



Choice School Policy Manual

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY S-30

Policy Statement

In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, several statutory authorities in BC have issued health and safety requirements for schools that must be followed. All Boards of Education or independent school authorities must have a Health and Safety Plan that addresses all the requirements in the following guidelines.

The School must prepare and have on site a WorkSafe BC Safety Plan. This plan must be shared with all staff. This policy must also be provided for staff prior to the commencement of school opening and/or reviewed after a shut down when re-opening is anticipated.

Choice School is committed to ensuring the health and safety of students and staff in the event of a serious health crisis such as an epidemic or pandemic. Following the guidelines and protocols provided by the *BC Ministry of Health, The BC Center for Disease Control (BCCDC)*, the *Ministry of Education and Worksafe BC* and under the directions of the *Public Health Officer (PHO)*, and the *School Act*, the following policy outlines the procedures and protocols established by Choice School in accordance with the guidance cited above to ensure the well-being of those who work at and attend the School.

Government Definition of Responsibilities and Authorities

A Board of Education or an independent school authority has the authority to close a school on a required day(s) of instruction if it believes the health or safety of students is endangered. If a teacher or staff member suspect a student is showing symptoms of a communicable disease that could endanger others at the school, they may report this to the local public health officer, and may ask that the student stay home from school, until a certificate is received from their doctor permitting them to attend. Boards and independent authorities can also require staff who are suffering from a communicable disease to be absent from work until they can provide a certificate from their doctor permitting them to return to work. In the event that a student is excluded from attending school due to health reasons, the board or independent school authority will continue to provide an educational program to the student.

Government Defined Guidelines for Schools

Should students or staff have common-cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms they must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider, and tested for COVID-19. When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider. Self-isolation is also advised for those who are considered in close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness. The following guidelines are provided by the Ministry of Education.

Personal Measures Guidelines for Schools

- All students and staff who 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 of COVID-19 must stay home and self-isolate, including children of essential workers who are ill.



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- Parent and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza or Covid-19 or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school.
- School administrators must ensure school staff are aware of their responsibility to assess themselves daily for signs or symptoms of common cold, influenza or Covid-19 before coming to school.
- Those unsure if they or a student should self isolate, will be directed to use the *BC COVID-19 Self-assessment Tool*. <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves are not needed.
- Under direction of the Public Health Office of BC and mandate from the Ministry of Education, masks are mandatory for all students and staff in BC schools while in the school building.
- These guidelines may be amended to respond to an increased risk of transmission. If required, personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided to teachers through existing WorkSafe processes. As law currently provides, teachers who are immune compromised, have underlying conditions that put them at greater risk, recovering from or receiving treatment for cancer, age 60 or older, will be accommodated.

Environmental Measures Guidelines for Schools

1. Cleaning and Disinfection – regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19.
This includes:
 - General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises once a day
 - Frequently touched shared surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day,
 - Common commercially available detergents and disinfectant products should be used closely following the instructions on the label,
 - Items that are not easily cleaned should be removed or limited,
 - Garbage containers must be emptied once a day,
 - Disposable gloves must be used when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, or urine),
 - Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves and practice good protocol for removing gloves,
 - Washrooms must be cleaned twice a day using the ‘high-touch’ surface area protocols,
 - Cleaning supplies must be provided for commonly used materials and devices that are used for the delivery of education such as photocopiers, phones, computers.

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

Administrative Measures Guidelines for Schools



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1. Physical Distancing

Physical distancing, maintaining a distance of 2 metres between 2 or more people, is difficult in a school setting particularly with younger students. It is reasonable to establish different expectations for varying ages and activities. The following distancing strategies should be implemented and supported where possible:

- Avoid close greetings (e.g. hugs, handshakes),
- The number of students in a space should not exceed the capacity of the space for safe distancing.
- Drop off and pick up times should be staggered,
- Recess/snack, lunch and class transition times should be staggered,
- Students should be outside more frequently,
- Encourage individual activities to create more space between students and staff,
- Create flow paths to manage the flow of people in common areas including bathrooms and hallways,
- Minimize assemblies and other school-wide events and they should be held virtually to limit the presence of parents, caregivers, and other non-staff adults from entering the school,
- School should not be used for community events unless determined essential by the independent school authority.

