours will schools or other centres need to be staffed for parents/caregivers to drop their children off based on the needs of their families?
- What protocols need to be in place in accordance with current health and safety guidelines? What process will a district/authority use to identify sites conducive to these requirements?
- Who is best positioned to staff identified sites and what protocols will be put in place to control site access?
- When and how will learning opportunities be integrated into the scope of services, and who will provide that?

School districts/authorities that have posted information on child care centres (for ages 0-5) on their websites should be aware that some child care centres may be closed due to the pandemic. MCFD requests that schools/school districts update their websites with this link to an [online referral service](#) and with contact information for the local [Child Care Resource and Referral Centres](#), which have updated information on child care centres that are open or closed.

Learning Groups, Density Targets and Child Care

Learning group requirements and density targets do not apply to child care operations on school grounds. School districts/authorities should work with before and after school care operators on school grounds to support children to stay within their learning groups as much as possible. However, the primary requirements for child care operators are to meet their licensing requirements and to follow the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#). Note that:

- *Learning groups reduce the number of in-person, close interactions an individual has in a day with different people.*
- *Students from different learning groups may be required to be together to receive beneficial programs or services, like before and after school care.*
- *Before and after school care providers will be implementing other measures that provide layers of protection from COVID-19 transmission, including adapting the space to reduce physical contact, requiring regular hand hygiene and taking students outside more often.*
- *Many students will have interactions with children and adults outside of their learning groups before and after school, not just those receiving care.*

Supports for Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities and Students Requiring Additional Support

With the exception of Stage 5 (suspension of in-class instruction in all schools), school districts and independent school authorities are expected to make full-time, in-class instruction available for students with disabilities or diverse abilities and students who require additional supports.

For all Stages, learning plans for these students should be based on needs, goals, and strategies articulated in existing or the previous school year's Student Learning Plans (SLP), Individual Education Plans (IEP), Annual Instruction Plans (AIP) and/or additional data⁵ as well as referrals and information from other community agencies (e.g. MCFD indication that the family would

Examples of students who require additional support:

- *some children and youth in care*
- *students not yet meeting literacy expectations*
- *students at risk of not graduating*
- *students requiring mental health or substance use supports*
- *students with serious medical conditions*
- *students who may be at-risk due to the situation in their home environment*
- *a student with a disability who has been destabilizing due to changes in their routine*

⁵ Family composition should be included in school district/authority considerations regarding students who may require additional support – e.g. single parent/caregivers who are the sole income providers for their families.

benefit from respite care). Supports and services should be provided without delay. While goals from the student's learning plan will be consistent, the strategies to achieve the goals may need to be adjusted according to current public health guidelines.

Students who are immunocompromised or have underlying medical conditions, and who have been identified as high risk to attend school by a medical health care provider, should be provided with an at-home learning plan.

Educational Assistants should continue to collaborate with teachers in the delivery of instruction and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities, which may include:

- assisting with the preparing of assignments, content and activities;
- assisting with the collection of materials that will be sent to students;
- maintaining regular communication and check-in with students as determined by the classroom teacher, and under the direction of the principal, vice-principal or director of instruction; and
- supporting families and students in accessing and participating in remote learning and therapy experiences as needed.

Teachers should maintain ongoing communication with colleagues who also serve their students (paraprofessionals, non-enrolling teachers, related service providers, counsellors, school-based team, etc.).

(Stages 3 to 5)

Educational support staff should create specific plans on how students with disabilities/diverse abilities will be able to continue to access specialized supports delivered onsite. Families who decide to keep their child at home should continue to have access to specialized supports through direct service to learners or via consultation with the educational team (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing).

Inclusive Learning Groups

Schools and school districts must ensure that learning groups are established in a manner that reflects the principles of equity and inclusion and does not result in segregated learning environments for students with disabilities/ diverse abilities.

MCFD Supports for Families

At a provincial level, the Ministry of Education and MCFD continue to work together on an integrated approach to support students with disabilities/diverse abilities and learners requiring additional support. At the local level, schools and school districts are encouraged to work with MCFD and Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAA) to support coordination of services.

Supports and services provided by MCFD/DAA may be functioning differently during the COVID-19 pandemic and can vary by community. School districts/authorities are encouraged to work collaboratively with MCFD/DAA to explore a range of options for families that will prevent students from becoming destabilized and experiencing regression or loss of skills, and families from breaking down due to the increased demands on the parents/caregivers.

Autism Funding and Access to Respite

Funding for autism services and respite falls under MCFD's area of responsibility. More information on additional resources for parents and caregivers can be found in the following section.

Supports for Students with Serious Medical Conditions

Nursing Support Services released updated information on [supports for children and families](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic, including referrals, in-home nursing respite, delegated care, and at home program assessments.

Personal Protective Equipment

Guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment, when working with students outside of a learning group and where physical distancing is not possible, can be found in the *Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12* in the *Health and Safety* section of this guide.

Communication with Parents/Caregivers

Making regular connections between staff, families and students can happen in a variety of ways. Most importantly, communication in stressful times should focus on relationship, connection, and lowering anxieties. Parents/ guardians' feedback indicates that relevant, clear and concise information increases their sense of trust and collaboration.

Additional Resources

Many organizations that provide assistance to families continue to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, however support may be offered in different ways. Families are encouraged to seek support from agencies they are familiar with and that they have accessed prior to the pandemic.

More information is available in this list of [resources for parents/caregivers of children with disabilities and diverse abilities](#). However, depending on Public Health Orders, time and extent of services may vary.

[Provincial Outreach Programs](#) are available to support school districts and independent school authorities in developing remote learning plans for students with disabilities and diverse abilities.

Health Authority Supports for Families

The Provincial Health Services Authority is responsible for working with the five regional health authorities to plan and co-ordinate the delivery of provincial programs and [specialized services](#) and governing and managing the organizations that provide specialized health services throughout the province.

Considerations and Planning for Children and Youth in Care

Children and youth in care often face unique circumstances and stressful events in their lives that can affect their ability to learn, including separation from family members and their broader community. During the pandemic, physical visitations with family members may be restricted, and shift to on-line forms of communication. This presents a major challenge for many families and children and youth in care, especially those with limited access to technology, making children and youth in care feel even more alone. Youth on agreements who live independently may also feel especially isolated during this time.

Monitoring school attendance of children and youth in care and supporting their connections to peers, trusted adults, and the broader school community is critically important during this time. For Indigenous children and youth, maintaining connection to their culture, indigenous community and land is vital for maintaining their well-being.

Since supports and services provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development or Delegated Aboriginal Agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic can vary by community, needs of students who are in government care need to be considered in collaboration with social workers, caregivers, and students themselves. A range of options should be considered to ensure both children and youth in care and their caregivers are supported during the pandemic, especially where there might be increasing demands on the caregivers. Many children and youth in care are facing increased placement instability and an increased risk of homelessness, due to caregiver reluctance to house youth who may not be following physical distancing measures. Therefore, it is important to inform children and youth in care how to protect themselves and others during the pandemic.

Access to technology, child care, in-class instruction and additional supports and services such as tutoring, mentoring and extracurricular activities should be considered for children and youth in care during the pandemic. Access to technology and connectivity is especially important for ensuring continuity of learning during times when in-school instruction may be limited or suspended.

Access to child care and in-school instruction is also an important support for caregivers who might be struggling, which can help increase placement stability and help children and youth in care maintain their social connections to the school community. It is also important to connect children and youth in care with service providers that can help address any food security and mental health concerns.

StrongStart BC Early Learning Centres and Outreach Programs

(Stage 1)

All StrongStart BC programs are open and operating at full capacity during this Stage in accordance with any provincial direction or requirements that may exist.

“Full capacity” means that StrongStart BC programs are offering in-person, drop-in programs five days per week for 3 to 4 hours per day.

(Stage 2)

School districts may offer in-person StrongStart BC programs at reduced capacity during this Stage.

“Reduced capacity” means that school districts may limit the number of families attending in order to maintain safe physical distancing. Districts may also reduce the number of hours per day and/or days per week of StrongStart BC operations to accommodate cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

StrongStart BC programs are encouraged to increase outdoor learning activities wherever possible.

StrongStart BC programs may provide an alternative remote or online service to families.

(Stage 3)

School districts are not expected to offer StrongStart BC programs during this Stage, due to the requirement for parents/caregivers to be with their children in a centre. StrongStart BC programs may provide an alternative remote or online service to families.

School districts may redeploy staff as necessary to supervise children of ESWs or to assist students requiring additional support.

(Stage 4)

All StrongStart BC programs are closed during this Stage. If StrongStart BC staff are not required to supervise children of ESWs or to help students requiring additional support, a StrongStart BC program may provide an alternative remote or online service to families.

(Stage 5)

All StrongStart BC programs are closed during this Stage. StrongStart BC staff should be involved in planning for Stage 4 activities.

General Guidelines:

StrongStart BC programs can be operated safely by following recommended preventative measures such as requiring participants and staff to stay home when sick, encouraging physical distancing and minimizing physical contact, practicing hand hygiene and

implementing enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols. All programs must follow current public health guidelines for [K-12 schools and child care settings](#).

StrongStart BC programs offering in-person programs are expected to maintain daily attendance records.

School districts are encouraged to find flexible solutions that best meet community needs for StrongStart BC programming. Examples of flexible options include:

- Limiting the number of hours per day and/or days per week that the program is offered.
- Pre-registering families into the program, if possible.
- Pre-planning family attendance and/or organizing families into smaller cohorts, if possible.
- Limiting group sizes in consideration of the StrongStart BC program's maximum space capacity.
- Engaging in physical distancing as much as possible including increasing the space between learning stations.
- Taking children and families outside for learning activities, including play and snack time.
- Engaging in outreach to families via emails, phone calls, and/or offering StrongStart services online.

Learning Supports

Mental Health and Well-Being

Supporting the health and safety of students, families and staff is a top priority during a pandemic event. In addition to taking measures to protect physical health, we also need to attend to social and emotional well-being.

Some students may have experienced elements of trauma during their time away from in-class instruction. Educators and support staff should look for changes in student behaviour, including trauma-related behaviours which may include fear; hyperactivity; aggression; body aches and pain; depression; self-harming behaviours; excessive shyness; or withdrawal. To support educators and staff in identifying and responding to the needs of students who have experienced trauma, the Ministry has created [trauma-informed practice resources](#) that are available on the [erase website](#).

Not all students will have experienced trauma as a result of the pandemic. However, in a time when anxiety and stress are increased, educators at all grade levels and in all subject areas are encouraged to incorporate social and emotional learning (SEL) throughout all learning opportunities, to build resilience and to enhance healthy, supportive communication. Schools should continue to engage in a whole-child approach and recognize that students may need additional supports as they transition into new or different routines. Learning environments that are designed to ensure that students feel safe, respected, valued and meaningfully engaged will support students' social and emotional well-being.

As students and families adjust to transitions between in-class instruction and remote learning, school districts and independent school authorities should ensure that families and students are aware of and have access to resources that support well-being and mental health. Schools districts/authorities should communicate clear expectations and learning options to students and parents/caregivers that are appropriate to the current Stage.

- Sharing information on current public health guidance and the comprehensive health and safety measures being taken by the school/school district can also increase parent/caregiver confidence regarding a return to in-class instruction.
- During Stages where in-class instruction is limited or suspended for all students, helping parents to understand the value of free play and opportunities for learning outside of traditional academic areas (e.g. common household tasks) can help to relieve anxiety.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Regularly monitoring and assessing how changes to the delivery of educational services and supports may impact the school community, and creating opportunities to support students, families and staff in transitioning between remote and in-class instruction.

- Connecting with children on a personal level to let them know they are valued and have a place in the school community.
- Developing a plan for how staff, students and families can continue to reach school administrators, including a process for new referrals.
- Identifying helpful online resources to post on the school/school district website, along with a counsellor's contact information.
- Exploring new ways to create a sense of connection and community among students, families and staff as part of efforts to support ongoing learning.
 - Implementing a range of in-school and virtual strategies to connect students who are receiving in-class, remote, or blended instruction.
- Determining how best to reach high-risk and vulnerable learners and watching for signs of other students whose baseline behaviours might have changed.
 - Establishing touchpoints to check in with students and monitor behaviour, mood and activities, focusing on student well-being and sense of connection.
 - Coordinating with external service providers (e.g. child and youth mental health, MCFD) to provide wrap-around supports to students in need.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and exploring alternatives where feasible and appropriate (e.g. phone, virtual meeting platforms, etc.).

Educators and staff also need to feel well supported in addressing the challenges they are facing both at work and at home, and through various transitions during a pandemic. School and school district leadership teams should continue to consider the well-being of adults in the school system and ensure supports are in place for all employees. This is a unique time for everyone, and the positive mental health of adults will have a direct impact on students.

Additional Resources:

- [erase](#) (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) hosts a range of mental health and well-being resources for students and families.
- *Keeping Healthy* on the [Keep Learning](#) website contains regularly updated free mental health and wellness resources for families and students, including specific resources for immediate help supports, LGBTQ2S+ supports, Indigenous supports, and resources available in various languages.
- [Mental Well-Being Information and Resources for Students, Families and Caring Adults](#) contains a variety of mental health resources and supports for school districts to share with educators, students, and families.
- Information on [Stigma, Prejudice and COVID-19](#) from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Student Safety

B.C. has a well-established infrastructure for supporting student safety through the provincial [Expect Respect and a Safe Education \(erase\) strategy](#). This comprehensive strategy includes prevention and intervention approaches to promote school connectedness, address bullying and violence, and create safe and caring learning environments.

As part of *erase*, [Safer Schools Together](#) provides subject matter expertise and consultation support to schools/school districts regarding student safety concerns, including worrisome and threat-related behaviour, traumatic events, and gang-associated activity.

Safety in Remote Learning Environments

During Stages where schools and school districts are providing remote learning environments, the creation and sustainability of safe and respectful digital classrooms is an essential component. Teachers, educational assistants and school administrators take great care to ensure physical classroom spaces promote and model positive behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour. It is equally important that expectations for appropriate behaviour are clearly communicated and monitored in the virtual spaces.

Schools are expected to remind students and families that the school's code of conduct applies to the remote learning environment and that online learning sessions are not for sharing beyond the intended audience. Content from these sessions may only be documented or distributed online beyond the virtual classroom setting with consent. No third-party capture or social sharing of the sessions should occur.

Connections with High-Risk Students

Changes in working, living and learning environments, as well as the anxiety and trauma that can accompany a pandemic, have the potential to create added stress for children, youth and parents/caregivers. Students who were not considered vulnerable prior to the pandemic may be experiencing challenges that affect their sense of safety, and their emotional and mental well-being. The impactful nature of pandemic events may be accompanied by increased rates of domestic/relational violence, substance abuse, child abuse, criminal and gang-associated activity and other traumatic situations that affect the health and safety of students.

The quality of relationships between adults and students is often one of the most influential factors impacting student safety and well-being. School teams should strategically identify staff members as key points of contact to support healthy and caring connections with identified students. Staff play a crucial role in helping students self-assess and communicate with a trusted adult in situations where they do not feel safe. As educators and support staff can be valuable "eyes and ears" for the community, they should be reminded of their "[Duty to Report](#)" if they become concerned about student safety in the home.

Identifying and Responding to Worrisome Behaviour

Worrisome behaviour may be an early warning sign of more serious high-risk behaviours. Worrisome behaviours are specific to the individual and may include drawing pictures, writing stories, or making vague statements that do not necessarily constitute “uttering threats” as defined by law but cause concern for some members of the school, family or community. Observed changes in a student’s baseline behaviour in person and online may indicate that they could be at risk of harm to self or others.

Determining the behavioural baseline for high-risk and vulnerable students is extremely important. School districts and independent school authorities can request confidential digital behaviour baseline reports by submitting a specialized [High-Risk and Vulnerable Youth Digital Check-In intake form](#) to Safer Schools Together [by email](#).

Teachers and support staff must report any signs of worrisome or threat-related behaviour to their administration. Following student safety protocols, it may be deemed necessary to initiate a threat risk assessment that could require the involvement of police and/or other community partners.

As students are spending more time online as a means of socialization and learning, staff should remind students of the [erase Report It tool](#). The tool allows students to send a secure, anonymous and confidential message regarding safety-related concerns to their school/school district safe school coordinator for immediate attention and follow up.

Trauma-Informed Practice and Response Considerations

Trauma-informed practice is a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events including the emotional and traumatic impact of a pandemic. Trauma-informed practice includes:

- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments
- Understanding coping strategies
- Supporting independence
- Helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual student needs.

A needs assessment of students and educators is a crucial part of a trauma-informed approach. Use of surveys and check-ins can assist in gathering important data to inform what level of trauma response and recovery will be necessary to support individuals and the school community.

Examples of Worrisome and Threat-Related Behaviours During Virtual Meetings/Classes

- *Displaying illegal weapons in the background*
- *Brandishing weapons*
- *Verbally uttering threats to kill*
- *Sexualized behaviour by the student or family member*
- *Visual/audible indications of potential domestic/relational violence*

A number of resources are available to assist schools and school districts in supporting students, staff and their families during the pandemic and transitions back to in-class instruction.

- North America Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Recovery (NACTATR) - Guidelines for Re-Entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic: <https://nactatr.com/news/guidere-entry.html>
- Compassionate Learning Communities - Supporting Trauma-Informed Practice: <https://mytrainingbc.ca/traumainformedpractice/>
- Linda O’Neill – Trauma Informed in the Classroom: <http://web.unbc.ca/~loneill/onesheet.pdf>
- Ministry of Children and Family Development: Healing Families, Helping Systems: A Trauma-Informed Practice Guide for Working with Children, Youth and Families: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/child-teen-mental-health/trauma-informed_practice_guide.pdf

Additional Resources:

- [erase website](#)
- [Children and Youth Living with Family Violence During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response](#)

Information on resources to support administrators, staff and parents/caregivers in creating safe, digital learning environments can be found in the *Privacy and Protection of Information* section.

Indigenous Student Success and Achievement (First Nations, Métis and Inuit)

First Nations have the authority to declare states of emergency and have responsibility for the education of their citizens. The way First Nations address learning during the COVID-19 pandemic will vary from community to community.

School districts and independent school authorities are expected to continue to support equitable outcomes and opportunities for all Indigenous learners by maintaining Indigenous student supports and collaboration with Indigenous rightsholders and education partners. School districts and independent school authorities are expected to collaborate with local First Nations and Indigenous communities on any changes/updates to the delivery of any programs including Indigenous language and culture services.

School districts are expected to collaborate with local Indigenous people in order to identify appropriate programs and services to be delivered through the use of targeted funds. This can be through an Indigenous Education Council or other mechanism for direct engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit families and communities.

(Stages 1 and 2)

School districts and independent school authorities should identify Indigenous students whose educational outcomes may have been negatively impacted during periods of limited or suspended in-class instruction and make accommodations to ensure these students are supported. The needs of Indigenous students who require additional supports should be planned for and prioritized in partnership with parents/caregivers and communities.

(Stages 3 to 5)

In addition to developing learning plans that align with the instructional delivery requirements for this Stage, school districts and independent school authorities are expected to collaborate with local First Nations, Métis and Indigenous communities to continue to deliver enhanced Indigenous education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Indigenous culture. These supports must be in addition to any other program and service for which an Indigenous student is eligible.

Planning for continuity of Indigenous language and culture education and supports under these unique circumstances will need to be done in partnership with Indigenous communities and Indigenous language teachers and speakers. For example, situations where an Elder is the course instructor via a Letter of Permission will require direction from the community regarding ability to access online learning opportunities.

School districts and independent school authorities should engage Indigenous communities and parents/caregivers to ensure there is no disruption to the educational path of students on track to graduate.

Boards of education are also expected to engage with First Nations to identify the transportation needs of First Nation students living on reserve and opting to attend in-person classes as schools gradually increase in-class instruction. Collaboration between boards and First Nations is necessary to ensure there are equitable and safe transportation opportunities as we transition back to in-class instruction.

Boards are also asked to refrain from seeking tuition payment from First Nations with a Local Education Agreement (LEA) until there is engagement on, or clarity about, continued learning opportunities.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Collaboration between teachers and Indigenous support staff on the development of Indigenous students' learning plans, including ensuring the integration of language and culture into these plans.
- Collaboration between district/authority leadership, school administrators, teachers and Indigenous support staff to engage parents and communities and identify the specific needs of each student and family, including technology, connectivity, and/or transportation needs.

- A comprehensive strategy for tracking all enhanced services and supports provided to Indigenous students prior to the pandemic to ensure continuity of services and support moving forward and that services can be reinstated as in-class instruction increases.
- Awareness and sensitivity regarding the complex and devastating history that pandemics have had on many Indigenous communities.
- Understanding that some Indigenous families and communities may be taking increased safety measures during the pandemic, which may mean that some students will not be able to attend in-person instruction even as schools return to normal operations.

Communication

During the pandemic period, school districts and independent school authorities have an obligation to inform and communicate with the First Nations they serve regarding continuity of learning plans for Nominal Roll students, Enhancement Agreement goals and Equity Action Plans, Local Education Agreements and Joint Transportation Plans.

Additional information on these topics, and Targeted Funding, is available in a [special BCTEA Communique \(April 16, 2020\)](#).

Additional Resources

- [Indigenous Education in British Columbia](#)
- [Indigenous Education Teaching Tools and Resources](#)
- [FNESC Suggestions for Continuous Learning](#)

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Inclusive Supports

LGBTQ2S+ students who experience the school environment as a safe and welcoming space may feel a sense of loss and isolation when they are not receiving in-class instruction. Students who do not feel accepted in their home environment may be particularly vulnerable during these times.

For some other LGBTQ2S+ students, a return to in-class instruction may be of greater concern particularly in situations where they do not perceive the school environment to be safe and welcoming.

School districts and independent school authorities are encouraged to ensure that all LGBTQ2S+ students continue to have access to available resources to support their social-emotional health and well-being.

Educators are reminded to access www.sogieducation.org to find resources that support SOGI-inclusive educational environments and individual LGBTQ2S+ students. Additional resources have been added in response to COVID-19 related challenges.

(Stages 1 and 2)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Identifying students who were receiving support through school programs and/or staff and developing a plan to regularly connect with those students on an individual basis to support any transitions back to in-class instruction.
- Ensuring students and families can continue to reach school/school district SOGI Leads or other key contacts.
- Posting online resources on the school/school district website, along with contact information for school and community counselling services.
- Exploring ways to connect students to each other in safe spaces and formats (e.g. outside, physically distancing).

(Stages 3 and 4)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Identifying students who were receiving support through school programs and/or staff and developing a plan to regularly connect with those students on an individual basis.
- Arranging full-time in-school instruction for those who would benefit most.
- Ensuring students and families can continue to reach school/school district SOGI Leads or other key contacts via phone, email or online platforms.
- Posting online resources on the school/school district website, along with contact information for school and community counselling services.
- Exploring new ways to connect students to each other such as virtual Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs).

(Stage 5)

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities should include:

- Identifying students who were receiving support through school programs and/or staff and developing a plan to regularly connect with those students on an individual basis.
- Ensuring students and families can continue to reach school/school district SOGI Leads or other key contacts via phone, email or online platforms.
- Posting online resources on the school/school district website, along with contact information for school and community counselling services.
- Exploring new ways to connect students to each other such as virtual Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs).

Additional Resources:

- [Trans Care BC](#): Provides links to community support groups and family resources.
- [PFLAG Canada](#): Provides support to LGBTQ2S+ individuals and their families.

Supports for Families

School districts and independent school authorities are expected to outline supports that will continue to be made available to families, including specific information on how to access these supports during different Stages of the K-12 Restart Plan. In addition, school districts/authorities should remind parents and caregivers of available local community resources that can be accessed to support ongoing learning and family well-being.

(Stage 1)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Identifying families who were receiving regular support by staff or through school programs (e.g. time with a Family Support Worker), or who may have emerging support needs, and developing a plan to assist those families with their well-being.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer.

(Stages 2)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Ensuring staff are prepared to support students with mental health and/or wellness concerns as these students transition between in-class instruction and remote learning.
- Identifying families who were receiving regular support by staff or through school programs (e.g. time with a Family Support Worker), or who may have emerging support needs, and developing a plan to assist those families with their well-being. At a minimum this should include regular communication with the family and may also include arranging in-school supports for those children who would benefit most.
- Ensuring staff who work in family support roles remain accessible to families and provide additional supports beyond continued learning opportunities for students.
- Assigning school-level staff to connect with local community-based organizations and Indigenous communities to coordinate school and community supports and referrals for families.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods (e.g. home visitation) to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and exploring alternatives where feasible and appropriate (e.g. phone, virtual meeting platforms, etc.).

(Stages 3)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Ensuring staff are prepared to support students with mental health and/or wellness concerns as these students transition between in-class instruction and remote learning.
- Identifying families who were receiving regular support by staff or through school programs (e.g. time with a Family Support Worker), or who may have emerging support needs, and developing a plan to assist those families with their well-being. At a minimum this should include regular communication with the family and may also include arranging in-school supports for those children who would benefit most.

- Ensuring staff who work in family support roles remain accessible to families and provide additional supports beyond continued learning opportunities for students.
- Reviewing and potentially shifting staff assignments, including those for non-enrolling teachers and support staff, to ensure local school communities can meet elevated support needs of families during transitions between in-class, remote and blended instruction.
- Assigning school-level staff to connect with local community-based organizations and Indigenous communities to coordinate school and community supports and referrals for families.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods (e.g. home visitation) to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and exploring alternatives where feasible and appropriate (e.g. phone, virtual meeting platforms, etc.).

(Stage 4)

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Identifying families who were receiving regular support by staff or through school programs (e.g. time with a Family Support Worker), or who may have emerging support needs, and developing a plan to assist those families with their well-being. At a minimum this should include regular communication with the family and may also include arranging in-school supports for those children who would benefit most.
- Ensuring staff who work in family support roles remain accessible to families and provide additional supports beyond continued learning opportunities for students.
- Reviewing and potentially shifting staff assignments, including those for non-enrolling teachers and support staff, to ensure local school communities can meet elevated support needs of families during the pandemic.
- Assigning school-level staff to connect with local community-based organizations and Indigenous communities to coordinate school and community supports and referrals for families.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods (e.g. home visitation) to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and exploring alternatives where feasible and appropriate (e.g. telephone, Skype, FaceTime, etc).

(Stage 5)

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities should include:

- Identifying families who were receiving regular support by staff or through school programs (e.g. time with a Family Support Worker), or who may have emerging support needs, and developing a plan to assist those families with their well-being. At a minimum this should include regular communication with the family.
- Ensuring staff who work in family support roles remain accessible to families and provide additional supports beyond continued learning opportunities for students.
- Reviewing and potentially shifting staff assignments, including those for non-enrolling teachers and support staff, to ensure local school communities can meet elevated support needs of families during the pandemic.

- Assigning school-level staff to connect with local community-based organizations and Indigenous communities to coordinate school and community supports and referrals for families.
- Reviewing existing service delivery methods (e.g. home visitation) to ensure they align with current guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and exploring alternatives where feasible and appropriate (e.g. telephone, Skype, FaceTime, etc).

Additional Resources:

- Most organizations that provide essential services to families continue to operate during a pandemic; however support may be offered in different ways depending on current circumstances. Many of these organizations have provincial offices and toll-free phone numbers to connect families with local agencies that can provide assistance, and direct them to a number of new online service options that are now available. More information can be found in this list of [community services and resources](#).
- The [erase](#) (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) website and the Keeping Healthy section of the [Keep Learning](#) website each host a range of mental health and well-being resources for students and families.
 - The Ministry of Education has also developed a COVID-19-specific [Mental Well-Being Information and Resources](#) document for school districts to share with educators, students and families, which includes a variety of mental health resources and supports.

School Food Programs

While physical distancing and suspension of in-class instruction may impact the delivery of food programs to students, school districts/authorities with existing programs should continue to work with community partners to provide services based on need and operational feasibility, and in accordance with current K-12 health and safety guidelines (see the *Health and Safety* section for more details).

(Stage 1)

School districts/authorities should:

- Regularly assess student need based on the current context, taking into account the fluid nature of individual circumstances. For example:
 - Students who were not considered vulnerable prior to the COVID-19 pandemic may now be experiencing food insecurity.
 - Food programs may need to shift or adapt their focus to those students most in need.
- Ensure that food programs adhere to current public health requirements.

- Engage with local, provincial, national and Indigenous organizations to create and leverage community partnerships and coordinate efforts to support students and families in need.

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Availability of human resources (i.e. teachers, support staff, volunteers) to support programs.
- Safe food preparation
 - use of community volunteers; and
 - collaboration with existing local food programs.
- Opportunities to incorporate creative and innovative approaches.

(Stages 2 to 5)

School districts/authorities should:

- Plan for continuity of food supports for students on days when they are not in attendance at their school (e.g. pick-up/drop-off of food/meals).
- Regularly assess student need based on the current context, taking into account the fluid nature of individual circumstances. For example:
 - Students who were not considered vulnerable prior to the COVID-19 pandemic may now be experiencing food insecurity.
 - Food programs may need to shift or adapt their focus to those students most in need.
 - School districts/authorities that were not previously offering school food programs can assess opportunities to respond to emerging student needs.
- Ensure that food programs adhere to current direction from the Provincial Health Officer, and [support the safety of students, staff and volunteers](#).
- Engage with local, provincial, national and Indigenous organizations to create and leverage community partnerships and coordinate efforts to support students and families in need.
 - School districts/authorities should connect with other local community and Indigenous agencies to create an inventory of food provision services available to those in need, to help identify any gaps in service provision.

Considerations for school districts/authorities include:

- Availability of human resources (i.e. teachers, support staff, volunteers) to support programs.
- Safe food preparation
 - impact of increased physical distancing protocols (e.g. reduced capacity/closure of commercial food preparation facilities);
 - use of community volunteers; and
 - collaboration with existing local food programs.
- Safe food distribution
 - strategies to support students/families who are sick and/or self-isolating;
 - redeployment of school/school district staff not needed onsite;

- use of community volunteers;
- First Nations capacity;
- food deliveries for students not in attendance at school; and
- food pick-up schedules and routines that allow for physical distancing.
- Opportunities to incorporate creative and innovative approaches.

Examples of approaches within B.C. and Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- *Redeploying school bus drivers to deliver food to students' doorsteps.*
- *Providing families with vouchers, gift cards or pre-paid accounts at local grocery stores.*
- *Offering drive-thru or in-person food pick-up at designated school locations.*
- *Arranging regular shopping/pick-up times with local grocery stores for school food program supplies.*

The Ministry will continue to work, plan and share information with K-12 education partners, government and non-government organizations to support school districts/authorities.

Additional Resources:

Save-On-Foods has committed \$500,000 through [Breakfast Club of Canada](#) to give kids easier [access to school meal supports during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). School districts are encouraged to contact [Save-On-Foods](#) directly for information and resources, including reduced rate grocery gift cards, bulk purchasing options, and toolkits to help with distribution of food to students.

A number of community businesses, non-profit agencies and charities provide support to school meal programs, in addition to the following organizations:

- [BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food \(BC-CHSF\)](#)
- [President's Choice \(PC\) Children's Charity](#)
- [Vancouver Sun Kids Fund](#)
- [BackPack Buddies Program](#)
- [Farm to Cafeteria Canada](#)
- Rotary Clubs and other local service organizations (see local websites for contact information)

Delivery of K-12 Education

Parameters for Schools and School Districts

The following parameters are provided to support student learning and to ensure that shared efforts promote quality educational experiences across B.C. While schools may operate in a variety of in-class, remote, and blended models, in alignment with the [Expectations for Each Stage](#), the core functions of our education system will continue.

Learners and families can anticipate that their school/school district will:

- Prioritize health and safety in the provision of learning initiatives.
- Acknowledge that social-emotional learning is a key component of the educational experience and will be evident in the competencies being supported during in-class, remote or “blended” (a combination of in-person and remote) learning experiences.
- Explore and share ways for families to access available local resources, including local Indigenous community resources and partner agencies that support student learning and social-emotional health.
- Make regular efforts to engage with students and families to communicate expectations and to provide materials, resources and activities that will support Stage-specific in-class, remote or blended models of teaching and learning.
- Be responsive and flexible in meeting individual student needs in the learning opportunities being provided.
- Identify how school and school district personnel (such as non-enrolling teachers, administrators, education assistants, Indigenous and cultural support workers, and other support staff) may be involved in supporting the classroom teacher’s creation and maintenance of a quality learning environment (in-class, remote or blended) for individuals and groups of students.
- Develop activities, assignments and assessments that are accessible to all students and families, as appropriate for any in-class, remote or blended delivery.
- Share expectations of student engagement and the processes, requirements and timelines that will be used for assessment, evaluation and reporting.
- Communicate standards for protection of privacy and online security and any concerns regarding the storage of student information, particularly for remote and blended instructional models that utilize technology.

Parameters for Parent/Caregiver Choice *(updated August 28, 2020)*

Under the *School Act*, a person must enrol in an educational program between the ages of 5 and 16. Across all Stages, parents/caregivers have the choice to enrol their child in an educational program offered by a public or independent school (including “bricks and mortar” schools, online/distributed learning schools, or through blended programs) or to register their child for homeschooling prior to the start of the school year. With

homeschooling, parents/caregivers are responsible for designing the educational program for their child and must register their child with either a public or independent school.

Parents/caregivers can choose a different option at any time during the school year, based on program availability and in accordance with applicable school district or independent school authority policies and procedures.

Students with rights under section 23 of the [Charter](#) have the right to attend an educational program provided in French. First Nations students may attend a school operated by the government of Canada or by a First Nation or a participating First Nations under the [First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act \(Canada\)](#).

(Stage 2)

Once Stage 2 plans are approved by the Ministry, school districts should contact all families in their school communities to share their safety plans and to confirm if they are planning for their child to attend school classes in September, or if they need alternative learning options.

In this stage, school districts have the flexibility and certainty to find options that work for families. This includes the authority for all school boards to offer remote options to students within their districts, as well as the tools they need to increase their existing programs to meet demand.

Immunocompromised Students and Parents/Caregivers

According to the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction when safety measures are in place. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

The advice from the PHO and BCCDC for parents/caregivers of children with complex medical conditions or underlying risk factors, or parents/caregivers who are immunocompromised themselves, is to consult with their medical health care provider to determine the level of risk regarding their child's return to in-class instruction. Parents/caregivers seeking an alternative to in-class instruction, and who do not wish to register their child in a distributed learning program or homeschooling, will be required to obtain a doctor's note indicating the need for accommodations due to health-related risks.

School districts and independent school authorities are expected to work with these families to ensure continuity of learning and supports through the provincial Homebound program. The Homebound program enables students to continue their educational program while absent from school for periods during the school year because of injury, disease, surgery,

pregnancy, medical or psychological reasons, etc. Homebound program students stay within their school and school district while they are receiving their educational supports and can be welcomed back to in-class instruction at any time. More information on the Homebound program is available in the [Special Education Policy Manual](#) (p.37).

For more information, see BCCDC's [guidance for families of immunocompromised children in school and group gatherings](#), and their [Frequently Asked Questions regarding COVID-19 and children with immune suppression](#).

Additional Resources

- Information on [Online and Distributed Learning](#)
 - [Public Distributed Learning programs and courses](#)
 - [Independent Distributed Learning programs](#)
- Information on [Homeschooling](#)

Curricular Obligations

In all Stages of the K-12 Restart Plan, teachers are expected to work with their students to cover all required learning standards of the curriculum including an emphasis on the [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#). Teachers always have significant flexibility to determine how student engagement and successful completion of different activities have met the requirements of the curriculum. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to plan for activities that allow for a transition between in-class and remote learning in the event of a transition between Stages.

Schools also need to consider [current K-12 health and safety guidelines](#) when structuring in-school learning opportunities and programs, including physical activities in Physical and Health Education, music education activities such as choir and band, home economics and culinary, science labs, drama, technology education, computers, Kindergarten entry and Adult Education.

(Stage 1)

In this Stage, students will be learning in-class with their teacher(s).

(Stage 2)

In this Stage, most students will be learning in-class with their teacher(s). However, in situations where in-class instruction to secondary school students is being supplemented with self-directed or remote learning, teachers will need to prioritize learning standards that can be more successfully learned remotely. This includes a focus on key cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills and the development of core competencies. Teachers should work with the school team and parents/caregivers to ensure that students who are experiencing challenges at home or who have limited access to technology are not disadvantaged by their inability to participate fully in any self-directed or remote learning being offered.

(Stages 3 to 5)

During Stages where in-class instruction is limited or suspended for all students, teachers will need to prioritize learning standards that can be more successfully taught and learned remotely. This includes a focus on key cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills and the development of core competencies. Teachers should work with the school team and parents/caregivers to ensure that students who are experiencing challenges at home or who have limited access to technology are not disadvantaged by their inability to participate fully in remote learning.

Instructional Approaches

As schools and school districts develop stage-specific plans and prepare for the possibility of transitioning between Stages, consideration must be given to providing different instructional approaches for different grade levels and contexts. Depending on the Stage, students may be attending in-person classes full-time, attending in-person classes part time and engaging in supplemental self-directed or remote learning opportunities (a “blended” model), or engaging in remote learning opportunities full-time. See [Expectations for Each Stage](#) for additional details on expectations for in-class instruction and learning options.

Definitions:

Self-Directed learning: *students complete learning tasks, assigned by the teacher during in-class instruction, at their own pace and outside of the classroom.*

Blended learning: *students spend time learning and working remotely as well as in person in a brick and mortar building for at least some of the time.*

Remote learning: *instruction is delivered and received online and learning activities are done remotely and submitted digitally.*

Whether learning is enabled through in-person, blended or remote instruction, students will benefit from knowing that they are still part of a learning community. The educator/student relationship is at the core of successful learning and educators will continue to build on those relationships.

Blended instruction models may take a variety of forms. In some cases, the primary mode of instruction will be through remote channels, supplemented by extra in-person support. In other cases, in-person instruction may be at the center, supplemented by remote learning activities. The ratio of in-class time to remote learning time may vary as well. Factors will include the stage-specific expectations for instructional delivery, individual needs and the school/school district’s capacity to deliver a combination of in-class and remote learning.

Where blended or fully remote learning opportunities are provided, consideration should be given to access and comfort with technology. Some educators will connect with their students in a primarily online environment. Others will use strategies that utilize more traditional resources. Educators will need to be sensitive to the fact that not all students have regular (or any) access to technology, so allowances should be made for “low tech” ways for students to engage in remote learning experiences.

For some students, blended learning models will not be appropriate. Schools will need to assess student needs and plan for in-class instruction accordingly.

Blended Learning Resources for Educators

See the Training and Support section for more information on a new Blended Learning online course for educators.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities

School districts and independent school authorities are expected to develop learning plans for students with disabilities or diverse abilities that prioritize in-school instruction (see Prioritization of Services and Supports under the *Services and Supports* section) and ensure equity of access to learning.

Learning plans for students with disabilities and diverse abilities should be aligned with the goals identified in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and developed in consultation with education professionals who typically support the student in the educational setting (e.g. EAs, non-enrolling teachers, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists). School districts/authorities should assess the supports that can continue to be provided in a school environment, taking into account the needs of the student and their family circumstances. Learning plans that involve remote learning will not be able to fully replicate the services provided in the educational setting but should provide staff and parents/caregivers with activities that are appropriate in the circumstances.

School districts and independent schools must ensure any online learning opportunities provided as a part of a learning plan are accessible to all students.

Additional considerations for school districts/authorities include clarity of roles for:

- Classroom teachers creating learning plans for designated students whose learning needs are documented in an IEP and/or for English Language Learning students whose learning needs are documented in an Annual Instructional Plan (AIP). School administrators can determine the specific staff members to assist classroom teachers to develop and support learning plans that include information as identified in students' IEPs/AIPs. Consultation should include education professionals who typically support the student in the educational setting.
- Non-enrolling teachers collaborating with classroom teachers to ensure that content being prepared for at-home learning is accessible, meaningful for all learners, and can be supported by parents/caregivers. Students who face barriers to accessing online content should be provided with access to in-class instruction.
- Educational support staff creating specific plans that outline how students will continue to access specialized supports delivered onsite (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing).

- Educational Assistants continuing to collaborate with teachers in the delivery of instruction and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities. Support may include:
 - assisting with the preparing of assignments, content and activities;
 - assisting with the collection of materials that will be sent to students;
 - maintaining regular communication and check-in with students as determined by the classroom teacher, and under the direction of the principal, vice-principal or director of instruction; and
 - supporting families and students in accessing and participating in remote learning and therapy experiences as needed.

Teachers should maintain ongoing communication with colleagues who also serve their students (paraprofessionals, non-enrolling teachers, related service providers, counsellors, school-based team, etc.).

Additional Resources

[Provincial Outreach Programs](#) are available to support school districts and independent school authorities in developing remote learning plans for students with disabilities and diverse abilities.

Considerations for Timetables

Across all Stages, school districts and independent school authorities are expected to consider the following when determining class and grade/course organization:

- Ensure schedules meet stage-specific instructional delivery requirements, learning group size limits and school density targets outlined in [Expectations for Each Stage](#).
- Define operational and learning priorities and, where possible, have more than one option to attain these priorities.
- Work with staff, parents, students, Indigenous rightsholders, and partners to support education delivery.
- Recognize these Stages are dynamic; flexibility and nimbleness are key requirements.

Decisions regarding timetabling will be made at the local level taking into account available facilities, health and safety considerations, student needs, transportation and available staff resources. School districts/authorities and local unions must facilitate a process with education partners and Indigenous rightsholders to explore a range of delivery models that:

- meet the needs of students during each Stage with a focus on maximizing in-class instruction time within health and safety guidelines;
- ensure teacher and support staff workloads regarding in-class instruction and remote instruction (where applicable) are balanced and manageable; and
- include as many elements as possible that can be maintained if and when there is a transition from one Stage to another.

Additional Resources and Contacts

School district questions regarding collective agreements or employment related matters should be directed to the [BC Public School Employers' Association](#).

Resources, Tools and Technology Options

Resources, tools and technology play an important role in the delivery of education. School/school district needs may vary by Stage, so it is important to identify what is needed for different types of educational delivery and for different age groups of learners.

Given that various forms of remote and blended instructional models are happening across the world, many resources are being shared online. Having school/school district level processes in place to highlight and recommend particularly useful products or services will help to streamline the work of classroom teachers in sorting through the many available options. Schools and school districts may create their own lists of recommended resources for teachers, support staff, students and/or parents/caregivers.

Schools and school districts are also encouraged to select a standard set of tools and applications in an effort to streamline remote learning environments for students and parents/caregivers (e.g. learning how to use new platforms, managing multiple accounts, etc).

Considerations:

- Making regular connections between staff, families and students can happen in a variety of ways. In-person connections are important and should be encouraged whenever it is safe to do so. When in-person connections are limited or not possible, there are other ways to maintain connections. Phone calls and hard copy text are low-tech ways to connect, while video conferencing or setting up virtual classrooms are more high-tech solutions. The list below provides some starting points.
 - Working with [Focused Education](#), the Ministry of Education [secured a provincial licence for Zoom](#), a videoconferencing and collaboration tool. The provincial enterprise license for Zoom is managed by [Focused Education](#). School districts, independent school authorities and First Nations schools received guidance on the administration and configuration for Zoom to ensure the highest level of security. For additional information about onboarding and implementation, refer to the [Access to the Zoom BC K-12 License info sheet](#).
 - Microsoft Teams is a collaboration app that helps your team stay organized and have conversations—all in one place. Teams is part of Microsoft 365 which districts/authorities license through [Focused Education](#) and may make available for use by educators, staff, and students.
 - Current functionality within MyEducation BC can be leveraged to facilitate communication and information between students, parents/caregivers, teachers and support staff. Please see the [MyEducation BC information sheet](#) on available features and support resources.

- Through [ShareEdBC](#), teachers across the province have access to curated content aligned to B.C.'s redesigned curriculum. ShareEdBC aims to help users across the province connect with each other, and to find and share resources. Currently, an early release of ShareEdBC is available, enabling educators to onboard easily. If your School District has not yet connected with ShareEdBC about making the platform available to your educators, please contact ShareEdBC@gov.bc.ca. ShareEdBC will work with you to activate ShareEdBC for the 2020-2021 school year.
Note: The Ministry will invite Independent Schools, First Nations Schools, Yukon and other Educational Partners to join in the fall provided they have the required technology in place.
- Learning management systems (LMS) can provide robust environments for teaching and learning but do require training and support for users.
 - For more information about LMS considerations, as well as some options to support local capacity, see the [Learning Management System and Online Course Options info sheet](#).
- Learning resources come in a variety of formats. Consider what is needed for various age groups, abilities, and delivery models. Resource selection should be aligned with the [Learning Resources Policy](#) and with district/authority policies. Educators may consult with school/school district leadership and with their school librarian for recommendations and expertise in this area.
 - Schools and school districts may facilitate the distribution of physical learning resources such as books, toolkits, or instructional packages, as well as the lending of tablets or laptop computers for student use. Please ensure proper health measures are in place and that safe processes are established for receiving and distributing materials and devices. For more information, refer to the *Health and Safety* section of this guide.
 - For information about some online course options, see the [Learning Management System and Online Course Options info sheet](#).
 - [ShareEdBC](#) (see above)
 - [TeachBC](#) is an online resource of teaching materials, lessons, and research relevant to the K-12 BC curriculum, provided through the BC Teachers' Federation. The website is public and open to everyone through the generosity of BC public school teachers. Teachers and organizations can share their teaching resources or educational research by registering and uploading their materials or providing links. Anyone can browse and download the resources for classroom or professional use. Browsing is easy. Users can search by subject, grade level, resource type, title, description, language, and more.
 - [BetterEducate](#) is a platform developed by the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association to enable resource sharing and networking between educators.

- The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) has released [Suggestions for Continuous Learning](#), which includes a comprehensive list of learning activities developed for First Nations schools that can be used by public school districts and independent school authorities.
- Through [Focused Education](#), districts and independent school members can license the [BC Digital Classroom](#), a core collection of digital resources with videos, reference databases, lessons, and activities. Focused Education has [archived webinars](#) highlighting use of these tools, and provides a schedule of [live webinars](#) for members throughout the school year. Teachers can find information on peer-reviewed digital and print resources in the [K-12 Evaluated Resource Collection and](#) discover curated collections featuring [free websites](#) for instructional use.

Focused Education offers a one-hour online course for educators and support staff on the [selection of learning resources](#).

- [Keep Learning BC](#) is a central place where families can find ideas for everyday educational activities, annotated links to free learning resources, as well as how to help children keep well and learn while they're at home.
- Where possible, and in alignment with district/authority policy, utilize open resources that do not have fees associated. Look to public and community institutions such as libraries, museums, and educational centers to see if they have any programming available even if they may be closed.
- Ensure the accessibility of virtual spaces and the inclusive design of digital and online content.
- IT staff at the school and school district level are essential resources to ensure that district or school web infrastructure can sustain the necessary volume of traffic and that web portals and online learning environments are robust enough to be accessed via a range of solutions (e.g., devices, operating systems, assistive technology). Providing remote professional connections and opportunities to learn and share may be needed to support IT staff as they address emerging challenges. If schools and school districts implement (or share) e-learning platforms that rely on students accessing school/school district data center resources and are concerned with bandwidth, NGN Leads should [contact the ministry](#) to assess the need for upgrades.
- Ensure privacy and protection of information safeguards are in place. See the *Privacy and Protection of Information* section for more information. Ensure clear expectations are set for staff, students and families.
- Consider copyright restrictions and permissions under the Canadian [Copyright Act](#) in planning for the use and distribution of resources. Below are some resources to consider sharing with staff:
 - The [Fair Dealing Decision Tool](#) helps teachers decide whether "fair dealing" permits classroom use of print materials, artistic works, or audiovisual materials without first getting copyright permission. The tool helps teachers determine

whether a specific intended classroom use is allowed under the [Fair Dealing Guidelines](#).

- The [Copyright Matters handbook](#) is available online.
- Schools and school districts should also consult with First Nations communities for permission to use any locally-developed cultural resources for digital instruction or distribution extending beyond the classroom.

Training and Support (updated August 28, 2020)

The suspension of in-person classes during the 2019/20 school year required system-wide navigation of new processes, learning environments and routines. As school districts and independent school authorities plan for the possibility of shifting between Stages if and when required, it will be important to pay attention to several processes and procedures intended to support effective operations and the needs of staff, students and their families. To achieve the best possible outcomes, schools and school districts will need to provide initial or refresher training and support to teachers, support staff and families on an as needed basis throughout the year. The level and type of support needed will vary depending on the specific, and sometimes changing, circumstances and needs of a school community.

Starting with a *needs assessment* can be an effective way to build a plan for continuity of learning in each Stage. These assessments will allow schools and districts to create the infrastructure needed for solid foundations and supports for students, families and staff based on their specific needs. Gathering information about Spring 2020 learning experiences, ease of access to technology, and comfort with remote and blended teaching and learning will be helpful in determining what training and supports will be required. There will be much to learn from the experiences of the 2019/20 school year, and schools and districts should encourage staff to reflect on what worked well and what areas require attention. Schools or districts should engage with local First Nations and collaborate with Indigenous education leads to identify any technology access or connectivity supports required by Indigenous students.