Choice School Protocols and Procedures in Response to Government Guidelines for Operating under COVID-19

The following are Choice School’s Health and Safety Plan protocols and procedures in response to the particular issues related to COVID-19. This policy is in addition to current Choice School policies *S-4, Health and Safety, S-5 Emergency Crisis Management, and S-22 Visitors to the School.*

Procedure for Entry to the School Grounds

- Students will be dropped off at the gate from the driveway to the school at an assigned time to stagger entry.
- Parents and care givers are required to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza or Covid-19 before sending them to school
- A staff member will meet students at the gate and parents/caregivers will be asked to confirm that their child is not demonstrating any of the following symptoms before entering the school:

- Running a temperature
- Coughing
- Sneezing*
- Has a runny nose*
- Body aches
- Or other respiratory disease

*These symptoms may be associated with seasonal allergies. If your child displays these symptoms, please have them assessed by their family doctor or nurse practitioner to confirm these symptoms are allergy related. Once cleared by a doctor, please inform a staff member that this the case with your child.

Should a person in their home have a confirmed case of COVID-19, the student must remain at home.



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- At any time during the day, should your child exhibit any of the above symptoms or give staff indications that they feel sick, your child will be isolated, and you will be required to pick your child up immediately.
- After school, students will have a reserved time for pick up. A staff member will have the student waiting at the gate at the assigned time.

Entry to the school buildings

- A staff member will guide students from the gate, around the outside of the school, to the west entry of the gym.
- All entry and exit from the school will be through the gym.
- Students will change into their inside shoes and leave outside shoes, backpacks, outerwear, and lunches in the gym.
- Nothing from outside the school will be allowed in the classrooms.

While students are at the school:

- All food sent to the school must be ready to eat and does not need heating or to be kept cool and the proper utensils are with the food. A personal drinking bottle is essential as there is no provision for use of cups or utensils at the school.
- Students are NOT to share food, drinks, or utensils with others.
- No personal toys, stuffys, or games may be brought to school.

Practising hand hygiene

- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the school entrance so everyone can perform hand hygiene when they enter and throughout the day.
- While at school, staff will review procedures for diligent hand hygiene - washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Reminders concerning hand washing and bathroom protocols will be posted through out the school, brought to students' attention frequently and actions monitored by staff.
- Additional hand hygiene opportunities should be incorporated into the daily schedule
- Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed

Respiratory etiquette

- While at school, staff will be reviewing the procedures for respiratory etiquette.
- Staff will demonstrate and practise with your children how to cough or sneeze into their elbow, a sleeve or using a tissue.
- Staff will stress that students should not touch, eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Masks are not required but may be worn. Generally, children tend to play with masks, touching their face which reduces their effectiveness. Children who choose to attend wearing masks will be responsible for proper wearing and handling of their masks - for safety and health reasons, staff should not handle student's masks.

Social distancing guidelines

- Social distancing directions and signs have been marked and posted in hallways, bathrooms, and classrooms and staff will remind and direct students frequently.



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- Traffic flows will be managed to limit the number of people in common areas, including hallways.
- Students will be reminded about ‘keeping their hands to themselves’.
- Break times and times for eating and outside play will be staggered and supervised by staff following distancing guidelines. The amount of time outside will be increased and include instructional time where possible.
- Primary children will have different break and outside times from Intermediate and Middle School Students to reduce the number of students out of classrooms at any one time.
- Desk and table formations inside instructional areas are designed to provide for the requirements for distancing and are labelled so each student returns to and uses their desk and the learning materials provided for them.
- Students will work primarily with a small group of staff to minimize the number of different personal contacts.