Many educators, parents/caregivers and students will look to their schools and districts to provide access to training and supports as they explore technologies that are new to them. Some school districts have established “help desk” teams to facilitate this work.

The Ministry of Education is creating opportunities to support capacity building for educators.

Blended Learning: Creating a Flexible Classroom is a self-paced course designed to provide tools and strategies for incorporating blended learning into the classroom. This course consists of three components: foundation, application, and collaboration. The foundation section focuses on the “what” and “why” while the application section focuses on the “how”. Both sections come together in the collaborative community of practice, where teachers across B.C. can connect to ask questions, share resources, and discuss experiences. (The course is freely available through Open Course Resources. Registration is required.)

The Ministry of Education will be launching a **webinar series** to support teachers across the province amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Subject matter experts will present on a range of topics relevant to teachers’ interests and concerns for changing teaching and learning environments. The webinars will take place over fall within the first week of September, October and November. **For more information, please see “Teaching Tenaciously” under K-12 Resources.**

Consider including the September webinar in your district or school orientation week plan.

Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal

Date: September 9, 2020

Time: 10:00 am

Speakers:

- Monique Gray Smith, Award Winning and Best-Selling Author, Speaker, and Consultant
- Dr. Linda O’Neill, Associate Professor for the Department of Psychology at UNBC and Clinical Coordinator at the Community Counselling Centre in Prince George
- Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Professor in the Human Development at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Applied Developmental Psychologist

Duration: 75 min

Moderator: Dean Shareski

Objective: This webinar will provide teachers with information, ideas and strategies that teachers can use to create compassionate spaces for students, especially during times where the classroom environment is ever-changing.

Processes and Policies

School districts and independent school authorities are encouraged to consider and share ideas and resources as they develop processes and policies during the COVID-19 pandemic. School districts and independent school authorities are expected to review their own policies to determine whether those policies require amendments during this time.

Areas for school districts and independent school authorities to consider include:

- Attendance policies for students
 - See stage-specific information below for school districts and the [MyEducation BC information sheet](#) for available features and support resources.
- Assessment and Reporting
 - See *Assessment and Reporting* section.
- Reporting to post-secondary institutions

- Review and documentation of progress related to IEPs.
- Transition success plans for Indigenous and priority students from elementary, to middle and secondary school programs.
- Activities planned for transitioning of preschoolers into kindergarten. This is an important process for all youngsters and families, especially for parents/caregivers of students with special needs.
- Processes to support students with special needs transitioning out of the K-12 system.
- Guidance on how students with diverse learning needs can continue to access specialized supports onsite or through direct service to learners or via consultation with the educational team (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, teachers of students with sensory impairments).

School District Attendance Policies

(Stage 1)

During this Stage, all students **not present on-site** will be **recorded daily** in MyEducation BC as an **absence** per standard attendance practices established by the school and/or school district prior to COVID-19 protocols.

(Stages 2)

During this Stage, all students **not present on-site** will be **recorded daily** in MyEducation BC as an **absence**, per standard attendance practices established by the school and/or school district prior to COVID19 protocols.

Data will be reported daily to the Ministry via an extract provided by the MyEducation BC service provider. This data is also available for extraction and analysis by schools and school districts via existing reports in MyEducation BC.

(Stage 3)

During this Stage, all students **present on-site** will be **recorded daily** in MyEducation BC using the **OnSite code** as per standard instructions and practice established in June 2020 for all schools and school districts.

Data will be reported daily to the Ministry via an extract provided by MyEducation BC service provider. This data is also available for extraction and analysis by schools and school districts via existing reports in MyEducation BC.

(Stage 4)

During this Stage, all students **present on-site** will be **recorded daily** in MyEducation BC using the **OnSite code** as per standard instructions and practice established in June 2020 for all schools and school districts.

Data will be reported daily to the Ministry via an extract provided by MyEducation BC service provider. This data is also available for extraction and analysis by schools and school districts via existing reports in MyEducation BC.

(Stage 5)

During this Stage, **daily attendance** recording in MyEducation BC **is suspended**.

Note: MyEducation BC can be used for communications and tracking student contact in a variety of ways. MyEducation BC District Level 1 support contacts can outline which method would best meet a school/school district's needs.

Summer School

The Ministry will announce the approach for summer school in the 2021/22 school year in spring 2021.

Privacy and Protection of Information

School districts and independent school authorities must ensure privacy and protection of information safeguards are in place, and must establish and communicate clear expectations for staff, students and families. School district/authorities are expected to remain aware of the privacy implications that may arise from the use of digital technologies for instruction and continue to practice due diligence.

School districts/authorities must ensure that protection of personal information is embedded into any new processes of collection, use, disclosure, storage, transmittal and the use of technology, in accordance with [FIPPA](#) (for school districts) and [PIPA](#) (for independent school authorities), and are encouraged to [contact the Ministry](#) for assistance or for general privacy information. A privacy impact assessment should be completed prior to using any new digital technologies.

B.C. currently has a [Ministerial Order](#) in place **until December 31, 2020**. This order allows some flexibility for teachers to utilize online and digital learning platforms in response to COVID-19. In response to the pandemic landscape, this order can be rescinded at any point in time. It is important to consider this when planning for online learning and technology use. [The Guidance on Ministerial Order 180](#) is critical to deciding whether to rely on the order for use of any communication or collaboration tool(s). Data stored in tools under this order will need to be cleared prior to the order ending or being rescinded.

Additional Resources:

- [Protecting Information](#) is a free, openly available online course addressing some basics related to the identification, protection and security of information that districts may consider offering to staff.
- [Focused Education](#) is a source of information and support. It provides [templates](#) for developing consent forms and privacy impact assessments, and materials to guide [resource selection processes](#). In addition, Focused Education has created the following information privacy resources for educators:
 - [Protecting Student Information \(pdf\)](#)
 - [Reference Guide to App Privacy Implications \(pdf\)](#)Schools/school districts can contact Focused Education directly at info@focusedresources.ca.
- The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC published a guidance document, [FIPPA and online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).
- [Safer Schools Together](#) has created a set of resources for administrators, teachers, and parents with information and guidance on establishing the safest possible digital learning environments:
 - [Increasing Safety in a Remote Learning World – Guidelines \(pdf\)](#)
 - [Increasing Safety in a Remote Learning World – Using Zoom, MS Teams and Google Classroom \(pdf\)](#)
 - [Zoom - Creating Safe Remote Teaching & Learning Spaces \(video\)](#)
 - [Zoom – Keeping it Private and Practical Tips for Remote Teaching \(video\)](#)
 - [Zoom Settings for Education - Quick Reference Sheet \(pdf\)](#)

Assessment and Reporting

School districts must meet the requirements of British Columbia's [Student Reporting Policy](#), which allows significant flexibility for schools and school districts regarding the content and format of report cards. Independent school authorities must develop student reporting frameworks which adhere to the criteria established in the External Evaluation Report, which also allows for significant flexibility regarding the content and format of report cards.

As always, teachers will use their professional judgement to determine whether a student has demonstrated sufficient evidence of learning. This professional judgement determines how teachers assign marks and communicate that information to students and families. Teachers also have the professional autonomy to decide how grades are determined and how different activities meet the learning standards of the curriculum.

For students with disabilities or diverse abilities or English Language Learners, the expectation remains that unless the student is able to demonstrate their learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum for the course or subject and grade, that student's report card must contain written reporting comments in relation to the expected learning outcomes set out in that student's Individual Education Plan, Student Support Plan or Annual Instruction Plan.

(Stage 1)

During this Stage, all students will receive progress updates based on the learning opportunities they engaged in throughout the year.

The Ministry recognizes the need to be flexible and to accommodate students who have engaged in self-directed or remote learning during previous stages throughout the school year.

(Stage 2)

During this Stage, all students will receive progress updates based on the learning opportunities they are engaging in at school and, for some secondary school students, through additional self-directed or remote learning. Teachers may wish to work with families to develop realistic learning goals and shared expectations for learning in order to accommodate any self-directed or remote learning conditions that students are working within.

The Ministry recognizes the need to be flexible and to accommodate students who are engaged in additional self-directed or remote learning. Reports prepared during this stage for students engaged in self-directed or remote learning may not provide the amount of rich, detailed feedback that usually goes on a report card. Marks and comments can place additional emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and core competency development in each learning area.

(Stage 3)

During this Stage, all students will receive progress updates based on the learning opportunities they are engaging in at school and through remote learning. Teachers may wish to work with families to develop realistic learning goals and shared expectations for learning in order to accommodate the wide variety of remote learning conditions that students are working within.

The Ministry recognizes the need to be flexible and to accommodate students who are engaged in remote learning. Reports prepared during for students engaged in remote learning may not provide the amount of rich, detailed feedback that usually goes on a report card. Marks and comments can place additional emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and core competency development in each learning area.

(Stages 4 and 5)

During this Stage, all students will receive progress updates based on the learning opportunities they are engaging in through remote learning, plus any in-class learning that has previously taken place. Teachers may wish to work with families to develop realistic learning goals and shared expectations for learning in order to accommodate the wide variety of remote learning conditions that students are working within.

The Ministry recognizes the need to be flexible and to accommodate students who are engaged in remote learning. Reports prepared during this Stage for students engaged in remote learning may not provide the amount of rich, detailed feedback that usually goes on a report card. Marks and comments can place additional emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and core competency development in each learning area.

Graduation Program

Information for All Grade 10-12 (Graduation Program) Students and Adult Learners

The health and safety of students, staff, and their families is the highest priority during this unique time. The Ministry is committed to ensuring continuity of learning leading to final marks for all students, and graduation for those eligible.

For students in grades 10 and 11, school districts and independent school authorities should focus on ensuring all students are making progress towards completing the graduation requirements. Information on graduation requirements is [available online](#). Regardless of Stage, there is no change to graduation requirements: Students must satisfy all graduation requirements in order to earn a B.C. Certificate of Graduation (“Dogwood Diploma”).

For students in Grade 12 and on track to graduate, the focus should remain on ensuring each student will successfully achieve or exceed the 80 credits needed for graduation. For adults pursuing the Adult Dogwood, the focus should be on achieving or exceeding the 20 required credits.

(Stages 1 to 3)

In any given school year, students will be able to graduate provided they have fully and successfully completed all their courses needed to fulfill graduation requirements, to the end of the term, semester, or school year.

In Stages 2 and 3, where in-class instruction is supplemented with self-directed or remote learning, the focus should remain on ensuring that students are making progress towards completing the graduation requirements. This may include further consideration of the flexible credit options available to students to satisfy graduation requirements, so students who are unable to participate fully in self-directed or remote learning are not disadvantaged.

(Stages 4 and 5)

During this Stage, where most or all students are learning remotely, it is expected that schools will implement a variety of measures to ensure continued learning in different forms for students.

The Ministry is not mandating or specifying the minimum number of hours that must be completed for a student to receive credit for grade 10, 11, or 12 courses. The focus is on determining if, and how, sufficient learning has taken place during these exceptional circumstances and given the individual needs of students.

Sufficient learning will be determined by teachers using their professional judgement. Grounded in the curriculum, teachers will assess what individual students know, understand, and are able to demonstrate to determine whether sufficient learning has taken place to enable the student to pursue further learning in the curricular and content area. Teachers will need to prioritize which

learning standards can be learned remotely, with particular emphasis on the development of a student's literacy, numeracy and key curricular and core competencies.

Teachers will determine a final grade for students based on all work completed and the assessment of participation in learning opportunities throughout a course. Teachers will work with students to fulfill course requirements according to their school/school district plans during this stage. In doing so, they will consider those students whose learning needs or circumstances may require unique approaches and additional supports from the school. While the Ministry expects all students to continue their learning, students should not be penalized due to circumstances that make remote learning inaccessible to them.

Information Specific to All Graduating Students

Every student eligible to graduate will graduate. To be eligible to graduate means that a student successfully completes courses underway and in progress for completion by the end of the term, semester, or school year to satisfy all graduation requirements. This does not mean that students will graduate "no matter what". Students are expected to continue their learning and successfully complete the assignments set out by their teachers in order to graduate.

Teachers will work with students to fulfill the requirements of Career-Life Connections, including the capstone project, according to their school/school district plans for continuity of student learning during the suspension of in-class instruction. Teachers will use their professional judgement in determining student marks and the granting of graduation credit for these requirements.

For capstone projects, students should be able to complete many aspects of the self-assessment and critical analysis, as well as the planning for capstone representation. Recognizing they may not have access to specific samples of work or other important elements needed for their capstone presentations, efforts to innovate under the current circumstances should be recognized. Students can be given many different options and significant flexibility regarding how to design and present a more limited capstone via alternative methods such as videoconference or teleconference. For more information, please see the [Career Education 10-12 Guide](#) and the *Career and Post-Secondary Transitions* section in this guide.

Earn Credits in the Graduation Program

There are many options for students to earn credits toward graduation and these options remain available to students regardless of Stage. Although students must complete Ministry-developed courses for graduation, students may also earn credit through local and external courses. Options for students to earn credits may include:

- Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) Courses – BAA courses provide an opportunity for educators to develop courses that explore content beyond the boundaries of Ministry curriculum, while meeting Ministry curricular requirements. BAA courses help educators respond to the local needs of students and their communities. School districts or independent schools may develop and offer BAA courses according to

Ministry standards to help meet local community needs while providing choice and flexibility for students.

- Independent Directed Studies (IDS) – Under teacher supervision, students can earn additional credits toward graduation by pursuing curriculum in more detail for a Ministry or BAA course.
- Course Challenge – Students may earn graduation credit for undocumented prior learning by challenging a specific Grade 10, 11 or 12 Ministry or BAA course.
- Equivalency – Students may earn graduation credit for documented prior learning by requesting their school conduct a review to determine if a course taken outside B.C. is equivalent to a current B.C. course.
- External Credentials – Students often take courses, programs or activities that are developed and offered outside the school system and the B.C. school curriculum. These courses must meet specific Ministry criteria to be authorized as an external credential course for elective credit toward graduation. This includes the same (or greater) level of depth, breadth, and rigour as found in Ministry-developed Grade 10, 11 or 12 courses, as well as an evaluation component that assesses the intended learning standards. One example would be the graduation credits for Grades 10, 11 or 12 given to students who have completed B.C. Conservatory of Music training outside of school.

Career and Post-Secondary Transitions

Career Programs

The Ministry offers a variety of [programs and courses](#) to support the career development of students.

In Stages where in-class instruction is limited, flexible delivery options should be considered where possible to allow students to safely continue their career programs and dual credit courses to ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

Work Experience (WEX) Elective Courses

<p><i>(Stage 1)</i></p> <p>Return to regular policies and procedures.</p>
<p><i>(Stage 2)</i></p> <p>The work environment has changed due to the impacts of COVID-19 and employers will need to follow current guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC. Students can still engage in work placements. Schools and school districts must ensure students are covered with the required, valid workplace insurance for placements at standard worksites and follow WorkSafeBC guidelines. For current and any new placements, standards in the ministry Work Experience Program Guide must be followed. <i>(Note: As part of setup and monitoring, worksite visits can now be conducted virtually if needed.)</i></p>
<p><i>(Stages 3 to 5)</i></p> <p>During this Stage, schools and school districts will assess and determine if it is safe for students to continue with existing work placements or to begin new placements, considering Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC guidance regarding COVID-19. To ensure awareness and support for placements under these conditions, it is recommended that school districts and schools obtain parent/guardian sign-off for all new and continuing placements during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Boards of education and independent school authorities may offer Work Experience (WEX) courses that use career simulation activities rather than placements at standard worksites. Career simulations consist of activities that are directly related to the work performed in a given occupation. <i>(Note: WorkSafeBC coverage will not apply unless WEX occurs at a standard worksite. Students undertaking WEX at a non-standard worksite or through a career simulation are not provided with WorkSafeBC coverage as “workers of the Crown.”)</i></p> <p>Career simulations may be considered in addition to a standard worksite placement if COVID-19 impacts a student placement at a standard worksite. If students are unable to complete the placement as originally intended, additional opportunities that contribute to career-readiness skills including programs such as workforce training certificates, Jr. Achievement BC, or other industry-recognized micro-credentials which can be considered to successfully complete the course. <i>(Note:</i></p>

To be considered for employment, certificates or micro-credentials must be recognized by the organization, industry, or sector.)

For example: Focus on Information Technology (FIT) is a nationally-recognized program designed for Canadian high school students. It is associated with a number of training certificates. CISCO's CCNA Security course is a free 70-hour course that "prepares students to design, implement, and support security for networked devices." The course is industry-recognized and supported and could lead to careers in network security and security engineering.

It is expected that students will have engaged in self-assessment and reflection to consider their post-graduation goals and plans if undertaking career simulations.

For work placements that cannot continue in person and for which alternative methods to continue learning are not possible such as working remotely from home or career simulations, teachers have the discretion to provide a passing grade if sufficient learning has been achieved since the start of the course. (Note: Consult the Industry Training Authority for Trades Training Programs – see section below.)

Trades Training Programs

Given the unique structure of Trades Training Programs and oversight by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), new information on assessments and programming for these courses is [available online](#).

Information for workers is available on the [WorkSafeBC COVID-19 web page](#), including:

- [What workers should do](#)
- [Staying safe at work](#)
- [Information specific to various industries](#)

Transition to Post-Secondary Studies – Dual Credit

(Stages 1 and 2)

Students may earn "[dual credit](#)" by enrolling in and successfully completing courses at specific post-secondary institutions.

(Stages 3 to 5)

Some dual credit courses and programs may be impractical during a partial or full suspension of in-class instruction, whether they are offered at secondary schools, at post-secondary institutions, or both. The following actions are intended to reduce barriers during the COVID-19 pandemic so that school districts are well-positioned to support dual credit opportunities for students.

- Allow electronic signatures on, or email endorsements of, student transition plans.
- Permit course funding claims by school districts for school-aged students, regardless of graduation timing and status, if those students or their planned dual credit courses or

programs were impacted by COVID-19 (i.e., an exceptional circumstance as per the April 3 [policy clarification statement](#)).

Transition to Post-Secondary Studies – Scholarships

The [Provincial Scholarships Program](#) recognizes student achievement and encourages students to pursue post-secondary education.

The Ministry is committed to administering the Provincial Scholarships Program to recognize student achievement and encourage student transitions. The following actions are intended to help schools, school districts and staff support the scholarship program despite the challenges faced as a result of COVID-19.

- The deadline for school districts and independent school authorities to submit their lists of conditional winners of District/Authority scholarships is extended from June 30 to July 15, 2021.
- The Ministry will send additional documentation to assist school districts/authorities in using their allocation of District/Authority scholarships, recording conditional winners, and submitting their lists.
- If necessary, the Ministry will develop a digital method for principals to sign student applications to the BC Excellence Scholarship.

The marking and adjudication of BC Excellence and Pathway to Teacher Education Scholarships is shifted from in-person to virtual events.

International and Boarded Students

International and boarded students (who may include Canadian students from other provinces/territories) may be especially vulnerable at this time, particularly in cases where their home country is also being impacted by COVID-19. Disruptions to their regular educational routine, reduced access to peers and community services, and travel restrictions that prevent them from returning home can all contribute to increased feelings of isolation, stress and anxiety.

School district and independent school authority decisions regarding these programs should carefully consider potential impacts on students, their families, and homestay families, and place a priority focus on student safety and well-being.

Mental Health Resources in Other Languages:

- *IMMEDIATE HELP: Mental Health Crisis Line: 1 -800-784-2433.*
- [*Here to Help - Mental Health Resources*](#)
- [*Centre for Addiction and Mental Health - Information in Other Languages*](#)
- [*Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre*](#)

Program Continuity (updated August 28, 2020)

(Stages 1 and 2)

International Students and boarding students who are resident in the province of B.C. will follow the same education program protocols as domestic students.

SD73BC is currently the only authorized provider of Online Learning for international students who are not in the province. Through authorization from the Ministry, boards of education and independent school authorities may enter into an agreement with SD73BC to arrange a limited number of online courses for their students who are unable to come to B.C. for the start of the 2020/21 school year. However, all students who engage in these online courses must confirm that they intend to come to B.C. to enroll with a board or authority as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

(Stages 3 to 5)

Decisions to require international and/or boarded students to return to their home country during a pandemic event are left to the discretion of individual school districts and independent school authorities.

School districts and independent school authorities are expected to take the following factors into consideration when making these decisions:

- Availability of safe local housing conditions (e.g. homestay arrangement where the student is welcome and the family is able to offer reasonable support for continuity of learning) -

may require a review of existing homestay agreements in light of increased responsibilities, contingency plans if homestay parents fall ill.

- Availability of adequate health and well-being supports for international students through the local school district/authority, which may require coordination with community service providers.
- Possibility of safe return to the students' home country (e.g. viable transportation, no travel or border restrictions that would prevent re-entry to their home country).
- Clearly defined and communicated processes for collecting or rebating fees related to international student programs including medical, tuition and homestay fees.

Self-Isolation for New and Returning Students

All international students arriving in, or returning to, B.C. are required by law to self-isolate for 14 days. Students are also required to submit a self-isolation plan and complete the federal ArriveCAN application for approval prior to their return to B.C., or upon arrival. More information is available on the [provincial government website](#).

As per requirements from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, school districts and independent schools must abide by provincial and federal health and safety guidelines for receiving international students, including ensuring that students have a place to quarantine or self-isolate upon arrival. Schools and school districts should communicate any related expectations to the homestay family and check-in with the family on a regular basis to ensure that the student is following required quarantine or self-isolation protocols.

Many B.C. school districts have produced guides to support returning international students. For example, the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows School District (SD#42) has produced an [International Student Arrival Guide – “Keeping Safe During COVID-19”](#) which includes helpful information on pre-departure and arrival planning, airport/flight best practices, self-isolation/quarantine, and a COVID-19 checklist.

Homestay Arrangements

School districts and independent school authorities are advised to have, and subsequently document, discussions with homestay families regarding:

- expectations for hosting students who will not be attending school full-time during Stages in which in-class instruction is limited or suspended; and
- contingency plans if a member of the household (including the student) were to become ill with COVID-19, or if homestay families are no longer able to host an international student.

Boarding Arrangements (updated August 28, 2020)

Boarding schools should have plans in place to accommodate students during Stages in which in-class instruction is limited or suspended. See the *Facilities and Operations – Boarding Schools* section for additional guidelines and information related to COVID-19.

The BC Boarding Schools Restart Plan, collaboratively developed by Brentwood School and Shawnigan Lake School, and employed by many B.C. Boarding Schools, includes best practice protocols for K-12 student boarding facilities.

Staffing

School district and independent school authority planning should also include consideration of the level of resourcing required for school and district-level positions supported by International Student Programs.

Reporting (updated August 28, 2020)

The Ministry will be collecting aggregated data for the month of August onward on international students coming into B.C. for the 2020/21 school year, including number of students arriving, in quarantine and cleared for entry to school. International student school absences will also be tracked. School districts and independent school authorities with international education programs may be required to provide additional data to the Ministry with status updates as requested.

Financial Planning

Financial Planning – School Districts

Student Reporting and Funding

At this time, the 1701 process for the 2020-21 school year remains unchanged. Recalculated operating grants, based on September's 1701 count will be announced in December 2020.

Balanced Budgets

Amended Budget instructions will be distributed in December 2020 and at this time the Ministry does not foresee any changes to the submission dates or requirements. School districts should continue to update their assumptions and risk mitigation plans throughout the year as well as when developing Amended Budgets.

The Ministry and BCASBO have identified [potential risks](#) related to the COVID-19 pandemic that should have been considered when preparing the 2020/21 Annual Budget. These risks should be monitored throughout the 2020/21 school year and revisited when developing amended annual budgets, due by February 28, 2021.

School districts may have needed to utilize their accumulated surplus to balance their 2020/21 budgets including any budget surplus as a result of savings in the 2019/20 school year. Districts should be monitoring their financial performance and student enrolment on a regular basis to maintain an appropriate level of contingency.

Safe Return to School Grant

On August 11, 2020 the Ministry released the details of the \$42.5 million Safe Return to School Grant, including [district allocations](#), [guidelines](#) and a reporting [template](#). This grant is a component of the K-12 Education Restart Plan for September.

The grant is being disbursed as a special purpose grant under section 115.1(a) of the *School Act*. As such, school districts will be required to report this as a Special Purpose Fund in the Financial Statements and report on how they will spend the funding in the categories of:

- Custodial staff time for the cleaning of schools.
- The rental or purchase of hand washing units and hand sanitizer stations, and upgrades to non-touch faucets.
- Custodial cleaning supplies.
- Reusable and disposable face masks and face shields.
- Support for remote learning, such as technology loans or software to support students with disabilities or complex needs.

School districts will be required to submit an initial spending plan for the year (as of September 30) by October 12, 2020 using this [template](#).

Event-Driven Reporting

The Province has initiated a process for government organizations to record and report on financial transactions that are incremental to regular operations due to a specific major event in order to facilitate consistent financial reporting by the Ministry of Finance across the entire government reporting entity.

Effective March 11, 2020 and continuing until further notice, the government has identified COVID-19 as a major reporting event. Ministries, crown agencies, school districts, universities, colleges, and health authorities are required to track incremental and necessary costs that are incurred as a direct result of COVID-19 effective March 11, 2020 for the purpose of consistent government-wide reporting. There is no expectation that the Province or the Federal Government will reimburse these incremental costs.

Each school district must establish a process for tracking its own COVID-19 related costs and provide specific direction to staff to facilitate reporting out as required regarding costs incurred or forecasted. Costs identified must be:

1. Directly related to the COVID-19 event
2. Incremental to the cost of normal operations
3. Unavoidable operational expenses

The Ministry of Education has worked with BCASBO to determine how best to track COVID-19 response related costs/savings during this period. [Guidance](#) and a tracking template were provided in the April 17, 2020 special DM Bulletin.

All school districts have provided their estimate of increased costs and savings as at June 30, 2020 and tracking of these financial impacts will also be required for the 2020/21 school year. School districts have received an individualized reporting template, including amounts previously reported for June 30, 2020 - districts are encouraged to [contact the Ministry](#) regarding questions about the template. Reporting will be required for the periods ending September 30, December 31, March 31 and June 30 to align with their GRE reporting. The first report for period ended September 30, 2020 will be due by October 12, 2020.

Financial Reporting

Audited financial statements for the 2019/20 school year are required to be submitted by September 30, 2020.

The Ministry will distribute the instructions for financial reporting for the 2020/21 school year as usual before the end of the school year. School districts should be prepared, considering the event-driven reporting outlined above, that these requirements may be different from those required in previous years.

Should a school district believe it is at risk of running an operating deficit, it is encouraged to [contact the Ministry](#) as soon as possible.

Should a school district incur an actual annual deficit in 2020/21 in a magnitude greater than its accumulated surplus, the Minister of Education has the authority to grant approval for this accumulated deficit and set deficit retirement conditions.

Financial Planning – Independent School Authorities

Student Reporting and Funding

At this time, the 1701 process for the 2020/21 school year is expected to proceed as normal.

Safe Return to Schools Grant

This funding will be included in the per student funding calculation for independent school authorities and will not be allocated as a separate grant.

Facilities and Operations

School districts and independent school authorities must ensure that school facilities and operations align with current K-12 health and safety guidelines (see *Health and Safety* section for more information).

Custodial and Cleaning Supplies

At the provincial level, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) is coordinating supply issues as part of the COVID-19 response. EMBC has asked all ministries to establish an inventory of critical supplies (e.g. personal protective equipment, cleaning materials, etc.) that organizations have available. The inventories will be reviewed to ensure essential services in the province can continue to operate efficiently.

The Ministry will also work with Focused Education Resources around other service and supply options as the need becomes apparent. School districts/authorities can [contact the Ministry](#) or [Focused Education](#) with questions. School districts/authorities are also able to purchase PPE and cleaning supplies from the [BC Government Supply Hub](#).

School districts and independent school authorities may wish to consider how best to conserve supplies where possible, especially custodial and cleaning supplies. This may require reviewing which spaces are being reserved for staff and/or students to interact in-person and consolidating cleaning efforts accordingly and allowing for increased utilization of school buildings with the staged return to in-school instruction.

Menstrual Products

School districts must continue to provide access to menstrual products in school washrooms in accordance with board policies and procedures and may need to adjust existing policies and procedures to meet that requirement in alignment with current K-12 health and safety guidelines (see *Health and Safety* section for more information).

School districts should also:

- Regularly assess student need based on the current context, with the understanding that circumstances may change often.
 - Use of menstrual products may increase during the COVID-19 pandemic due to changes in personal/family financial resources.
- Ensure the distribution of menstrual products adheres to current provincial health and safety guidelines (see the *Health and Safety* section).
- Take steps to maintain a reliable and adequate supply of menstrual products at school facilities.

- Due to the possibility of supply chain disruption, school districts may need to plan ahead to ensure an adequate supply of menstrual products are available at all stages of a pandemic event.
- Consider how best to make menstrual products accessible to students of all gender identities and/or expressions, including during Stages where student access to school facilities may be limited or restricted, while safeguarding student privacy.

Boarding Schools (updated August 28, 2020)

Given unique considerations related to shared accommodation and dining spaces, boarding schools are expected to align policies and procedures with current public health guidance including promoting proper hygiene practices, following thorough cleaning protocols, and implementing physical distancing strategies in accordance with [Provincial Health Officer orders](#).

Plans should also be developed to address any circumstances where isolation and risk mitigation procedures are required due to a boarding school student or staff member becoming ill with COVID-19.

Supporting information can be found in the *Health and Safety* section.

The BC Boarding Schools Restart Plan, collaboratively developed by Brentwood School and Shawnigan Lake School, and employed by many B.C. Boarding Schools, includes best practice protocols for K-12 student boarding facilities.

Business Continuity

A Business Continuity Management Program enables an organization to respond to events that may prevent service, resulting in unacceptable outcomes for the organization. Business Continuity Plans outline how critical services will be performed when business-as-usual is not possible. Please refer to the Ministry's [Business Continuity Planning Guidelines](#) for more information.

Key Contacts and Additional Resources

For School/School District Administrators:

- COVID-19 related inquiries can be directed to the Ministry by email at educ.covid@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 236-478-2712.
- Medical Health Officer Contact Information by Health Authority:
 - Island Health: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/about-us/medical-health-officers>
 - Fraser: FHAMedicalHealthOfficers@fraserhealth.ca
 - Northern: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/about-us/leadership/medical-health-officers>
 - Interior: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHO/Pages/default.aspx>
 - VCH: <http://www.vch.ca/about-us/contact-us/medical-health-officers>
- [Provincial Health Officer's guidelines for K-12 school settings](#)
- [WorkSafeBC – Guide to reducing the risk of COVID-19](#)
- [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control – COVID-19](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority – COVID-19 Information](#)
- School district questions regarding collective agreements or employment related matters can be directed to the [BC Public School Employers' Association](#).

For Parents/Caregivers, Students and Staff:

- Provincial information and resources related to COVID-19 is available at gov.bc.ca/covid19 or by calling **1-888-COVID19**.
- Information on [COVID-19 and B.C. K-12 schools](#) is available online.
- [The First Nations Education Steering Committee COVID-19 web page](#) includes information and resources for educators, families and First Nations communities.
- [The Métis Nation BC COVID-19 web page](#) includes updates, mental health and wellness supports, and resources for kids.
- If you or a family member are experiencing symptoms of concern – such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing - access the [BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool](#) or call 8-1-1 to determine whether you may need further assessment or testing.
- [Mental Well-Being - information and supports for students, families and caring adults](#)



Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings



Updated August 28, 2020 – Updates are highlighted in yellow

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Introduction

School supports students in developing their potential and acquiring the knowledge, skills and abilities they need for lifelong success. In-person learning, as a part of a student's education, provides the opportunity for peer engagement, which supports social and emotional development as well as overall wellness. It also provides many students access to programs and services that are integral to their overall health and well-being.

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 return to full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.

In preparation for the 2020/2021 school year, the Ministry of Education has provided an investment of \$45.6 million to support the implementation of enhanced health and safety measures in public and independent schools. This investment aims at ensuring the increased cleaning of high-contact surfaces, increased number of hand-hygiene stations and the availability and use of masks, among other safety measures.

OBJECTIVES

This document was developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Indigenous rightsholders 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 [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#) developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure schools have robust measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

These guidelines are intended to support K-12 education employees, students, parents, caregivers, administrators and school community members to:

- Be informed about public health measures and how they support a safe school environment;
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting safe and healthy schools.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- All schools are to adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the BC Centre for Disease Control and [WorkSafeBC](#).
- The health and safety guidelines outlined in this document have been developed to complement the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC guidance.
- All school districts and independent school authorities are required to develop a Restart Plan before the 2020/21 school year begins to outline their approach for September. This Restart Plan must include a health and safety plan to adhere to the guidance of the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#) and address the health and safety guidelines outlined below.
- Schools should implement psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice alongside physical health and safety measures.
- Effective and ongoing communication with school leaders, community partners, parents, caregivers, students, unions and employees is an essential aspect of successfully implementing these guidelines.

B.C.'s Five-Stage Framework

The Five Stage Framework for K-12 Education outlines expectations for B.C. elementary, middle and secondary schools for learning during COVID-19. The goal of the Framework is to maximize in-class instruction for all students while adhering to the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#). This is supported by four foundational principles:

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and staff
- Provide the services needed to support the children of our essential workers
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
- Provide continuity of educational opportunity for all students

The framework allows instruction to be adjusted depending on the community risk of COVID-19 in B.C. This will enable schools to move between stages if necessary, based on guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

While B.C. has announced a return to in-class instruction under Stage 2 for September 2020, school districts and independent schools must have the necessary plans in place to be able to shift between stages if and when required.

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: N/A ▪ Middle: N/A ▪ Secondary: N/A 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 60 ▪ Middle: 60 ▪ Secondary: 120 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 60 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 30 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 0 ▪ Middle: 0 ▪ Secondary: 0
DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0% for all schools
IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time all students, all grades	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for all students for the maximum instructional time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed learning supplements in-class instruction, if required.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers¹ ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports In-class instruction for all other students for the maximum time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed and remote learning supplements in-class instruction.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers¹ ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports Remote learning for all other students	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Suspend in-class for all students

Note: as Stage 1 is a return to regular operating procedures, and Stage 5 means that all in-class instruction is suspended, the following health and safety guidelines apply to Stages 2 to 4, unless specified otherwise.

¹ For more information on essential service workers, see the “Services and Supports” section of the [Operational Guidelines](#).

Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures

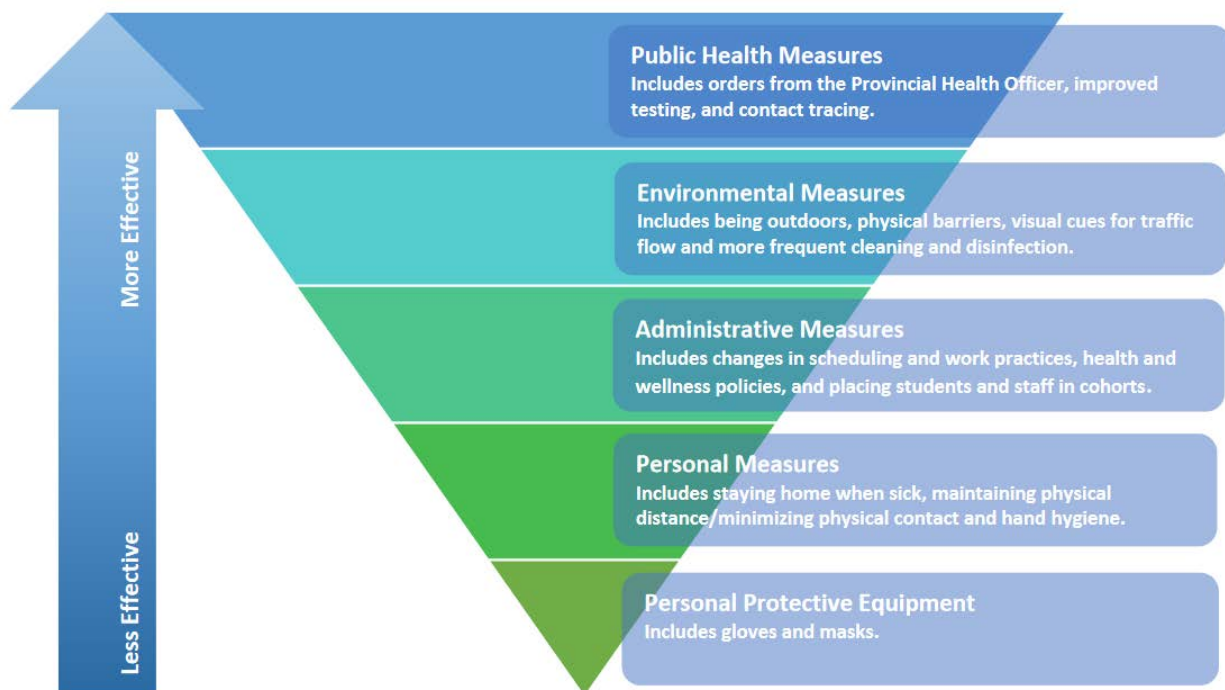
Infection prevention and exposure control measures help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. These are more effective in “controlled” environments where multiple measures of various effectiveness can be routinely and consistently implemented.

Schools are considered a “controlled” environment by public health. This is because:

- Schools include a consistent grouping of people.
- Schools have robust illness policies for students and staff.
- Schools can implement effective personal practices that can be consistently reinforced and are followed by most people in the setting (e.g. diligent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.).
- Schools can implement a variety of health and safety measures (e.g., enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, using outdoor space for learning activities, grouping students and staff in learning groups to limit in-person interactions, implementing staggered schedules, etc.)

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 those at the bottom. By implementing a combination of measures at each level, the risk of COVID-19 is substantially reduced.

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



Learning Groups and Physical Distancing

Reducing the number of close, in-person interactions an individual has in a day continues to be a key component of B.C.'s strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This can be accomplished in K-12 school settings through two different but complementary approaches: learning groups (cohorts) and physical distancing.

LEARNING GROUPS

A learning group is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term (e.g. a school quarter, semester or year) and who primarily interact with each other. A learning group could be made up of a single class of students with their teacher, multiple classes that sometimes join for additional learning activities, or a group of secondary school students with the same courses.

- **In Stage 2**, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact.
- **In Stages 3 and 4**, staff, as well as middle and secondary school students, will have to maintain physical distance at all times (even if they are part of the same learning group).²

Learning groups are a recommended public health measure to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Organizing students and staff into learning groups helps to reduce the number of different interactions and potential exposure to COVID-19 and supports better contact tracing if there is a confirmed case in a school community.

Maximum learning group sizes (inclusive of students and staff)

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary: no limit • Middle: no limit • Secondary: no limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary: 60 • Middle: 60 • Secondary: 120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary: 30 • Middle: 30 • Secondary: 60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary: 30 • Middle: 30 • Secondary: 30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary: 0 • Middle: 0 • Secondary: 0

Examples of what learning groups can look like in elementary, middle and secondary schools are available on the [B.C. Government website](#). Refer to the [Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts](#) section for more information.

² Stage-specific health and safety expectations are subject to change, further to updated public health guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Learning group size limits were established by provincial medical health officers based on a number of considerations including:

- Compared to some other community settings, schools are considered “controlled environments” in that they have a comprehensive set of safety measures in place, a consistent and limited group of people accessing the building, and the majority of those people are children who are at lower risk for transmitting COVID-19. The combination of these features reduces the risk of bringing more children and youth together in schools.
- The significant academic, social and emotional benefits of providing more students with more in-class learning time in a closer to normal learning environment – minimizing learning gaps, increasing peer interaction and support, decreasing feelings of isolation.
- The typical format of instruction in B.C. (e.g. one teacher with a consistent group of students in elementary, multiple teachers and inconsistent groupings of students in secondary).
- The low community prevalence of COVID-19 currently in B.C., particularly amongst school-aged children.
- Provincial contact tracing and testing capacity.

Learning groups will be smaller for elementary students recognizing that it’s more challenging for younger children to maintain physical distance from each other, while older students are better able to minimize physical contact, practice hand hygiene and recognize if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Allowing larger learning groups in secondary schools also enables more flexibility in meeting students’ diverse learning needs.

In rare circumstances, and upon Ministry approval, school districts and independent schools may request a variance from the learning group size guidelines outlined in the Five-Stage Framework for K-12 Education. These exemptions must be school-specific and based on significant operational implications for a school or school district, result in a relatively small increase to learning group sizes (e.g. increase from 60 to 62), and be implemented in a manner that preserves all other required health and safety measures. **The school district or independent school authority must outline the rationale for the request and include a recommendation from the local medical health officer in its Stage 2 Restart Plan submitted to the Ministry of Education. The school district or independent school authority needs to have engaged in conversations with its local medical health officer, local unions and school-based staff prior to submitting the request. See the [Contacts and Resources](#) section of the Operational Guidelines for Medical Health Officer contact information by Health Authority.**

INTERACTING WITH LEARNING GROUPS

Schools should minimize the number of adults (staff and others) who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment.

Those outside of a learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. For example, an itinerant educator (e.g. a teacher teaching on call, an Indigenous support worker, a teacher candidate, a district specialist) can teach/support multiple learning groups but should maintain physical distance from students and other staff as much as possible. In an elementary or secondary school, two classes from different learning groups can be in the same learning space at the same time if a two-metre distance can be maintained between people from different learning groups. See section on [Itinerant Staff](#) for additional guidelines.

During break times (e.g. recess and lunch), students may want to socialize with peers in different learning groups. There are different considerations for elementary and middle/secondary students when socializing outside of their learning group. Schools should make sure these considerations are clearly communicated and explained to students.

Elementary students:

- When interacting with peers outside of their learning group, students should:
 - minimize physical contact when outdoors;
 - maintain physical distance (2m) when indoors. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student should socialize within their learning group or where they can be supported to physically distance.

Elementary-aged students are less able to consistently maintain physical distance. Outdoors is a lower risk environment than indoors.

Middle/secondary students:

- When interacting with peers outside of their learning group, students should maintain physical distance (2m).
- Middle and secondary school students capable of consistently maintaining physical distance, when it is required, should be expected to do so. If a student is unable to physically distance, the student should socialize within their learning group or where they can be supported to physically distance.

ITINERANT STAFF AND SPECIALISTS

Schools should minimize the number of staff who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment.

As such, school districts and schools should, where possible, assign staff to a specific learning group to help minimize the number of interactions between students and staff, while continuing to support students who may need special assistance. Examples could include assigning an educational assistant to a learning group where they can support one or more students in the same learning group, or assigning a teacher teaching on call or a teacher candidate on practicum to a learning group if they have been offered an extended assignment at a single school. Schools and school districts must consider learning group size limits when assigning staff to learning groups.

Staff outside of a learning group must practice physical distancing when interacting with the learning group. For example, a learning assistance teacher or a counsellor can work with students from multiple learning groups, but they should maintain physical distance from students and other staff as much as possible.

In situations where staff outside a learning group cannot practice physical distancing, other measures must be explored, such as reconfiguring rooms, securing an alternate space to allow for physical distancing, installing a physical barrier made of transparent materials, or providing virtual services where possible.

When staff are interacting with people outside of their learning group; physical distance cannot be consistently maintained; and none of the strategies outlined above are viable options, staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to

the face shield). Exceptions will be made for staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.

Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff.

School districts and independent school authorities should ensure that other preventative measures (e.g., assigning staff to a learning group, maintaining physical distance outside of a learning group, reconfiguring space, installing barriers, etc.) have been exhausted before requiring itinerant teachers/specialists to use a non-medical mask.

See the [Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts](#) section for more information.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing requirements vary between stages 2, 3 and 4:

STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical distancing (2m) for staff and for middle and secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groupsPhysical distancing (2m) for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups while indoors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical distancing (2m) for staff, middle and secondary school students at all times.Physical distancing (2m) for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups while indoors.	

To support physical distancing requirements, the following strategies should be implemented where possible:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes).
- Regularly remind students about keeping their hands to themselves. Use visual supports, signage, prompts, video modelling, etc. as necessary.
- Create space between students/staff as much as possible:
 - Configure classroom and learning environment differently to allow distance between students and adults (e.g., different desk and table formations).
 - Arrange desks/tables so students are not facing each other and using consistent or assigned seating arrangements.
 - Store excess equipment (e.g. equipment that might not be of use during the pandemic) in order to open more space in schools.
- Implement strategies that prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off times.

- Where possible, stagger recess/snack, lunch and class transition times to provide a greater amount of space for everyone.
- Take students outside more often, where and when possible.
 - Organize learning activities outside including snack time, place-based learning and unstructured time.
 - Take activities that involve movement, including those for physical health and education, outside.
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage greater space between students and staff as much as is practical to do so.
 - For elementary students, adapt group activities to minimize physical contact and reduce shared items.
 - Offer manipulatives and items that encourage individual play, and that can be easily cleaned and reduce hand-to-hand-contact and cross-contamination.
 - Prioritize the acquisition of adequate amounts of high-touch materials, such as pencils or art supplies, in order to minimize sharing between children.
 - For middle and secondary students, minimize group activities and avoid activities that require physical contact.
 - Note: for guidelines specific to courses/subject areas that tend to involve a significant number of group activities (e.g. culinary programs), see the section on [Curricular, Programs and Activities](#).
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.
- Use floor markings and posters to address traffic flow throughout the school. This may include one-way hallways and designated entrance and exit doors. It is important not to reduce the number of exits and ensure the fire code is adhered to.
- Ensure communication of physical distancing guidelines is relayed in multiple formats for ease of understanding (visual supports and representation, prompts, video modelling, signage, videos using sign language, etc.).
- Consider installing barriers made of transparent material in places where physical distance cannot be regularly maintained, and a person is interacting with numerous individuals outside of a learning group. This may include at a front reception desk where visitors check in, a library check out desk, or where food is distributed in a cafeteria. See [guidance from WorkSafeBC on designing effective barriers](#) for more information.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/DIVERSE ABILITIES

Expectations for School Districts and Schools

School districts and independent schools are expected to implement health and safety measures that promote inclusion of students with disabilities/diverse abilities.

School districts and independent schools must ensure that supports and services typically provided to students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity continue across all stages. This should include ongoing discussion on needs assessments to better understand the supports that students and families may require (see

the Services and Supports > Supports for Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities section of the [COVID-19 Operational Guidelines](#) for more information).

Students with disabilities/diverse abilities who are not able to physically distance are not to be excluded from a learning group. Prevention and exposure control measures should be implemented to support students to access learning within a learning group (e.g. assigned seating, prompts, visual support, education using video modelling, social stories, etc.)

Schools districts and independent schools must ensure that learning groups are established in a manner that allows for the implementation of students' IEP goals, respects the principles of equity and inclusion and does not result in segregated learning environments.

Most students with disabilities/diverse abilities or medical complexity are not considered at greater risk of experiencing severe illness from COVID-19. For guidelines specific to children with immune suppression (e.g. students who have had a recent organ transplant, who are receiving chemotherapy, those with an illness impacting their immune system), please refer to [Students with Immune Suppression](#) in the Employee/Student Attendance section.

Due to physical space limitations it may be necessary to reduce the number of individuals at any given time within secondary schools to ensure that physical distance can be maintained when required (this would mostly be the case in larger secondary schools). In this case, secondary schools should continue to prioritize the attendance of students who most benefit from in-person support and learners with diverse needs.

Examples of students who require additional support:

- some children and youth in care
- students not yet meeting literacy expectations
- students at risk of not graduating
- students requiring mental health or substance use supports
- students with serious medical conditions
- students who may be at risk due to the situation in their home environment
- a student with a disability who has been destabilizing due to changes in their routine

Guidelines for Staff Working with Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities where Physical Contact may be Required

Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student.

When staff are in close physical proximity with a student within their learning group, personal protective equipment, such as masks and gloves, is not required beyond that used as part of the personal care routine normally encountered in their regular course of work (e.g., gloves for toileting).

Non-medical masks are required in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance and is in close proximity to a person outside of their learning group. As such, staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield)

when outside of their learning groups, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained. **Exceptions will be made for staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.**

Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff.

Wearing a non-medical mask, a face covering, or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in schools outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice and will be respected.

For more information, see the [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) section.

SCHOOL GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

School gatherings should be kept to a minimum and where possible schools should seek virtual alternatives for larger gatherings and assemblies to continue to support these events in a different format. When it is necessary to gather in larger groups, the following guidance should be followed:

- School gatherings should occur within a learning group.
 - Gatherings should not exceed the maximum learning group size in the setting (which includes students and staff who are part of the learning group), plus the minimum number of additional people required (e.g. additional school staff, visitors, etc.) to meet the gathering's purpose and intended outcome. Additional people should be minimized as much as is practical to do so, and they must maintain physical distance
- Staff meetings involving staff from different learning groups should preferably occur through virtual means. Where a virtual alternative is not possible, staff meetings can happen in person if participants maintain physical distance.
- In-person inter-school events (including competitions, tournaments and festivals) should not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to only bring items that are necessary (e.g. backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles).

Students can continue to use their lockers, as it is better for personal items to be stored in a locker than to be stored in classrooms or carried throughout the school. If possible, lockers should not be shared if possible. If lockers have to be shared, schools should try to assign shared lockers to students in the same learning group. Schools should implement strategies to manage the flow of students around lockers to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

Staff and students should not share personal items (including electronic devices, writing instruments, etc.)

Additional measures should be taken, including:

- Personal items should be labelled with student's name to discourage accidental sharing.

Food and beverages:

- Schools should continue to emphasize that individual food and beverages are not to be shared.

- Schools should not allow homemade food items to be made available to other students at this time (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items).

Please note that different guidelines apply to food that is prepared in schools (e.g. as part of a culinary program) or for school food services (e.g. cafeteria), which are outlined in the [Curriculum, Programs and Activities](#) section.

At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

Student Transportation on Buses

The following strategies are recommended for student transportation on buses:

- Buses used for transporting students should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in [BCCDC's Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings](#) document. Additional guidance is available from [Transport Canada](#).
- Bus drivers should clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips. They are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips.
- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) when they cannot maintain physical distance or be behind a physical barrier in the course of their duties. **Exceptions will be made for bus drivers who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.**
 - Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff.
 - See the [Supporting Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities](#) section for more information on safety measures when staff are required to be in physical contact with students.
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. **If a child has any symptoms, they must not take the bus or go to school.**
- Students should clean their hands before they leave home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home.
- Where possible, bus line up areas should be set up to prevent crowding, and allow for physical distancing of 2m (e.g., tape markings on pavement, etc.) where required.
 - Schools should provide support for students who are not able to physically distance.
- Middle and secondary students are required to wear non-medical masks when they are on the bus. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical **and/or disability-related** reasons. For more information, see the [Personal Protective Equipment](#) section.
- Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).

To reduce the number of close in-person interactions on school buses, the following strategies are recommended:

- Use consistent or assigned seating arrangements.
 - Schools/school districts should keep up-to-date passenger and seating arrangement lists to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.
 - The seating arrangement can be altered whenever necessary to support student health and safety (e.g. accommodating children with a physical disability, responding to behavioural issues, etc.)
- Consider the order students typically onload and offload to support buses being loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
- If space is available, students should each have their own seat (unless sharing with a member of their household) and sit separated side to side and front to back.

Additional measures related to student transportation can be taken, including:

- Consider installing a physical barrier made of transparent materials between the driver and students. For additional information with respect to safety considerations when deciding to install a physical barrier, read the [Joint Guidance Document from Transport Canada and CSA D250 School Bus Technical Committee](#).
- Encouraging private vehicle use and active transportation (e.g. biking, walking, etc.) where possible to decrease transportation density.
- See the [Field Trips](#) section for more guidance about safety measures for field trips.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Schools should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the [BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document](#).

DEFINITIONS

Cleaning: the physical removal of visible soiling (e.g. dust, soil, blood, mucus). Cleaning removes, rather than kills, viruses and bacteria. It is done with water, detergents and steady friction from a cleaning cloth. All visibly soiled surfaces should be cleaned before being disinfected.

Disinfection: the killing of viruses and bacteria. A disinfectant is only applied to objects; never on the human body.

PRODUCTS & PROCEDURES

For **cleaning**, use water and detergent (e.g. liquid dishwashing soap), or common, commercially available cleaning wipes, along with good physical cleaning practices (i.e. using strong action on surfaces). For hard-to-reach areas, use a brush and rinse thoroughly prior to disinfecting.

For **disinfection**, use common, commercially available disinfectants such as ready-to-use disinfecting wipes and pre-made solutions (no dilution needed). Refer to the [Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Guidelines](#) for additional information.

For specific brands and disinfectant products, see Health Canada's list of [hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

Follow the procedures outlined in the [BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document](#) when cleaning and disinfecting.

- Remove or limit the use of:
 - frequently touched items that are not easily cleaned (e.g., fabric or soft items, plush toys)
 - shared equipment, as much as is practical to do so (e.g., instead, try to assemble individualized/small group kits that can be assigned to students, if possible to do so)
- Always wash hands before and after handling shared objects.
- Items and surfaces that children have placed in their mouths or that have been in contact with bodily fluids should be cleaned as soon as possible and between uses by different children.
- Dishwasher-safe items can be cleaned and disinfected in a dishwasher with a hot rinse cycle.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING FREQUENCY

The following frequency guidelines **must** be adhered to when cleaning and disinfecting:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least **once in a 24-hour period**. This includes items that only a single student uses, like an individual desk.
- In addition to the cleaning and disinfecting of the premises, cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces at least **twice in 24 hours, including at least once during regular school hours**. (See [Frequently Touched Surfaces](#) section below for examples of frequently touched surfaces.)
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Empty garbage containers daily.

No additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures are required when different learning groups use the same space or when the composition of a learning group changes at the end of a school term, beyond the cleaning and disinfecting procedures that are normally implemented, and the guidelines outlined above.

FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, faucet handles, toilet handles, tables, desks and chairs used by multiple students, water fountains.
 - Water fountains can continue to be used, as access to water should not be restricted. Students and staff should be encouraged to use personal water bottles. If using water fountains, students and staff should practice hand hygiene before and after use, and should not place their mouth on the fountain. Water fountains should be cleaned as a frequently touched item.
- Shared learning items and manipulatives

- Shared equipment (e.g. computer keyboards and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for science labs, kitchen equipment for culinary programs, sewing machines and sewing equipment for home economic programs, etc.)
- Appliances (staff and students can share the use of appliances and other objects, but treat items like microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, photocopiers or laminators as frequently touched surfaces)
- Service counters (e.g., office service window, library circulation desk)

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BODILY FLUIDS

Follow these procedures, **in conjunction with school/district policies**, when cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine):

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Follow regular health and safety procedure and regularly used PPE (e.g., gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g. toileting, spitting, biting).

LAUNDRY

Follow these procedures when doing laundry (Home Economics, Physical and Health Education, Life Skills Programs, etc.):

- Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner.
- Do not shake dirty items
- Wearing gloves is optional. If choosing to wear gloves, ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after use. No other PPE is required.
- Clean hands with soap and water immediately after removing gloves.
 - Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).

Visitor Access/Community Use

STAGE 2

Visitor access during school hours should be prioritized to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. teacher candidates, public health nurses, meal program volunteers, etc.).

- Schools **must** ensure that visitors are aware of health and safety protocols and requirements **prior to entering the school** (e.g., maintaining physical distance, requirement to wear a non-medical mask in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.)
- Schools are responsible for ensuring that all visitors confirm they have completed the requirements of a daily health check before entering.
- Schools should keep a list of the date, names and contact information for any visitors who entered the school.

- Schools could include, as part of their visitor registration form, a checkbox for the visitor to confirm they have completed their daily health check.

After hours community use of facilities is allowed in alignment with other health and safety measures:

- Maximum 50 person gatherings, in alignment with the [Gatherings and Events Order](#) of the Provincial Health Officer. Additional information is available from the BC Centre for Disease Control for [gatherings and events](#) in community settings.
- Diligent hand hygiene
- Respiratory etiquette
- Physical distancing among older youth and adults
- 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
- Spaces and equipment used by community members should be cleaned and disinfected prior to students and staff re-entering the space.
 - Cleaning for purposes of after school use cannot result in a reduction of cleaning for education purposes.
 - Schools can consider asking community members to bring their own equipment, where appropriate.

STAGES 3 & 4

Limit visitor access during school hours. No non-essential community use of school facilities after hours (as determined by the Board of Education or Independent School Authority).

Employee/Student Attendance

School districts and schools should work with their local medical health officer to ensure policies and procedures are in place regarding reporting elevated staff and student absenteeism due to influenza-like illness to public health/the local medical health officer. Schools and school districts should notify their local medical health officer if staff and/or student absenteeism exceeds 10 percent of regular attendance. This reporting is helpful in early identification of clusters and outbreaks.

To maximize student attendance, repeated and consistent messaging/communication is crucial to allay parent and caregiver fears and to convey that schools are a safe place to be, based on the rigorous health and safety measures in place. For more information, see section on [Communications Materials](#).

Alternative methods of instructional delivery will be jointly determined by boards of education and First Nations for students from First Nations that remain closed and will not be sending students back to school at this time.

STUDENTS WITH IMMUNE SUPPRESSION

According to the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control, most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction when safety measures are in place. Protective self-

isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

School districts and schools should be aware of [BCCDC Guidelines for Children with Immune Suppression](#) and [BCCDC Guidance for Families of Immunocompromised Children in School and Group Gatherings](#) and share these documents with families of children with immune suppression.

The advice from the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control for parents/caregivers of children with complex medical conditions or underlying risk factors, or parents/caregivers who are immunocompromised themselves, is to consult with their medical health care provider to determine the level of risk regarding their child's return to in-class instruction. Parents/caregivers seeking an alternative to in-class instruction, and who do not wish to register their child in a distributed learning program or homeschooling, will be required to obtain a doctor's note indicating the need for accommodations due to health-related risks. School districts and independent school authorities are expected to work with these families to ensure continuity of learning and supports.

- **If attending in-class instruction is right for the child:** schools and school districts should work with parents or caregivers to develop a plan that provides options for learning to ensure appropriate preventative measures are in place.
- **If attending in-class instruction is not right for the child:** schools and school districts should work with families to develop options to continue their child's education at the school or school district level.

Illness & Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols

School districts and schools must develop local protocols that:

- Ensure school staff and other adults (e.g. parents, caregivers, visitors) entering the school are aware of their responsibility to:
 - assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease prior to entering the school (e.g. emails/letters to parents and staff, orientation video, signage on doors).
 - stay home and self-isolate if they have symptoms of COVID-19 **OR** travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak.
 - seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results if they have cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms.
- Clearly communicate with parents/caregivers their responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school.
 - Consider having parents and caregivers provide a copy of a completed daily health check form that confirms they understand how to complete the daily health check and that it must be completed daily.
 - Alternatively, conduct daily checks for respiratory illness at drop-off by asking parents and caregivers to confirm the child does not have symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory disease.
- Establish procedures for students and staff who become sick while at school to be sent home as soon as possible.

- Some students may not be able to be picked up immediately. As such, schools should have a space available where the student or staff can wait comfortably that is separated from others and provide them with a non-medical mask if they don't have one.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Daily assessment of children for symptoms by parents/caregivers, and staff self-assessment.
 - Schools could recommend using [BCCDC's Daily Health Check Example](#) (on page 16).
- If a student, staff or other adult has any symptoms, they must not enter the school.

SELF-ISOLATION AND SYMPTOMS

- Any student, staff or other person within the school who has symptoms of COVID-19 **OR** travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and [self-isolate](#), including children of essential service workers.
 - For a list of symptoms of COVID-19, see the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#).
- Any student, staff, or other person within the school who has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms should seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results.
- Those unsure if they or a student should self-isolate or be tested for COVID-19 should be directed to use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool.
 - If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.
 - They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms, provided the student/staff is asymptomatic. [As per public health guidance](#), it is expected the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider.
- Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

PROTOCOL IF A STUDENT/STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

If a student or staff member develops symptoms at school, schools should:

- Provide the student/staff with a non-medical mask if they don't have one (exceptions should be made for students and staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons).
- Provide the student/staff with a space where they can wait comfortably that is separated from others.
 - The student is to be supervised and cared for, when separated.
- Make arrangements for the student/staff to go home as soon as possible.

- Contact the student's parent/caregiver with a request to have their child picked up as soon as possible.
- Clean and disinfect the areas the student/staff used.
- Encourage the student/staff to seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Request that the student/staff stay home until COVID-19 has been excluded and symptoms have resolved.

Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.

Schools and school districts should notify their local medical health officer if staff and/or student absenteeism exceeds 10 percent of regular attendance, to help with the early identification of clusters or outbreaks.

PROTOCOL IN THE EVENT OF A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE IN A SCHOOL

If a student or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19, and were potentially infectious while they were at school:

- Public health will perform an investigation to determine if there were any potential close contacts within the school. (To learn more about contact tracing, visit the [BCCDC website](#).)
 - Students and staff who have interacted with the confirmed case may be asked to stay home while public health completes their investigation.
- If it is determined that there are close contacts within the school, public health will notify the school administrators to request class and bus lists to assist with contact tracing and provide guidance on what steps should be taken.
- Public health may then:
 - Recommend 14-day isolation if necessary (for confirmed close contacts).
 - Recommend monitoring for symptoms if necessary.
 - Provide follow-up recommendations if necessary.
- Schools must continue to provide learning support to students required to self-isolate.
- Together, schools/school districts and public health officials will determine if any other actions are necessary.

Trauma-Informed Practice and Socio-Emotional Lens

Trauma-informed practice is an informed way of approaching your practice through a compassionate lens of understanding that is helpful to all children, youth and adults, especially those who have experienced traumatic events.

Trauma-informed practice includes:

- Providing inclusive and compassionate learning environments.
- Understanding coping strategies.
- Supporting independence.
- Helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual student needs.

A [needs assessment](#) for students and educators is crucial as part of a trauma-informed transition back into classrooms. Use of needs-based assessments and regular 'check-ins' can assist in gathering important information to inform the level of trauma response and recovery necessary to support the school community.

The North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response has released a resource to assist the education sector in supporting the transition back to school called [Guidelines for Re-Entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic: Managing the Social-Emotional and Traumatic Impact](#). To support educators to develop compassionate learning communities through trauma-informed practice, the Ministry has created [trauma-informed practice resources](#) that are available on the [erase website](#).

School district and school staff should practice awareness and sensitivity regarding the complex and devastating history that pandemics have had on many Indigenous communities.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness (antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Follow these guidelines to ensure effective hand hygiene in schools:

- Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water).
- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene:
 - Use portable hand-washing sites and/or alcohol-based hand rub dispensers, especially where sinks are not available.
 - Hand-washing should be encouraged upon school entry and before/after breaks and eating, using washroom and using gym/playground equipment.
- Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly. For example, display BCCDC's [hand hygiene poster](#) at handwashing sites.
- Remind staff and students to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

- Ensure hand-washing supplies are always well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.
- Students may bring their own sanitizer or plain soap if they are on the list authorized by Health Canada or have a medical condition that requires specialized soaps. (See the [List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada](#) for products that have met Health Canada’s requirements and are authorized for sale in Canada.)
- If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand rubs can be used to clean hands if they are not visibly soiled. If alcohol-based hand rub is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.

When Student Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When they arrive at school. ▪ Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch). ▪ Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student’s desk or locker). ▪ Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.). ▪ After using the toilet. ▪ After sneezing or coughing into hands. ▪ Whenever hands are visibly dirty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When they arrive at school. ▪ Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch). Before and after eating and drinking. ▪ Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating. ▪ Before and after giving medication to a student or self. ▪ After using the toilet. ▪ After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood). ▪ After cleaning tasks. ▪ After removing gloves. ▪ After handling garbage. ▪ Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students and staff should:

- Cough and sneeze into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue.
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Non-medical masks are required to be used in situations where a person cannot maintain physical distance and is in close proximity to a person outside of their learning group or household.

Students in Middle and Secondary school are required to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons. For these exceptions, schools/districts should implement other environmental and administrative measures to ensure student and staff safety.

Non-medical masks are not recommended for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).

Staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g., itinerant teachers/specialists/educational assistants interacting with multiple learning groups). Exceptions will be made for staff who cannot wear masks for medical and/or disability-related reasons.

Staff can also wear a mask, a face covering or a face shield within their classroom or learning group if that is their personal preference. Refer to the [Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts](#) section for more information.

Face shields are a form of eye protection for the person wearing it. They may not prevent the spread of droplets from the wearer. Face shields should not be worn in place of non-medical masks.

Schools and school districts will have non-medical masks available for staff and students, including anyone who becomes ill while at school. Schools and school districts should consider distributing masks at the beginning of the school year on an opt-out basis, rather than at the request of students/staff.

Wearing a non-medical mask, face covering, or face shield in schools outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice for students and adults. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Those that choose to wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields must still seek to maintain physical distance from people outside of their learning group. There must be no crowding, gathering or congregating of people from different learning groups, even if non-medical masks are worn.

- More information about COVID-19 related mask use, including how to clean and store reusable masks, is available on the [BCCDC website](#) and the [Government of Canada website](#).
- More information on cleaning and disinfecting instructions for face shields is available on the [BCCDC website](#).

Wearing non-medical masks at all times in schools is not recommended as there are multiple, more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in place, such as:

- Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or required to self-isolate, including ensuring everyone entering the school performs a daily health check;
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection;
- Placing students and staff into consistent groupings of people (learning groups);
- Adapting learning environments to maximize the use of space;
- Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between learning groups; and
- Frequent hand hygiene

These measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of transmission.

Managing students with complex behaviours, medical complexities or receiving delegated care may require staff providing health services or other health care providers to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a medically complex or immune suppressed student.

- In [community-based clinical settings](#) where there is low incidence and prevalence of COVID-19, additional personal protective equipment over and above that required for normal practices is not required. The same guidance is applicable to staff providing health services and other health care providers who are providing health services in schools. However, if a person providing health services assesses the need for personal protective equipment beyond routine practices following a point of care risk assessment, it should be worn.
- Staff providing health care services and other health care providers are required to wear a mask when working in close proximity with students.
- Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their health care provider to determine their child's level of risk.

General Ventilation and Air Circulation

At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, is contributing to the spread of the virus.

School districts and independent school authorities are required to ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort for workers ([Part 4 of the OHS Regulation](#)).

School districts and independent school authorities should regularly maintain HVAC systems for proper operation and ensure that:

- schools with recycled/recirculated air systems upgrade their current filters to a minimum MERV 13 filter or higher if possible; and

- schools with fresh air intake systems increase their average air exchanges as detailed on the [ASHRAE website](#) and the [Rocky Point Engineering Ltd website](#).

In order to enhance school ventilation, schools should consider:

- moving activities outdoors when possible (for example, lunch, classes, physical activity) and consider moving classrooms outside when space and weather permit
- ensuring that the ventilation system operates properly
- increasing air exchanges by adjusting the HVAC system
- opening windows when possible and if weather permits

See the [WorkSafeBC website](#) for more information.

Communication and Training/Orientation

School districts and schools must clearly and consistently communicate guidelines from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) and resources available for information on COVID-19 as needed. Ensure communication of infection prevention and exposure control measures is relayed in multiple formats for ease of understanding (e.g., visual representation, videos using sign language, etc.)

As well, school districts and schools should consider providing early and ongoing health and safety orientation for staff, parents/caregivers and students to ensure employees, families and the school community are well informed of their responsibilities and resources available. Examples include online information, distribution of orientation and training materials that are clear, concise and easily understood, interactive sessions with Q&A's, material in multiple languages to meet community needs, etc.

WorkSafeBC recommends that schools and school districts:

- Train their workers on:
 - The risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease.
 - Safe work procedures or instruction to be followed, including hand washing and cough/sneeze etiquette.
 - How to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Changes they have made to work policies, practices, and procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and keep records of that training.
 - Document COVID-19-related meetings and post minutes at a central location.
- Keep records of instruction and training provided to workers regarding COVID-19, as well as reports of exposure and first aid records.

As per WorkSafeBC guidelines, employers must involve frontline workers, joint health and safety committees, and supervisors in identifying protocols for their workplace. School districts and schools should ensure they have active Site Committees and Joint Health and Safety Committees that meet regularly, including prior to any transitions between stages, and are included in school district/school planning efforts.

School district and school communications should include evidence-based information, provided by the Provincial Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control, to build awareness that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from students is minimal and to help address inaccurate information that might be circulating in the school community.

Schools/districts can refer to the [BCCDC website](#), [B.C.'s Back to School Plan website](#), [WorkSafeBC's website](#) and [Queen's Printer COVID-19 Signage Catalogue](#) for signage and posters.

Curriculum, Programs and Activities

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines. Electives (e.g. Fine Arts education, etc.) are important to student health and well-being and staff in these programs should be:

- reassured these programs will continue throughout each stage; and
- be supported in finding creative ways to redesign/deliver courses, if needed.

Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per [Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines](#) outlined in this document, and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.

For guidelines specific to visitor access during school hours (e.g. guest speakers), see the [Visitor Access/Community Use section](#) in this document. As visitors are not part of learning groups, they would need to adhere to the physical distancing requirements outlined in the [Physical Distancing section](#) of this document.

In-person inter-school events including competitions, tournaments and festivals, should not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education programs operated by K-12 schools should follow the guidance outlined in this document, particularly the guidance provided for adults in a school environment. This includes respecting environmental and administrative measures, such as maintaining physical distance (2m). **Note that learning groups cannot be applied to adult-only settings (an "all adult" learning group is not an acceptable public health measure).**

ARTS EDUCATION

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - at the beginning and at the end of the class;
 - before and after handling shared equipment; and
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and equipment set up for students, as best as possible.
 - Avoid sharing equipment by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
 - Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.
 - When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

DUAL CREDIT

Students may earn [“dual credit” towards graduation by enrolling in and successfully completing courses at specific post-secondary institutions.](#)

- For students taking dual credit courses taken in secondary schools, the health and safety guidelines outlined in this document apply.
- For students taking dual credit courses in post-secondary institutions, schools must ensure students are aware of and adhere to the health and safety guidelines set out by post-secondary institutions. Information on health and safety guidelines for post-secondary institutions can be found on the [B.C. Government website](#) and in individual institutions.

EXTENDED DAY CLASSES

- Extended day classes should occur when:
 - Under Stages 2 to 4, physical distance can be maintained between members of different learning groups; and
 - Under Stage 2, minimized physical contact is practiced by those within the same learning group.

FIELD TRIPS

Stage 2

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- Field trip locations must provide supervisors with their COVID-19 operating plan and ensure it does not conflict with the school’s plan. The field trip supervisor should then share the plan with parents and school administration.

- For transportation, see guidance in the [transportation section](#) in this document.
- Use of parent volunteers for driving groups of students is not permitted during stages 2 to 4.
- Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to physical distancing and other health and safety guidelines. Refer to the [Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts](#) section for guidance on health and safety measures if the volunteer is not part of the learning group.
- Ensure field trip numbers align with the PHO guidance.
- Field trips to outdoor locations are preferable.
- Conduct a risk assessment considering the field trip location - science exploration vs. exploring at the beach.
 - Schools/districts should consider developing a risk assessment specific to field trips under Stage 2, in accordance with their school/district policies and the guidelines outlined in this document.
- If using public transportation for field trips (e.g., SkyTrain, public buses), schools should adhere to local transit authorities guidance (e.g., mandatory mask use for [Translink](#) and [BC Transit](#), as well as practicing hand hygiene before and after use).
- No overnight field trips should occur.
- International Field Trips - cancelled until further notice.

Stage 3 & 4

No field trips should occur under Stages 3 and 4.

FOOD / CULINARY PROGRAMS

Schools can continue to include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. The following guidelines should be applied:

Food Safety

- In the case of food and culinary programs, where food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the students who prepared it, the following health and safety measures should apply:
 - Continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements
 - Implement the cleaning and disinfecting measures outlined in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section of this document

Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Protocols

- Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.) Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - at the beginning and at the end of the class
 - before and after handling food
 - before and after eating and drinking
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty

- Refer to the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section for cleaning/disinfecting protocols.
- For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section of these guidelines.

Learning Groups

- As students tend to prepare food together in culinary programs, use of learning groups is encouraged.

FOOD SERVICES

If food is prepared within or outside a school for consumption by people other than those that prepared it (e.g., meal program, cafeteria), it is expected that the [WorkSafe BC Restaurants, cafes, pubs, and nightclubs: Protocols for returning to operation](#) are implemented as appropriate and as relevant to the school setting, in addition to normally implemented food safety measures and requirements (e.g. FOODSAFE trained staff, a food safety plan, etc.). Some of the guidance within may not be relevant to a school's food services. For example, the July 23, 2020 Order of the Provincial Health Officer [Restaurants, Coffee Shops, Cafes, Cafeterias and Licensed Premises, Including Pubs, Bars, Lounges, Nightclubs and Tasting Rooms](#) does not apply to schools. As such, the restriction of six patrons at a table does not apply.

[Food Safety Legislation](#) and the [Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools](#) continue to apply as relevant.

Schools should not allow homemade food items to be made available to other students at this time (e.g., birthday treats, bake sale items).

TEXTILES PROGRAMS

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - at the beginning and at the end of the class;
 - before and after handling shared tools or equipment; and
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible.
 - Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
 - Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.
 - When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.
- For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRY

Students transitioning into Kindergarten will need additional time to adjust to the new school environment and develop relationships with educators and peers in the context of COVID-19.

- Consider implementing pre-transition strategies to familiarize students with the people, spaces, and expectations as they start school.
 - send home a social story from the perspective of the student that describes what a day may look like, how they may feel, and what their choices are;
 - share a video of the school that outlines the health and safety measures used including signage, washing hands, and class environment;
 - provide an introduction to and a warm welcome from the educators in the building;
 - organize video calls to families from the classroom so children and families can see the space and ask questions.
- Provide clear, simple communications to parents about having to limit the number of adults in the building and the classroom, and the need for adults to maintain physical distance from each other and from children not their own.
- Implement gradual entry of students, commencing no earlier than when all students are welcomed into schools, and may include:
 - Scheduling fewer caregivers into the classroom at a time to account for physical distancing of adults;
 - Outdoor learning or transition activities with a caregiver in attendance.
- Students themselves will be part of a learning group. Ensure enough space for parents/caregivers to maintain physical distance.
- As students transition to full-time, consider frequent communication with families with photos and/or information about classroom activities.
- Provide research to parents, caregivers and staff that demonstrates low transmission rates in young children.
- Kindergarten students are expected to minimize physical contact. Consider how the room is configured and rearrange furniture to encourage small group and individual play.
- Provide clear communication to students about expectations for the classroom materials, play, and physical contact. Gently remind students of the expectations throughout the day and encourage students to kindly support one another.
- Teachers should continue to provide comfort and reassurance in a way that feels comfortable for the teacher and the student. Students can be comforted through different means, including:
 - stories
 - comfort objects
 - drink of water
 - songs
 - soothing words

- Kindergarten classrooms should maintain a focus on play-based learning, while limiting the use of shared materials and following the cleaning and disinfecting protocols outlined in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.

MUSIC PROGRAMS

- All classes, programs and activities (e.g. Band, Choir) can continue to occur where:
 - Under Stage 2:
 - physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group;
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for middle and secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groups;
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups when indoors.
 - Under Stages 3 to 4:
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff, middle and secondary school students at all times.
- Schools could consider installing a barrier made of transparent material in places where physical distance cannot be regularly maintained (e.g., between an itinerant teacher and a learning group). See [guidance from WorkSafeBC on designing effective barriers](#) for more information.
- No in-person inter-school competitions/events should occur. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.
- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per [Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines](#) and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in music classes and music equipment use.
- Staff should refer to the [Guidance for Music Classes in BC During COVID-19](#) developed by the B.C. Music Educators' Association and the Coalition for Music Education in B.C. for additional information.

SHARED OFFICE SPACE FOR STAFF

- Schools and school districts must follow WorkSafeBC guidance on [Offices: Protocols for returning to operation](#) for office settings occupied by adults only (e.g. Distributed Learning office, school/school district offices). Note that learning groups cannot be applied to adult-only settings (an "all adult" learning group is not an acceptable public health measure).

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION/OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

- Encourage outdoor programs as much as possible.
- Teachers should plan physical activities that limit the use of shared equipment and:
 - Minimize physical contact inside learning groups (under Stage 2); or
 - Support physical distancing outside of learning groups.

- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section of this document, and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in physical activity and equipment use.
- Refer to Physical and Health Education ([PHE Canada guidelines](#)):
 - Include more individual pursuits than traditional team activities such as dance, alternative environment and land-based activities, exercises without equipment, fitness, mindfulness, gymnastics, and target games.
 - Explore local parks and green spaces to promote outdoor learning and activity.
 - Focus on activities that do not use equipment.
 - If equipment must be used:
 - Avoid sharing equipment by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies
 - Assemble individualized PE kits that can be assigned to students
 - Have students create their own PE kits to use at home or school and set aside budget for additional kits to be purchased
 - Anticipate equipment hygiene compromises and keep extra equipment on hand so that instructional time is not lost to re-cleaning equipment
 - Disinfect teaching aids (e.g., clipboards, white boards, pens, plastic bins for transporting materials etc.)
 - Encourage students to come to school in clothing that is appropriate for PE and the weather conditions to eliminate the use of change rooms
 - When transitioning to/from outside remind students to use designated areas for changing into jackets and winter clothing if moving outdoors, such as in designated desk area or a marked side of the hallway

PLAYGROUNDS

There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. Playgrounds are a safe environment. The following measures should be taken when using playgrounds:

- Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play
- Attempt to minimize direct contact between students
- Sand and water can be used for play if children wash their hands before and after play. COVID-19 does not survive well on surfaces, other than hard surfaces. There is no evidence showing that the virus survives on sand, in water or on playdough.
- More information on playgrounds is available on the [BC Centre for Disease Control website](#).

SCHOOL LIBRARIES / LEARNING COMMONS

- School libraries / learning commons facilities should be open and book exchange can continue to occur during stages 1 to 4.

At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

- Students and staff should practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - before and after handling shared equipment/resources;
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Laminated paper-based products, including laminated books, should be cleaned and disinfected daily if they are touched by multiple people or upon return, before reshelving.
- For information on cleaning, including technological devices, see the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.
- When visiting the library / learning commons, students and staff should remain in their learning group as much as possible and maintain physical distance from members outside of their learning group. For more information on learning groups and maintaining physical distancing, see the [Learning Groups and Physical Distancing](#) section.
- Students should bring their personal school supplies for classes held within the space. For makerspace and STEM activities, see the [STEM Programs](#) section.
- Schools should install a barrier made of transparent material at the library check out desk if physical distance cannot be regularly maintained. See [guidance from WorkSafeBC on designing effective barriers](#) for more information.

SPORTS

- Programs, activities and sports academies can occur if:
 - Under Stage 2:
 - physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group;
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff and for middle and secondary school students when interacting outside of their learning groups;
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups when indoors.
 - Under Stages 3 to 4:
 - physical distance (2m) can be maintained for staff, middle and secondary school students at all time.

- No in-person inter-school competitions/events. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year.
- See the [Memorandum from BC School Sports](#) for addition information.

STEM PROGRAMS

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - before and after handling shared tools or equipment;
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible
 - Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
 - When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
 - Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

SCIENCE LABS

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.) Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - before and after handling shared tools or equipment;
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible
 - Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
 - Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (SHOP CLASSES & TRADES IN TRAINING PROGRAMS)

- Practice diligent hand hygiene: wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19). Students and staff should wash their hands:
 - before and after handling shared tools or equipment;
 - whenever hands are visibly dirty.
- Have personal spaces and tools set up for students, as best as possible

- Avoid sharing hand tools by numbering and assigning each student their own supplies, if possible.
- Clean and disinfect shared equipment as per guidelines in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section of these guidelines.
- When entering classroom spaces, encourage students to use designated areas for leaving personal items, such as in designated desk areas or a marked side of the room.
- Safety demonstrations and instruction: ensure appropriate space is available to allow for all students to view and understand demonstrations.
 - If needed, break class into smaller groups to allow appropriate spacing.
- Ongoing collaboration and communication with post-secondary institutions for Trades in Training or other pre-trades apprenticeship programs is crucial.
 - Ensure that staff and students in the K-12 school and the post-secondary institution are aware of health and safety measures in place.
 - Diligent student self-assessment of health when transitioning between the secondary school and post-secondary institution.
- Given the unique structure of Trades Training Programs and oversight by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), new information on assessments and programming for these courses is available online.
 - Information for workers is available on the [WorkSafeBC COVID-19 web page](#), including:
 - [What workers should do](#)
 - [Staying safe at work](#)
 - [Information specific to various industries](#)

THEATRE, FILM, AND DANCE PROGRAMS

- No in-person inter-school festivals/events should occur. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.
- Dance and drama classes should minimize contact by reorganizing warmups, exercises and performance work into smaller groups allowing for physical distancing to occur as per individual space limitations.
 - This could mean that portions of the class act as an audience and audit work.
 - This could mean that portions of the class work in alternate areas on their own small group or individual exercises.
- Blocking of scenes and dance numbers should be choreographed in ways that limit physical touch and face-to-face interactions, and instead seek creative solutions to dynamic storytelling and expressive movement.
- Shared equipment such as set pieces, props, cameras etc. should be cleaned and disinfected as per [cleaning and disinfecting guidelines](#) in this document and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after participating in drama, film or dance classes.
- Costume items should be limited in their shared use at this time. For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) section of these guidelines.

- Where possible, make use of outdoor and site-specific performance spaces that allow for physical distancing for drama, film and dance, especially if working in theatres, green rooms and studios that have no windows.
- Consider alternatives for audience engagement such as online streaming, in class or family-oriented presentations.
- The Association of BC Drama Educators (ABCDE) is currently developing additional guidelines for teaching drama during COVID-19. Staff should refer to the [ABCDE website](#) for more information.

WORK EXPERIENCE

The work environment has changed due to the impacts of COVID-19 and employers will need to follow current guidelines from the [Provincial Health Officer](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#). Students can still engage in work placements in accordance with the following guidance:

- Schools and school districts must ensure students are covered with the required, valid workplace insurance for placements at standard worksites and follow WorkSafeBC guidelines.
 - Information for workers is available on the [WorkSafeBC COVID-19 web page](#), including:
 - [What workers should do](#)
 - [Staying safe at work](#)
 - [Information specific to various industries](#)
- For current and any new placements, standards in the ministry [Work Experience Program Guide](#) must be followed. (*Note: As part of setup and monitoring, worksite visits can now be conducted virtually if needed.*)
- Schools and school districts will assess and determine if it is safe for their students to continue with existing work placements or to begin new placements, considering [Provincial Health Officer](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#) guidance regarding COVID-19. To ensure awareness and support for placements under these conditions, it is recommended that school districts and schools obtain parent/guardian sign-off for all new and continuing placements during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Students and support workers who accompany special needs students to work sites, life skills course and locations, etc., will adhere to the health and safety guidelines of the workplace including wearing PPE if required.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities and special interest clubs should occur when:

- Under Stages 2 to 4, physical distance can be maintained between members of different learning groups; and
- Under Stage 2, reduced physical contact is practiced by those within the same learning group.

In-person inter-school events including competitions, tournaments and festivals, should not occur at this time. This will be re-evaluated throughout the school year. Where possible, schools should seek virtual alternatives to continue to support these events in a different format.

Appendix: Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts

There is a suite of measures that can be implemented in school settings to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. These flow charts have been developed to assist school districts and independent school authorities in navigating the layered approach of environmental and administrative measures available to schools (e.g. organizing students/staff in learning groups, maintaining physical distance, enhancing cleaning and disinfecting protocols, using outdoor space for learning activities, implementing staggered schedules, reinforcing effective personal practices such as diligent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, implementing robust illness policies for students and staff).

School districts and independent school authorities should ensure that all options for the highest level of measures have been exhausted before moving to the next level. **All decisions should be made to prioritize health and safety and in consideration of the best interest of students.**

CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFF

Schools should minimize the number of staff who interact with learning groups they are not a part of as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment. The following flow chart outlines the considerations to assign staff to a learning group and the steps to take when a staff cannot be assigned to a learning group.

1. Can the staff member be assigned to a learning group?
Consider learning group size limits, nature of staff's role and responsibilities, and student needs.

2. If no, can the staff member fulfill their duties while maintaining physical distancing (2m)?
Consider reconfiguring rooms or securing an alternate space.

3. If no, can environmental measures be implemented?
Consider installing a physical barrier made of transparent materials, or having the staff member provide remote/virtual services.

4. **If none of the measures outlined above can be implemented,** the staff member is required to wear PPE (e.g. non-medical mask, face covering, or face shield, in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield).
This could include a specialist teacher or an EA who must work in close physical proximity to students in multiple learning groups, or a TTOC.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Schools and school districts are required to deliver the full breadth of provincial curriculum as outlined in the [Expectations for Each Stage](#). The following flow chart outlines considerations for schools and school districts when planning instructional delivery to students in secondary schools.

1. Organize students and staff into learning groups, considering the following:
 - a. Can “natural learning groups” be identified through analysis of student enrolment data (students taking the same core subjects and/or electives)?
 - b. Which courses or programs could be delivered using physical distancing (based on the required learning environment and available space relative to number of students enrolled), and can therefore be excluded from learning group considerations¹?

2. Create timetables including “in-learning group” and “cross-learning group” classes
 - a. “In-learning group” class = all students are from the same learning group; students must minimize physical contact
 - b. “Cross-learning group” class = students are from different learning groups; students must maintain physical distance (2m)

3. Supplement in-class instruction with self-directed or remote learning for those courses/programs that cannot be accommodated via learning group or physical distancing approaches.

- Requiring students to wear masks during class is not an acceptable alternative to the use of learning groups or physical distancing.

¹ Within learning groups, minimizing physical contact is the rule. Consider focusing application of learning groups on subject areas that cannot be delivered using physical distancing strategies.

✕ B.C. has declared a state of emergency. Learn about [COVID-19 health issues.](#) | [B.C.'s Response to COVID-19.](#)

British Columbia News

Detailed plans support safe return to classroom

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/22939>

Wednesday, August 26, 2020 2:00 PM

[VIEW TRANSLATIONS](#)

Victoria - Back to school plans for K-12 families are now posted for all 60 school districts, so parents and families can prepare to support their children for a safe return to the classroom.

Families should visit their school district website to view their local school's plans.

“There is no better place than in-class learning. With these plans now in place, parents can feel confident about sending their children back to school and assured that strict health and safety measures are in place to protect students and staff,” said Rob Fleming, Minister of Education. “I know that some families will continue to have medical or health concerns, and my expectation is that school districts will be flexible and work with families to provide remote options that keep children connected to their school community.”

Fleming has directed school districts to contact all families in their school communities to share their safety plans and to confirm if they are planning for their child to attend school classes in September, or if they need alternative learning options. As part of the ministry's July 29 guidelines for planning, many districts have already begun engaging with parents to determine their needs.

The Ministry of Education has also given school districts the flexibility and certainty to find options that work for families. This includes the authority for all school boards to offer remote options to students within their districts, as well as the tools they need to increase their existing programs to meet demand.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, boards of education throughout B.C. have worked hard to make sure local community needs are met within the health and safety framework provided by the provincial health officer,” said Stephanie Higginson, president, British Columbia School Trustees Association. “Districts will continue to work with parents and families, as they have always done, to ensure children returning to school in September are able to do so safely.”

Parents will find detailed back to school plans on their district website. In addition to health and safety measures, the plans include:

- how learning groups will be organized;
- when masks are required;
- daily schedules for classes, lunch and recess;
- daily health assessment requirements;
- pick-up and drop off times;
- protocols for common areas;
- hand washing directions; and
- orientation information.

Each school district plan follows the same strict provincial health and safety measures co-developed with the provincial health officer, the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Ministry of Education. School districts are adapting their schedules and learning groups to fit within those measures based on student population and local consultation with education partners, parents and Indigenous rightsholders.

Every day, school districts are prepared to welcome all students to elementary and middle schools. For secondary schools, timetables have been modified to adhere to the health and safety requirements and ensure that all students can attend most days, with much of their instruction occurring in-class. The majority of school districts (69%) are moving to a quarterly Page 127 of 168

SCHOOL DISTRICTS (88%) ARE MOVING TO A QUARTERLY SEMESTER SYSTEM IN SOME OR ALL OF THEIR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

While schools may look different in different communities, all school districts are also required to follow operational guidelines developed by a provincial steering committee made up of parents, teachers, support workers, Indigenous rightsholders, school leaders and trustees. School districts were also required to consult local First Nations on the development of their plans.

Families will find out:

- how districts will support mental health and wellness;
- what they are doing to ensure vulnerable students and those who require additional support in school – including students with disabilities and diverse abilities, and children and youth in care – are prioritized for full-time, in-class learning and services without delays;
- how they are ensuring Indigenous rightsholders are engaged in meaningful consultation; and
- plans for Indigenous students living on-reserve and attending public school.

“On behalf of parents, I thank the ministry, and specifically Minister Fleming, for stating his clear expectations that all school districts will provide online options for parents, while ensuring all children will have the opportunity to remain connected to their school community,” said Andrea Sinclair, president, BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC). “This is the position BCCPAC has continuously been stating at the provincial tables since June. I thank Minister Fleming for his willingness to listen and to provide flexibility for families which is in the best interests of our children.”

The health and safety measures that all school districts will follow include:

- masks will be required for staff, middle and secondary students in high-traffic areas, such as buses, and in common areas, such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained (exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons);
- even when wearing a mask, staff and students will still be required to maintain physical distance from people outside of their learning group;
- increased cleaning of high-contact surfaces, such as doorknobs, keyboards, desks and chairs;
- increased hand hygiene with all students, staff and visitors being required to clean their hands before boarding school buses and entering school buildings, before and after eating, using the washroom and using playground equipment;
- school districts may also install transparent barriers for people who have more contact with others, such as front-desk staff, bus drivers or food services staff, where appropriate; and
- staff and students (or their parents/guardians) must also assess themselves daily for illness, including symptoms of COVID-19. If any student or staff member has even mild symptoms, arrangements will be made for that person to return home.

Quick Facts:

- The Ministry of Education has developed a five-stage approach to operate schools, depending on risk of transmission and guidance from the provincial health officer. This helps school districts know what to expect if there is a significant change to school operations required as part of B.C.’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Operational plans for independent schools will be reviewed by the ministry by the end of this week. Those plans will be posted on school websites early next week.
- To support and ensure the health and safety of students and staff during this pandemic, a one-time investment of \$45.6 million as part of B.C.’s COVID-19 Action Plan will support school districts and independent schools for the start of the school year. This funding will support the purchase of up to 1.5 million masks, enough for every public-school staff member and student to have at least two masks.
- Canadian Shield, a manufacturer of personal protective equipment products in Ontario, recently announced it is donating an additional 54,500 face shields for K-12 schools in B.C., adding to the inventory of personal protective equipment that will be available for students and staff.

Learn More:

For more info on back-to-school plans, learning groups and health and safety guidelines visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school>

Two backgrounders follow.

Media Contacts

Ministry of Education

Government Communications and Public Engagement
250 356-5963

Backgrounders

Alternate learning supports for K-12 schools

The Province is providing a range of supports for remote learning for school districts, teachers and parents.

School districts

- Extended the authority to all school boards to offer online programs to students within their districts.
- Gave districts the ability to expand their local distributed learning programs to include additional grades and services to students and district schools to meet local needs.
- Provided a provincial learning management system (MOODLE) for districts to support online learning.
- Upgraded internet access to all schools in the province through the K-12 Next Generation Network.
- Provided a provincial licence for Zoom for all schools as a secure platform for real-time videoconferencing.

Parents and caregivers

- Provided \$3 million through the Safe Return to Schools Grant to loan technology to students (such as tablets or laptops) to support their educational program.
- Enhanced the Keep Learning Website with additional resources for parents. This is a central place where families can find ideas for everyday educational activities, links to free learning resources, as well as how to help children learn and how to ensure their well-being while they are at home: <https://www.openschool.bc.ca/keeplearning/>
- Worked with telecom and internet service providers to ensure families and school districts were provided with information about access to internet assistance and connectivity programs (such as Internet for Good).

Teachers

- Created an online repository of over 2,000 curated learning resources for use by teachers and staff to support the new curriculum, suitable for use online or in class.
- Provided funding for teachers to develop additional resources for this fall, through a partnership with the not-for-profit organization FocusED.
- Worked with the Western Canadian Learning Network, a school district consortium, to provide a full set of course resources for grades 4-12 for teachers using MOODLE.
- Funded a provincial site licence for Zoom to ensure a common, consistent platform to communicate and share lessons with their students.
- Provided a new self-paced course with strategies for incorporating remote and in-person learning in the classroom.

- Launched a webinar series hosted by experts to support teachers throughout the province about changing their teaching or learning environments. The first webinar, *Building Compassionate Communities in the Classroom*, is scheduled for Sept. 9.

Homebound program

- During a regular school year, districts also accommodate students that cannot attend in-class instruction through the long-standing B.C. Homebound Program. This enables students to continue their education program if they are absent from school for periods during the school year because of medical reasons, such as injury, illness, surgery, pregnancy, or mental health reasons.

Examples of school district back to school plans

While all school districts are following the same strict health and safety guidelines to keep students and staff safe, B.C. is a diverse province and each school district has created back-to-school plans based on the needs of their communities.

Large school district example: SD 36 (Surrey)

Most school districts can accommodate all students in the classroom every day. However, there are some urban secondary schools with larger student populations in cities like Surrey where this will not be possible.

- To minimize contacts between learning groups, Surrey is accommodating grade 10-12 students every day in the morning and one day a week in the afternoon, while students in K-9 will have full-time access to the classroom. In Surrey's plan, every secondary student will be in attendance every day.
- Children with special needs, those who require additional supports and children and youth in care will have priority access to technology, in-class instruction and additional supports.
- To reduce contact between learning groups, the district is staggering arrival and departure times for some of its larger schools, with different pick-up and drop-off times and/or locations for families depending on their learning groups.
- The district is also staggering the times students enter the school, as well as breaks and lunches, to minimize the numbers of people passing each other in the halls. The district will never have more than 60% of students sharing a lunch period and two times per week no more than 40% of a school will be on lunch.
- Surrey secondary schools are moving to a quarterly semester system, which means students have two courses every 10 weeks, minimizing the amount of time they need to change classes and keeping the size of learning groups small. The learning group size for grades 8 and 9 is 60 students. For grades 10 to 12, it is 30 students.
- Surrey has an Aboriginal Education Council, with representatives from the local Katzie and Semiahmoo First Nations, BC Métis Nation, Fraser Valley Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association, Kekinow Housing, Surrey Principals and Vice Principals' Association, Surrey Teachers' Association and Aboriginal parents that meets to provide leadership on the education. The superintendent has also met with representatives of the local Katzie and Semiahmoo First Nations about Surrey's restart plan.
- First Nations students will be accommodated for remote learning, when requested.
- Surrey also has a distributed (online) learning option, which includes a blend of remote classes and in-person instruction for grades K-7, and more than 70 online courses, including project-based learning, for grades 8-12.

Mid-sized school district example: SD 63 (Saanich)

- The majority of students in Saanich will have access to full-time, in-class learning. All secondary schools will have in-class learning, with many also offering some blended learning (a mix of remote and in-class) to ensure that learning group sizes can be maintained.

- To maximize the number of students who have in-class learning, secondary schools in Saanich are moving to a quarterly semester system, with students having two courses every 10 weeks.
- Elementary and middle schools will have staggered recess and lunch times. Secondary schools will have rescheduled term start and end times.
- School staff will connect with families of students who require extra support to ensure they better understand what to expect this school year.
- On Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, Indigenous school staff will connect with each family to determine their individual needs. The district will work collaboratively with Indigenous rightsholders to create a flexible plan that allows Indigenous students full access to education, whether remote or in-class, with support for technology when needed.
- The district has purchased two new buses and a van that will be fully operational on Sept. 8. These buses will serve local First Nations communities and ensure that all students who have requested transportation services will receive them in a timely and convenient manner.

Smaller school district example: SD 48 (Sea-to-Sky)

- The majority of students in Sea-to-Sky will be accommodated for full-time, in-class learning, with the exception of some secondary school electives which will be offered as remote learning classes.
- To maximize the number of students who have in-class learning, secondary schools in Sea-to-Sky are moving to a quarterly semester system, with students having two courses every ten weeks.
- To reduce contact between learning groups, the district is staggering arrival and departure times for some of its larger schools, with different pick-up and drop-off location for families depending on their learning groups.
- Some larger schools will also have staggered class schedules, with students remaining in their learning group through recess, lunch and break times.
- The district is expanding its distributed (online) learning program and it has developed a remote learning alternative for K-9 students who want to stay connected to their community school.
- Any student who needs to self-isolate or quarantine will be supported with the resources (personnel, digital, and otherwise) they need to continue learning with their peers remotely.
- To support students who require additional support in school, SD 48 offers students a My Action Plan program, ensuring students are actively involved in their learning plan and in finding services that meet their needs.
- Those with special needs or anyone who requires extra support at school will have full-time access to in-person classes. Children and youth in care will have priority access to technology, child care, in-class instruction and additional supports.
- The district has had extensive consultation with local First Nations, including N'quatqua, Lil'wat, Samahquam and Squamish Nation. First Nations students will be accommodated for remote learning when requested.
- Staff will be provided with digital professional development and training, in case a school needs to switch stages because of an increased risk of transmission.

Translations

- [8-26_back_to_school_Arabic.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Chinese\(simplified\).pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Chinese\(traditional\).pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Farsi.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_French.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Hindi.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Korean.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Punjabi.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Spanish.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Tagalog.pdf](#)
- [8-26_back_to_school_Urdu.pdf](#)

Teaching & Learning

We are striving to provide flexible learning opportunities that support our students.

Parent Options

As we prepare for 2020–2021, we know that our students need access to high-quality instruction. In-class instruction is available and safe for students and staff as it aligns with the Provincial Health Officer’s and Ministry of Education’s guidelines. We do also recognize that in-class instruction might not be appropriate for all families, depending on their personal circumstances and well-being.

During these challenging times, School District #43 acknowledges that individual needs and circumstances for students and families might necessitate considering alternative or other learning options. Below is a listing of the options available in the district. While capacity is limited in our programs, we are working to provide alternative for students.

In the case of Distributed Learning/Homeschooling options, please be advised that your child's spot at their home school cannot be held for them for the duration of this school year. You may choose to return to your home school this school year if space allows. Should you want to return to your home school for the 2021-2022 school year, you will need to contact your home school principal by April 2, 2021. Students currently registered in a language-based program of choice will need to assure they maintain the language skills for the program they are registered in. This may require a language assessment upon your return to the program for the 2021-2022 school year.

The following Learning Options are available to discuss with your school principal:

School-Based Gradual Transition Supports (K-8)

We understand that some families are concerned about the restart of school and want their child to return to face to face instruction but need some time to gradually return their child to school.

While we would like to all students to meet their classroom teacher on Monday, September 14th and to be in attendance, we understand some families may want more time or will be more comfortable with a slower, more gradual start. While schools are unable to provide the same level of flexibility as they did in June (all school-based teachers will be working with students face to face 5 days a week), we do want to provide families the flexibility to start at a pace that matches their family’s needs.

School principals will work with families to provide a gradual restart for this September as families require.

The school district is dedicating resources to develop some grade-level learning supports and tutorials that schools can send home to support their child while they transition back into in-class learning. While the materials will not be teacher-specific or necessarily in pace with your child's classroom teacher, they will help support a child's learning.

Parents will need to be able to support their child's learning while they are at home. Your child will retain their school-based classroom placement; and, on the days and times that your child attends school, they will participate in the classroom/learning group. The amount of parental time needed to support your child is proportional to the amount of time your child attends classes.

The goal will be to increase your child's classroom time as families' situations evolve. While this is a short-term solution, it does provide families more time to transition back to regular school or to make other educational arrangements that better match their family needs.

Supports would be mostly in English and based on the B.C. Ministry of Education curriculum. Therefore, parents in language-based programs would need to ensure that their child's language skills regarding the program of choice they are in, are fostered while they are learning at home. A gradual return will not impact a child's language skills but a long-term prolonged absence from a program of choice would require families to reassess enrolment in a program of choice, as language acquisition is the core foundation of the program.

Parents would work with their school principal and classroom teacher to develop a timeline for their return. Families would need to inform the principal of this approach and their desire for a gradual return to maintain their classroom placement.

This approach is not a remote learning program but is rather a way to support a student's self-paced return to regular in-class instruction.

These curricular supports will take time to establish but we hope to have things up and running in mid-September. You would however still inform your school principal now of your plans so we could begin planning.

Distributed Learning: Encompass K-9

School District #43 is currently trying to expand its Encompass K-9 capacity for enrolment. When supported transitions at the school level do not meet a student's needs, distributed learning is a potential option. The program is largely dependent on at-home support with limited face-to-face contact with teachers. It is an online program grounded in the BC Curriculum. We provide programming in English only and not in Programs of Choice (French Immersion, Montessori, Mandarin, etc.). Students registering in this program will no longer be registered in their home school as Encompass becomes your home school.

Distributed Learning: COL 10-12

Online learning for grades 10 -12 is an option for students who need flexibility to learn from any location or at times that work best for them. Coquitlam Open Learning (COL) is currently working to expand capacity.

Teachers are available for support when requested, though the teacher may or may not be available for real-time support.

Students can sign up for individual classes as a supplement to those they're enrolled but cannot sign up for courses still in their schedule at other Coquitlam high schools. We can offer full-time online learning; however, we start students with 2 courses at a time and add more either when courses are completed or when students are showing success in both courses and desire a third course. Students enrolling in our expanded COL 10-12 learning option as an alternative to in-class learning at school will be unable to cross-enrol in both programs.

We encourage students to complete courses on a schedule planned with teachers. We recommend a pace faster than 10 months, but we make accommodations as needed. Teachers and academic advisors from our online learning program are available to discuss scheduling options.

Access to digital devices and internet connection is required. Loans of district computers may be possible on a case-by-case basis.

We will work to add spaces in course based on our ability to resource them.

Homeschooling

Parents may choose to homeschool. Homeschooling does not involve a student's school and is the sole responsibility of the parent. Importantly, choosing to homeschool means remaining registered at your neighbourhood school for Ministry tracking purposes. The school, however, provides no instructional support. Homeschooling is not:

- supervised by a BC-certified teacher
- required to meet provincial standards
- inspected by the Ministry of Education

Homeschooling is an alternative method of teaching offered outside the B.C. educational system. More information can be located here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/classroom-alternatives/homeschooling>

Hospital-Homebound

Parents with children who are medically diagnosed with immunosuppression

may qualify for hospital-homebound support. During Phase 2 of the BC Restart Program, families who provide documentation from a specialist/physician affirming immunocompromised status are eligible for hospital homebound. Immunosuppression is a medical diagnosis. Information from the Ministry of Health and BCCDC regarding immunosuppression can be located here:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID-19-IS-Children-FAQ-BCCH.pdf>

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19-easing-social-distrancing-IS-children.pdf>



MEMORANDUM

TO: BCSS MEMBER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND ATHLETIC DIRECTORS
FROM: JORDAN ABNEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: COVID-19 UPDATE FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL
DATE: AUGUST 13, 2020
CC: DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS, BCSS SPORT COMMISSIONERS, LOCAL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS, ZONE PRESIDENTS, PARTNER STAKEHOLDERS

COVID-19 Update

Following the K-12 Education Restart Plan announcement on July 29, the BCSS Board of Directors met to discuss the options for the 2020-2021 school year. The Board decided that **effective the first-day students are in session (tentatively September 10th), the ban on school sport activities currently in place will be lifted and provided that they can be conducted following guidelines as published in the K-12 Education Restart Plan, school sport activities may resume.**

The announcement clarified that co-curricular activities such as our traditional interschool athletics are **not permitted at this time**. This announcement has brought a great deal of disappointment to students, coaches and parents, as we know what an integral role school sports play in a student's high school experience. The Restart Plan addresses specifically school sport activities and states:

Extracurricular activities in middle and secondary schools including sports, arts (including band and choir) or special interest clubs can occur if:

- physical distance can be maintained between members of different learning groups (cohorts)
- reduced physical contact can be practiced by those within the same learning group (cohort)

The Education Restart Plan also notes that activities like inter-school competition will be re-evaluated in the mid-fall. To that end, we are making every effort to present a case to the government to allow a modified school sport to return safely and responsibly based on the Return to School Sport work that has been prepared this summer. We have also received a lot of questions from parents and AD's about the discrepancy between school sports and those happening already in the community. We understand the frustration and are communicating those to the government.



Now that there is clarity on what the school year will look like, we are working on finalizing the Return to School Sport plan to provide guidelines and resources for our schools. It will be incumbent on our administrators, athletic directors and coaches to find creative solutions to safely engage students in school sport activities at this time. We expect the Return to School Sport Plan to be published before the beginning of school.

The ban on school sport activities will remain in place until students are back in session. However, coaches are still permitted to conduct virtual sessions to stay engaged with student-athletes throughout the last few weeks of summer.

Operations Update

In a normal year, BCSS would begin the mail-out and opt-in process for our member schools in August to prepare for the start of the school year and the fall season of play. In response to the dynamic and constantly changing environment for school sport, there will be some changes to the normal procedures.

Unchanged is the requirement for each school administrator of record to confirm their school's BCSS membership for the school year. During the week of August 24, the administrator of record will receive an email to complete their school's membership opt-in. In addition to confirming their membership for the year, they will be asked to update the key contact information for their school. Until the school administrator completed the approximately 3-minute opt-in process their Athletic Director will not have access to STARS.

Given the uncertainty around school sport this year due to COVID-19, the BCSS Board of Directors has opted to charge only 60% of the annual membership fees at this time. The Board felt it was critical to ensure BCSS remained functional to assist and guide member schools through this period while remaining ready for the eventual return to normalized activities. The Board is also cognizant of the tight fiscal environment member schools face this year as well as the likely decrease in interschool sporting opportunities. They will evaluate the need throughout the year if all, some or none of the remaining 40% should be assessed to the Member Schools. BCSS does not pro-rate membership fees regardless of when a school joins throughout the year. It is the hope of the Board that our member schools value the work of BCSS and will complete the opt-in immediately.



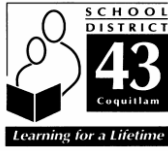
Please keep an eye on your email in the coming weeks as we will be replacing our usual mail-out with a virtual Welcome Back Package. This will include our Return to Sport Plan, links to important documents, clarification on Eligibility and Transfers during this time, our 2020-2021 Handbook & Calendar, as well as the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

We understand the frustration that comes with the uncertainty ahead. However, we know that our students will be returning to our schools in a few weeks, and that's an important first step. We ask for your continued patience and thank you for your support as we continue to advocate for the importance of school sport during these times.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jordan Abney", is positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

Jordan Abney
Executive Director



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent

FROM: Stephen Whiffin, Director of Instruction and Chief Information Officer

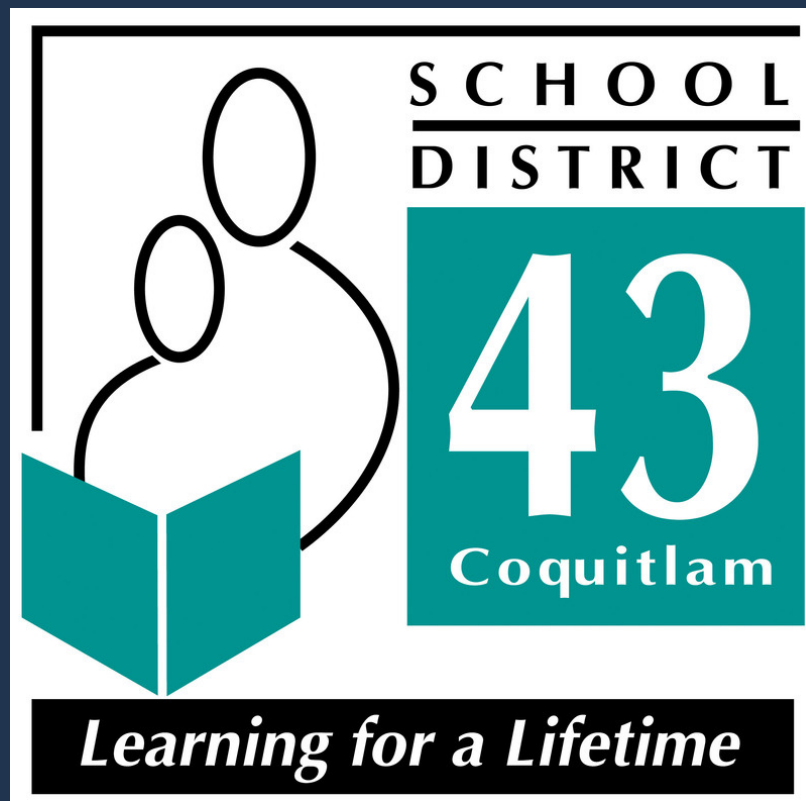
DATE: September 8th, 2020

SUBJECT: **School-based Gradual Transition Support**

COPIED TO: District Leadership Team

Recommended Action: The following is provided for information.

Background: Director of Instruction, Stephen Whiffin will review the District's return-to-school options, including the School-based Gradual Transition Support option, which will help meet the needs of all families as we strive to bring learners back to school.



ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE RETURN TO SCHOOL OPTIONS

September 2020



FULL TIME IN-CLASS

- Following all health & safety measures
- Students learn in-class with their peers
- More outdoor learning opportunities
- Learning groups of fewer than 60 students and staff



HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSITION

- Keeps students connected to their school
- Maintains spot in school programs
- Families responsible to support child's learning at home
- Collaborative plan supported and assessed by a teacher
- Opportunity for students to attend in-person activities at school
- Students will return to school in the 2020-2021 school year



DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

- Families are home facilitators in their child's education. A teacher provides program material, assesses student work and provides feedback.
- Students are supervised at home while following the BC curriculum
- Children do not attend in-person classes or activities



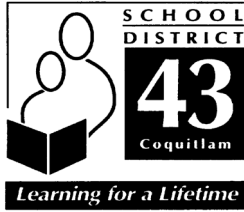
HOSPITAL HOMEBOUND

- For students who are unable to attend school due to a defined medical condition
- Students must be diagnosed by a doctor and have a letter from their medical practitioner outlining the qualifying diagnosis



HOME SCHOOLING

- Full educational program is delivered at home, usually with the family assuming full responsibility for their child's learning
- Families must inform their school of their decision to withdraw and Home School
- There are no assignments, assessments or supports from teachers



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent

FROM: Geoffrey Johnston, Principal
Jean Wong, Vice Principal

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: **International Education Review & Update**

Recommended Action: This report is being provided for information.

Background: At the September 8th Board Meeting, we are pleased to have the opportunity to present the highlights of the International Education 2019-2020 School Year and Summer School 2020 Program.

Some highlights of the 2019-2020 school year and our summer program include:

1. International Education Enrolment Numbers
2. School Support
3. Student Achievement
4. International Education Summer Accomplishments
5. International Education Initiatives



International Education Report

- Student enrolment: 1,000 from 25 countries
- The Order in Council confirming the extension of Canada's border closure to Sept 30, 2020: new international students can only travel to Canada if they have a valid study permit or an introductory letter issued by IRCC on March 18, 2020
- Ministry of Education requirement: weekly report regarding incoming international students
- Readiness Assessment Plan: Protocols for Pre-departure, Travel and Arrival to Canada
- Quarantine educational resource package



1



Supporting our Students

- Vital English – we offer a Pre-Arrival Learning Package to our students – placement test, orientation, and ELL modules to enhance language acquisition
- ISSP(Keep.meSafe) - an international student support program, which incorporates multilingual counselors who are available to our students 24/7/365
- Guard.Me Cares – the Quarantine Student Connection – weekly student support group available. Monitored by a mental health professional – discuss ways to improve one's health and wellness
- Program coordinators and youth workers – connect with students, families, counselors, and IE contacts



2



International Education Initiatives

Summer School Online Credit Courses 2020

- 428 students registered; hired 27 teachers
- Success rate: 92%
- Gross Revenue: \$684,800

Virtual Student and Educational Bureaus Marketing Fairs

- New markets: India, Malaysia and Indonesia

Social Media Platform

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube Channel, TikTok, Wechat, Whats App

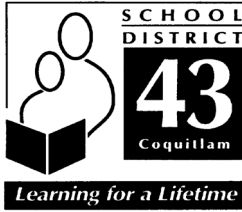
Canadian Bureau for International Education Online Education Symposium

- Superintendent, Patricia Gartland – guest speaker (June 2020)

Central Board of Secondary Education of Delhi, India Virtual Conference

- Presentation by Superintendent, Patricia Gartland and Director of Instruction and CIO, Stephen Whiffin- Leveraging Change Today to Prepare for the Future (July 2020)





SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carey Chute, Assistant Superintendent
Patricia Gartland, Superintendent

FROM: Michael McGlenen, District Principal
Murray Peters, Principal

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: Continuing Education Summer Report

Recommended Action: This report is being provided for information.

Background: Please accept the follow as an information update on Summer School Programming for Summer 2020.

Murray Peters will be providing a brief update on Summer Programming.

Attachment 1: Memo – Summer School Update

Attachment 2: Power Point



August 27, 2019

Summer Learning 2020 Report

Murray Peters, Principal - Summer Learning

This summer's program was devoted to serving vulnerable learners and students most in need of summer course opportunities.

School District 43 (Coquitlam) offered three summer programs in 2020, providing a quality learning experience for about 2000 students:

1. Literacy/Numeracy Classes for Elementary and Middle:

Purpose: Provide daily (elementary) and twice weekly (middle) in-person classroom instruction in basic literacy and numeracy skills to slow down or reverse the academic slide we have seen during the COVID pandemic.

- Each school referred 3 or 4 students, identified by school based teams as most in need of summer learning opportunities
- Classes built with ten or fewer students. EA assigned to every class. Specialized supports in place for students in "low incidence" categories A through H
- Stage 3 Health and safety protocols strictly in place

Coquitlam River Elementary (July 7-24, in-person 9am-12pm daily):

- 103 students in 11 classes (17 in Low Incidence categories)
- Bryn Williams – Summer Principal
- Afternoon camp available

Miller Park Elementary (July 7-24, in-person 9am-12pm daily):

- 65 students in 8 classes (13 in Low Incidence categories)
- Jonathan Sclater – Summer Principal
- Afternoon camp available

Gleneagle (Middle) (July 7-24, 8:45-11:45am, in-person twice weekly & online learning):

- 53 students in 3 classes (19 in Low Incidence categories)
- Kim Cuellar – Summer Principal

2. Remedial – Secondary

Purpose: Students provided opportunity to pass grade 9 or 10 course they had failed during school year

- By school referral only
- Instruction delivered completely on-line, with a few students invited in for in-person support as needed

Gleneagle (Remedial) (July 7-24, morning or afternoon online classes daily):

- 90 students

Coquitlam Continuing Education

380 Montgomery St., Coquitlam, BC V3K 5G2
T 604 936 4261 F 604 937 6877

Coquitlam Learning Opportunity Centre

104 – 2748 Lougheed Hwy, PoCo, BC V3B 6P2
T 604 945 4211 F 604 945 4218



- 98% success rate (passing mark earned)
- Kim Cuellar – Summer Principal

3. Fast Track – Secondary

Purpose: Students able to complete full credit courses in a 6-week period (July 2-Aug 7)

- Public registration
- Instruction delivered completely on-line

- 1650 students
- 94% success rate
- Kim Cuellar and Lisa Lucking – Summer Principals

Summer Learning Staff:

- 67 Teachers
- 27 EA's
- 4 Summer Site Principals
- 4 Clerical

Appreciation:

- All summer teachers, EA's, and clerical staff for their flexibility and commitment to providing the best summer learning experience possible under these unique circumstances
- The summer site principals for their innovation and vision to lead their staffs and care for students
- Personnel in Learning Services, Maintenance, Human Resources, Payroll, and Finance for their expertise and support
- Carey Chute, Assistant Superintendent, for his vision and commitment to learning throughout the planning process for Summer Learning 2020

Feedback:

The value of this summer's program, in addition to the above statistics, is also reflected in some of these positive comments from parents and students:

"So pleased that you were able to offer a limited program for elementary school students. The experience was very positive for my child and it was nice to have a semblance of routine for a short while."

"The teacher and EA's were amazing with _____ and he loved what he learned, thank you for all your dedication you all had for my son."

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"Course was structured very well with an excellent outline."

"Although fully online, the course still taught me new things and helped me to refine previous knowledge."

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McGlenen", written over a white background.

Michael McGlenen
District Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Murray Peters", written over a white background.


Murray Peters
Principal

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Summer Learning 2020

Presentation to SD43 Board of Education
By Murray Peters, Principal – SD43 Summer Learning

1




Literacy/Numeracy Classes for Elementary

- Coquitlam River Elementary (Bryn Williams, Summer Principal) & Miller Park Elementary (Jonathan Selater, Summer Principal)
 - 168 students, attending every morning for fourteen days (July 7-24)
 - All students referred by home schools as prioritized “vulnerable learners”
 - Classes of ten or less, with an EA assigned to every class
 - Specialized supports in place for students in “low incidence” categories A through H
 - Stage 3 Health and safety protocols strictly in place

“So pleased that you were able to offer a limited program for elementary school students. The experience was very positive for my child and it was nice to have a semblance of routine for a short while”
(Parent)

2




Literacy/Numeracy Classes for Middle

- Gleneagle (Kim Cuellar, Summer Principal)
 - 53 students, in two groups attending alternate mornings, with online support (July 7-24)
 - All students referred by home schools as prioritized “vulnerable learners”
 - Classes of ten or less, with an EA assigned to every class
 - Specialized supports in place for students in “low incidence” categories A through H
 - Stage 3 Health and safety protocols strictly in place

“The teacher and EA were amazing with my son and he loved what he learned, thank you for all your dedication you all had for him” (Parent)

3




Remedial Courses for Gr. 9 & 10

- Gleneagle (Kim Cuellar, Summer Principal)
 - 90 students in online courses (July 7-24)
 - By school referral only
 - Instruction delivered completely on-line, with a few students invited in for in-person support as needed
 - 98% success rate (passing mark earned)

“I felt many benefits of teaching online and so did the students. They participated a lot. All of my students did pass.” (Remedial Teacher)

4



Fast Track Courses for Gr. 10-12

- **Gleneagle** (Kim Cuellar & Lisa Lucking, Summer Principals)
 - 1650 students
 - Public registration
 - Instruction delivered completely on-line
 - Funded through Coquitlam Open Learning (DL Funding)
 - 94% success rate

“I liked that the course was engaging and all online due to covid. It was very accessible. I am very satisfied with my summer school experience this year.” (Student)

5

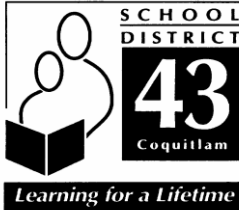


Summer 2020 Snapshot

- **Summer Learning Staff:**
- 67 Teachers 27 EA's 4 Summer Site Principals 4 Clerical
- **Appreciation:**
- All summer teachers, EA's, and clerical staff for their flexibility and commitment to providing the best summer learning experience possible under these unique circumstances
- The summer site principals for their innovation and vision to lead their staffs and care for students
- Personnel in Learning Services, Maintenance, Human Resources, Payroll, and Finance for their expertise and support
- Chris Nicolls, Secretary Treasurer, for supporting vulnerable learner programming
- Carey Chute, Assistant Superintendent, for his vision and commitment to learning throughout the planning process for Summer Learning 2020

“Summer school this year was a very interesting and rewarding experience. The small groups made it quite personal and I think the kids were able to make some good friends in addition to their learning and skill acquisition.” (Summer Teacher)

6



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: **Construction Contract Awards**

COPIED TO: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent; District Leadership Team

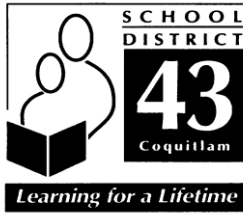
Recommended Action: The following is provided for information.

Background: At the June 16, 2020 Board Meeting, the Board of Education passed the following motion:

“... that the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer to Award the construction of the Irvine Elementary School Seismic Replacement Project, Sheffield Elementary New School Construction Project and the Educational Learning Centre.”

This motion authorized the Secretary-Treasurer and the Superintendent, in consultation, to proceed to award the construction contracts for these capital projects, on behalf of the Board of Education to allow the projects to continue within their projected timelines.

Project	Date	Tender Amount	Construction Firm	Project Summary
Panorama Elementary	July 27, 2020	\$ 3,964,585	RJS Construction Ltd	4-classroom addition
Sheffield Elementary	August 14, 2020	\$24,579,600	Chandos Construction Ltd.	New school Construction
Irvine Elementary	July 6, 2020	\$22,595,000	Yellowridge Construction Ltd	Replacement School Construction
Education Learning Centre	August 6, 2020	\$22,600,000	DGS Construction	Board Office and District Educational Services



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

FACILITIES DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

FROM: Ivano Cecchini, Executive Director, Facilities and Planning Services

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: K – 12 Restart Plan – Cleaning Protocols

COPIED: District Leadership Team

Recommendation: For Information Purposes

Background Information:

Significant resources are being put into our schools to create a safer environment for our students and staff. A key aspect of this involves following Provincial protocols while using effective products to combat COVID-19. With that said, our best defense is to work to ensure that the virus does not enter our building in the first place, and steps are in place for that as well.

Information can be found in the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings Document.

Wash Stations/Handwashing/Hand Sanitizer:

Health and Safety Guidelines recommend that frequent handwashing occurs throughout the day for both students and staff. Further, if handwashing stations are not available or practical, then the Guidelines indicate that hand sanitizing is an acceptable alternative. Health Canada authorized hand sanitizer is readily available to our schools for use.

In addition, portable handwashing stations are being provided to our schools to help create more locations where handwashing can occur. The focus of the locations is outdoors so that students are better able to wash their hands even before they enter the buildings. As each site is different, the locations of the stations are being determined by site-based staff.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:

Provincial Guidelines indicate that for cleaning, use water and detergent (eg. Liquid dishwashing), or common, commercially available cleaning wipes, along with good physical cleaning practices.

The Guidelines also support using common, commercially available disinfectants such as ready to use disinfecting wipes and pre-made solutions. Further, the Guidelines provide a Health Canada list with approved products that have been determined effective for COVID. As a result, our School District has purchased one of the disinfectants on the approved list (Vert-2-Go Saber) and has provided direction for staff to use this product for disinfecting needs.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Frequency:

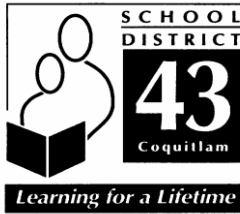
Provincial Guidelines indicate that general cleaning and disinfecting of the premises takes place once in a 24-hour period and this includes items that only a single student uses.

Frequently touched surfaces including items such as doorknobs, hand railings, faucet handles, desks used by multiple students etc. are cleaned and disinfected twice in 24 hours including at least once during regular school hours.

School staffs including Caretakers are developing routines to ensure that all of the Guidelines are being met or exceeded, and caretakers have been given the direction to work with their school-based administrators on specific needs of their school. In fact, hundreds of bottles of disinfectant have been sent out to schools to be used by all staff and potentially students depending on the specific context and routine to help ensure that Guidelines are met.

Added Precautions:

In the event that there is a potential or confirmed case of COVID-19, our School District has purchased specialized equipment similar to what airports or cruise ships would use in the event of an outbreak. The equipment is charged in such a way that the disinfecting chemical surrounds objects and is very effective in disinfecting a school quickly.



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

DATE: September 8, 2020

SUBJECT: **K-12 Restart Plan: Health, Safety and Other Initiatives**

COPIED TO: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent; District Leadership Team

Recommended Action: The following is provided for information.

Background: On July 29, 2020 the Ministry of Education announced a Restart Plan to safely bring K-12 students back to full-time, in-class instruction by September 10, 2020. This announcement was accompanied by the provision of additional funding to support schools during this next year, primarily in the areas of health and safety. The subsequent pages of this memo provide an explanation of the actions taken to date to secure the resources to further district success. In addition, there are several other activities that have been or will be initiated shortly.

A summary of the provided funds available for SD43 are captured in the chart below.

Category	SD43 Allocation	Description
Janitorial Time and staffing	1,328,183	New staff or time to implement enhanced cleaning protocols
Hand Hygiene	529,541	lease or purchase of portable handwashing stations and capital improvements
Cleaning Supplies	294,510	Additional cleaning supplies
Reusable Masks	120,896	Estimated as 2 per year for all employees and 2 for students that use public or school provided transportation (on request)
Computers & Assistive Technology	118,904	For hardware and software for student use. Not for internet access
Total	\$ 2,392,034	

Custodial Staffing

As a temporary measure for this school year, SD43 will be moving forward to increase custodial staffing at 41 schools, primarily elementary schools. Additional casual hours will also be available as required.

This provides the necessary resources to ensure high touch points are cleaned a minimum of twice in a 24-hour period. It also allows for one deep clean in a 24-hour period. Additionally, all schools will have at least one caretaker on site during most school hours.

Masks

- Reusable Masks – Total Ordered 85,000
 - A face mask has been ordered for each staff member at every location. These are high quality masks that should last for the entire year.
 - A second order of 30,000 masks was received the week of September 1. This is sufficient to provide a second mask for staff and at least one mask for students over the age of 10 as required under the most recent Ministry of Education guidelines for use in high traffic common areas such as hallways and buses or when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - A third order of masks (50,000) has also been placed. ETA to be determined.
- **Face shields** – Total Order to date 1,200.
 - These have been ordered and will be distributed to schools as follows;
 - Elementary – 10
 - Middle Schools – 20
 - Secondary – 30
 - Other Locations – 15
 - We are expecting a sizeable donation from Canadian Shield (perhaps as many as 3,000) as arrange through the Ministry of Education to supplement this order. ETA is not known at this time.
- **Clear Face Masks** - 500 have been ordered with all to be distributed to Learning Services.
- **Disposable Face Masks** – Total Order 915 boxes of 50 (45,750) for distribution to all locations for itinerate use or students who have forgotten their reusable mask.

Hand Sanitizer

Approximately 6,000 gallons of hand sanitizer in one-gallon containers, have been ordered. This will have been distributed to schools prior to September 8.

Portable Handwashing Stations

SD43 has ordered 180 portable handwashing stations for schools. This breaks down to approximately five for secondary schools three for middle and large elementary schools and one unit for all other locations.

As required, we may be able to secure additional stations as demand or need determines. However, supply of these portable handwashing stations is in extremely short supply in Canada and acquisition costs have escalated.

Technology

We are working through the anticipated additional demands that may be required to support student technology both in class and online learning for vulnerable students.

Informational Signage/Floor Markings

The Procurement and Custodial departments are working to find a standard signage and/or floor marking kit for each school type (elementary, middle, secondary), which will be paid for at the District level.

Rentals

We will begin allowing rentals to occur in our schools effective October 1. Group rentals will have some additional requirements placed upon them and we will likely limit the number of users during any one timeframe. There will be no gatherings of more than 50 individuals allowed as per PHO guidelines and any classroom use will be required to maintain physical distancing criteria. Rental group users will also be advised of the additional cleaning protocols after each use.

- **Language Schools** – We are still in the process of confirming these. The communication we have had is that they must abide by the mass gathering restrictions. Use of classrooms may not be approved with the use of larger spaces such as multipurpose rooms being an alternative.
- **Churches** – The churches at Como Lake and Centennial have confirmed they will be moving forward with their services limiting them to 50 people per service. We have met with both groups and can confirm they have strong plans in place for movement within the schools.
- **Sports/Community Groups** – We are not accepting any **new** requests for rentals with the exception of filming and Police Training at College Park. Communication has been sent to all **renewal** groups in regard to gym use. We have let user groups know that gym use will be limited to one organization per night where that organization can operate within their cohorts as recently approved by the Ministry of Health. Groups have been notified they will be responsible for costs associated to additional custodial hours required for cleaning after the rental activity. Several groups have cancelled based on this additional fee.
- **Filming** – We have had an uptake in film requests this past week. We have one confirmed commercial shoot at Terry Fox which will take place on a weekend mid-September. We also have a confirmed filming at College Park mid-November for approximately 2 weeks. We have 2 additional requests which are not yet confirmed.
- **College Park** – College Park is filling up with Police Training and filming and will be busy on a regular basis.
- **Ministry of Attorney General** – The rental of Riverside for use of Traffic Court was provided for the month of August.

Daycares

All daycare operators have indicated that they are opening as of Sept 10 with similar hours to last year. One daycare has cancelled their group care which would have operated 9am-2pm however are continuing with their before and after school care program. A couple other daycares have reduced their hours only slightly.

Food Services

In the five secondary schools in which we have contracted our food service operations, they will begin their services during the week of September 21. They will be complying with the restaurant/café PHO/BCCDC standards inside the kitchen and server areas. External to the service areas is the domain of the school to oversee in compliance with established education health and safety criteria.

It should be noted that under the K-12 Restart guidelines, the sale of food for fundraising activities or other initiatives are not permitted in Stages other than Stage 1.

School Supply Budgets

School supply budgets will be reduced on a temporary basis by approximately \$600,000. This approximates the incremental amount of unspent school supply budget money from this past year, on a year over a year basis. These funds will help support any incremental cleaning, janitorial supplies, or staffing that may be required to maintain a healthy and safe environment for student and staff.

At the June 16th, 2020, Board Meeting, the Board supported a request to provision funds from unspent budgets for use toward three specific Summer 2020 initiatives.

Food Security

Over the summer we were able to provide funding support to continue our food program for vulnerable students and families using our culinary program staff. In addition, we were able to sign on to a federal program that provides us with surplus food that can be distributed through us either to the agencies that we work with or direct to vulnerable students and families.

Summer Learning

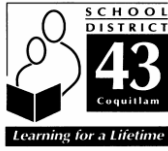
Incremental funding was provided to expand numeracy and literacy programs including a hybrid model of online learning and in class instruction for an expanded age group and particularly vulnerable learners.

Emergency Supplies

During the height of the pandemic – in March and April - we ‘raided’ our emergency and earthquake supply kits to provide supplies and materials in support of our essential workers. Through your support, we were able to replenish our classroom emergency kits and certain other emergency supplies in all our schools through a \$250,000 provision made available by the Board.

Federal Funding

On August 26 the Federal Government announced \$2 Billion in federal funding to support school reopening. \$242.4 million will flow to the BC Provincial Government. SD43 Finance staff have estimated the that SD43 should receive approximately \$11-12 million dependent upon the allocation model utilized. At this time we do not know if there are any restrictions on the use of these funds other than additional reporting requirements will be imposed to document utilization.



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

CORPORATE and FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

FROM: Nita Mikl, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
Kimberley Wakil, Manager of Financial Services

DATE: September 8th, 2020

SUBJECT: **Adoption of Bylaw No. 1.9-2020 – SSAC**

COPIED TO: I. Cecchini, Executive Director Facilities and Planning Services

Recommended Action: That the Board of Education adopt bylaw No. 1-9-2020 which sets the school site acquisition charge rates.

On June 16th, The Board of Education approved the 2020 Eligible School Sites Resolution. The Municipalities and Villages were sent a copy of the resolution along with corresponding schedules for acceptance. Pursuant to the Act, local governments have 60 days from that date to review, accept or reject the resolution. If after 60 days, there is no rejection notification received from the municipalities and villages, the Board can proceed to adopt a bylaw to enact the SSAC rates.

No rejection notifications were received from the municipalities or villages.

The School District identified the following six sites in its 5-year capital plan submission (2021-2025) which totals 11.1 hectares of land at an estimated cost of \$131,954,748.

1. Riverwalk - Elementary
2. Marigold – Elementary
3. Port Moody Centre – Elementary
4. Fraser Mills – Elementary
5. Coquitlam City Centre - Elementary
6. Hazel Coy - Elementary

As a result, the rates remain unchanged from the prior year and will be as follows:

Density	Current Charge
Low Density	\$ 1,000
Medium Low Density	\$ 900
Medium Density	\$ 800
Medium High Density	\$ 700
High Density	\$ 600

Bylaw No 1.9-2020, when adopted by the Board of Education, will be forwarded to the local municipalities and villages advising them of the rates, which will come into effect after 60 days (November 7th, 2020).

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

CAPITAL BYLAW NO. 3, AMENDMENT BYLAW NO. 1.9- 2020
(School Site Acquisition Charge Capital Bylaw Amendment)

A BYLAW BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM) (hereinafter called the "Board") to amend Capital Bylaw No. 1.8 – 2019, School Site Acquisition Charge Capital Bylaw, adopted on October 29, 2019. The School Site Acquisition Charge Capital Bylaw No. 3 sets the school site acquisition charges for the prescribed categories of eligible development pursuant to Part 14, Division 20, Sections 571 to 581 of the *Local Government Act* and British Columbia School Site Acquisition Charge Regulation 17/00.

WHEREAS, School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) is an eligible school district pursuant to Part 14, Division 20, Sections 571 to 581 of the *Local Government Act* for which the Board has indicated an eligible school site requirement in its approved capital plan beginning in 2003;

AND WHEREAS, the Board has consulted with stakeholders and local governments and passed the 2020 Eligible School Site Proposal, incorporated in the school district's 2021-2025 Five Year Capital Plan submission to the Ministry of Education;

AND WHEREAS, the Eligible School Site Proposal included in the 2021-2025 Five Year Capital Plan for School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) was submitted to the Ministry of Education by the Board of Education;

AND WHEREAS, the Board is required to amend its School Site Acquisition Charge Capital Bylaw within 60 days of the Minister's acceptance of the Board's Capital Plan;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Education for School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) in open meeting assembled, ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. "Eligible Development" means
 - a) a subdivision of land in School District No.43 (Coquitlam), or
 - b) any new construction, alteration or extension of a building in School District No.43 (Coquitlam) that increases the number of self-contained dwelling units on a parcel.

2. "School Site Acquisition Charge" is a charge collected by local government, for each new residential parcel to be created by subdivision and for new multiple family residential units to be constructed on an existing parcel, for the purpose of providing funds to assist school boards to pay the capital costs of meeting eligible school site requirements pursuant to Part 14, Division 20, Sections 571 to 581 of the *Local Government Act* and British Columbia School Site Acquisition Charge regulations.

3. Pursuant to Part 14, Division 20 of the *local government act*, the Board establishes the charges applicable to the prescribed categories of eligible development for the school district in accordance with the following formula:

$$SSAC = [(A \times B) / C] \times D$$

Where

SSAC = the school site acquisition charge applicable to each prescribed category of eligible development;

A = \$131,954,748(cost attributable to eligible development units);

B = 35% (set by Provincial regulation);

C = 32,876(Eligible development units projected for the 2020 capital plan submission); and

D = a factor set by Provincial Regulation for the prescribed categories of eligible development.

4. The charges applicable to the categories of eligible development as prescribed by British Columbia Regulation 17/00 for the school district are set in the table below:

Prescribed Category of Eligible Development (BC Regulation 17/00)	D=(Factor set by BC Regulation 17/00)	School Site Acquisition Charge (per unit) SSAC =[(A x B) / C] x D
Low Density (less than 21 units / gross ha.)	1.25	\$1,000
Medium Low (21-50 units / gross ha)	1.125	\$900
Medium (51 -125 units / gross ha)	1.0	\$800
Medium High (126-200 units / gross ha)	0.875	\$700
High Density (greater than 200 units / gross ha)	0.75	\$600

5. The school site acquisition charge amendment does not come into effect until 60 days after the adoption day of this bylaw.

6. A school site acquisition charge is not payable if any of the following applies:
- (a) The eligible development is within a category that is exempt from school site acquisition charges pursuant to BC School Site Acquisition Charge Regulations;
 - (b) A school site acquisition charge has previously been paid for the same eligible development unless, as a result of further subdivision or issuance of a building permit more eligible development units are authorized or will be created on a parcel;
 - (c) Where a building permit is issued on an existing parcel, which after construction, alteration or extension, the parcel will contain three or fewer self-contained dwelling units.
7. This Bylaw shall be cited for all purposes as the "School District No.43 (Coquitlam) Capital Bylaw No.3, Amendment Bylaw No. 1.9-2020 (Re: School Site Acquisition Charge Capital Bylaw Amendment)".

READ A FIRST TIME THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2020

READ A SECOND TIME THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2020

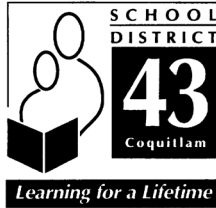
READ A THIRD TIME, PASSED AND ADOPTED THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2020

Chair of the Board

Secretary-Treasurer

I HEREBY CERTIFY this to be a true and original of School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) Capital Bylaw No. 3, Amendment Bylaw No. 1.9-2020, adopted by the Board the ____ day of _____, 2020

Secretary-Treasurer



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

BULLETIN

NOTICE OF PENDING AMENDMENT TO SCHOOL SITE ACQUISITION CHARGES

Background

Part 14, Division 20, Sections 571 to 581 of the *Local Government Act* requires school districts and local governments work together in planning for new schools, and in administering school site acquisition charges to fund the purchase of new school sites. The intent of the legislation is to assist school districts in acquiring school sites based on approved capital plans.

The School Site Acquisition Charge rates are set by the bylaw, which came into effect on November 1, 2004 (Bylaw No.1-2004). On September 8, 2020, the Board of Education for School District No. 43 adopted the current set rate for the school site acquisition charge and amend the market value of the land required to meet the eligible school site requirements as identified in its five year capital plan. (Amendment Bylaw No.1.9 2020). The School Site Acquisition Charge rates are set by the amendment bylaw.

The School Site Acquisition Charges applies to all new residential development applications at either subdivision stage, for single family/duplex lots, or at Building Permit stage, for multiple family residential developments or for residential component of mixed-use developments. School Site Acquisition Charges will be collected by the City of Coquitlam, City of Port Coquitlam, City of Port Moody, Village of Belcarra and Village of Anmore pursuant to the *Local Government Act*.

Implementation and Grace Period:

The *Local Government Act* provides a grace period, following the adoption of the bylaw to allow pending applications to receive in-stream status. The implementation date for Municipalities to begin their collection of School Site Acquisition Charges from new applications based on the new rate will be November 7, 2020. Any submission of complete subdivision or building permit applications received in good order by the Municipality before November 7, 2020 (the implementation date) will have until November 7, 2021 (12 months grace) to register or receive final subdivision approval or building permit issuance based on the old rate. Under this by-law, the new rate is the same as the old rate.

Please note that, if the Building Permit is for a project that is proceeding in conjunction with a Rezoning application, Development Permit application, and/or Development Variance Permit application, the Rezoning by-law must be granted final reading and/or the respective permits must be issued by Council, before the building permit may be issued.

School site Acquisition Charge Rates

The amount of School Site Acquisition Charges payable with respect to a project is based on the density of the residential development and is calculated on a per unit basis. The charges are to be levied for the prescribed 'units per gross hectare' categories pursuant to BC Regulation 17/00. The applicable rates are shown in the table below:

Prescribed Category of Eligible Development	Current Rate (per unit)
Low Density (<21 units / gross ha.)	\$1,000
Medium Low (21-50 units / gross ha.)	\$900
Medium (51 –125 units / gross ha.)	\$800
Medium High (126-200 units / gross ha.)	\$700
High Density (>200 units / gross ha.)	\$600

Collection of Charges:

All applications, which are subject to the charge, must pay the school site acquisition charge prior to a Municipality granting a final subdivision approval or issuing a building permit, authorizing construction.

The Local Government Act requires that the SSAC must be collected as follows:

- (a) At the same time as the development cost charge is paid;
- (b) If no development cost charge is payable, at the time of approval of subdivision if subdivision is required in respect to eligible development;
- (c) If neither (a) nor (b) applies, at the time that a building permit is issued in respect to eligible development.

Payment

A school site acquisition charge where required must be paid prior to the Municipality granting final subdivision approval which will create one or more new residential parcels or a building permit authorizing construction which would result in more than 3 residential units on an existing parcel.

Applicants required to pay School Site Acquisition Charges may, in full or in part, provide land in lieu of School Site Acquisition Charges provided that the School District No.43, the Municipality and the applicant agree on the provision of the land.

Exemptions

Although all new residential developments are subject to the School Site Acquisition Charge, there are some residentially oriented projects, such as hotels, not for profit housing, hospitals and community care facilities that qualify for exemption from the charge. Also, pursuant to the Local Government Act a building permit may be issued on an existing parcel with no school site acquisition charge payment required where after construction, alteration or extension, the parcel will contain 3 or fewer self-contained dwelling units.

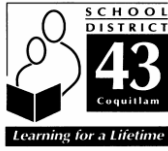
A list of exemptions to the school site acquisition charge, pursuant to the Act and BC School Site Acquisition Charge Regulations is attached as an appendix to this bulletin.

- Appendix -

EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL SITE ACQUISITION CHARGES

The following categories of eligible development are exempt from school site acquisition charges under Section 573 of the *Local Government Act* and *BC School Site Acquisition Charge Regulations 17/00*:

- a) Hospitals as defined in Section 1 of the *Hospital Act*;
- b) Private hospitals or hospitals as defined in Section 5 (1) of the *Hospital Act*;
- c) A hospital under paragraphs (c) to (e) of the definition of “hospital” in Section 1 of the *Hospital Insurance Act*.
- d) Bunkhouses or camp buildings;
- e) Hotels as defined in the *Residential Tenancy Act*;
- f) Community care facilities as defined in the *Community Care Facilities and Assisted Living Act*;
- g) Non-profit housing, including facilities owned or operated by:
 - i. a non-profit society incorporated under the *Society Act*;
 - ii. a municipality or a regional district;
 - iii. a college designated under the *College and Institute Act*;
 - iv. a university or institute named in the *University Act*, *Royal Roads University Act*, *Institute of Technology Act*, *Technical University of British Columbia Act* or *University of Northern British Columbia Act*;
 - v. a school board or a francophone education authority under the *School Act*; or
 - vi. an authority under the *Independent School Act*;
- h) a property for which financial assistance has been provided under the *Human Resource Facility Act* for non-profit housing;
- i) housing for elderly citizens for which a grant or other assistance has been given under Section 8.1 of the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act;
- j) REPEALED BC Reg. 38/10;
- k) a non-profit housing cooperative under the *Cooperative Association Act*;
- l) a private mental hospital as defined in Section 1 of the *Mental Health Act*.



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Chris Nicolls, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

DATE: September 8th, 2020

SUBJECT: **Return of Trustees to In-Person Board of Education Meetings**

COPIED TO: Patricia Gartland, Superintendent; District Leadership Team

Recommended Action: The following is provided for information.

Background: The Board of Education requested that staff provide information regarding options for Trustees to return to in-person meetings of the Board of Education.

Beginning in April 2020, Board of Education meetings transitioned to being conducted online through ZOOM for public meetings, and Microsoft Teams for In-Camera meetings. This change was made due to the emergency measures implemented by the Provincial Government in conjunction with the Provincial Health Officer in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the recovery from COVID-19 moves through the various provincially mandated stages, it is reasonable to explore how and when to resume in-person meetings of the Board of Education. This return can be facilitated in several different ways, and we have overviewed three options for Board consideration, which could be considered as a phased approach to returning to regular, in-person meetings.

Option #1 – Trustees On-Site, Meetings conducted via Zoom

This format would have Trustees attending meetings in person but retaining the meeting format using Teams (in-camera) and ZOOM (public meetings), as we have done since Spring. This would mean that Trustees would attend the meeting at the Board Office, with only the nine Trustees physically residing in the Board Room/Conference Room/Committee Room. Utilizing all three spaces, would allow for physical distancing protocols to be maintained. Staff would attend the meetings from their offices or elsewhere as they did during the Spring meetings. Trustees who are not able to attend in person could continue to do so remotely. They will be able to attend the meeting with little to no difference to those observing the meeting.

It is important to consider that in this scenario, everyone who is in the same common room will require headphones with microphone capability to ensure that there is no sound transfer and feedback to the online stream.

Option #2 – All Participants On-Site, Public in the room, no online streaming

This option provides for a full return to regular ‘in person’ meetings, as would have been done in pre-COVID-19. However, in order to maintain physical distance, public meetings would be held in the gymnasium at Winslow Centre. This would allow tables for the Board of Education and staff to be physically distanced, and likewise the public gallery seating would be physically distanced. The meeting would be capped at 50 attendees, including the Board and staff as per the existing PHO requirements. This would result in there being capacity for 26 members of the public. We could reserve seating for partner group representatives, but this is a limiting factor. In order to increase access to the public, staff who are not presenting at the meeting could be asked not to attend the meeting.

Given the PHO contract tracing protocols, all visitors, including Trustees, would have to complete and provide staff with a COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire, prior to entering the facility. A downside to this option is that it does not allow for the inclusion of any individuals who cannot attend a meeting in person. It is important that our meeting format provides accessibility equity for public engagement.

Option #3 – All Participants On-Site, Public in the room, online streaming

The final option for meetings, would be to create a hybrid of in-person attendance and online streaming of the meeting. This option will have Trustees and limited staff attending meetings in person at the Winslow Centre gym. For those Trustees and staff who are unable to attend the meeting in person, there will be an online component, which would also allow for public engagement.

Through Microsoft TEAMS Live, it is possible to use one webcam/laptop to film the entire Board table in the Winslow gym in one frame, have other meeting participants located at home or in their offices, and have them shown on the same screen for the public consuming the meeting. A screen would be positioned in front of the Trustee table as well as projected to the audience to show all active participant (live and online) simultaneously. However, while it is possible to connect the Trustee microphone system to Teams for broadcast, it would also be necessary for the live participants to hear the stream in order to include those Trustees and staff who cannot be present. This requirement would, with almost certainty, create sound feedback challenges due to the size and nature of the Winslow gym combined with a slight time delay between the live and online sound stream. The district will need to engage an AV consultant to propose solutions to this problem before costs associated with this approach could be finalized.

It is also important to note that, in this scenario, each individual camera shows as a single frame to the meeting viewer. This means that while we can prioritize the overall board table camera as the ‘main presenter’, Trustees participating off-site would each have their own individual frame while live Trustees would always be shown as a table group.