

Page 01 of 26 to/à Page 24 of 26

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Fw: Deputy Minister's Special Update - August 24, 2021

From: MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
To: Carling, Emma EDUC:EX <Emma.Carling@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: September 14, 2021 2:50:47 PM PDT
Attachments: image001.png, image002.jpg

From: Andre Tremblay <andre.tremblay@gov.ab.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 9:54 PM
To: MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX
Cc: Kindy Joseph
Subject: RE: Deputy Minister's Special Update - August 24, 2021

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Thanks for sharing this Scott.

Classification: Protected A

From: MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 1:54 PM
To: Andre Tremblay <andre.tremblay@gov.ab.ca>
Cc: Kindy Joseph <kindy.joseph@gov.ab.ca>
Subject: FW: Deputy Minister's Special Update - August 24, 2021

CAUTION: This email has been sent from an external source. Treat hyperlinks and attachments in this email with care.

Our specific guidelines for this year
Major announcement is masks grade 4 -12, all other requirements similar to what we announced in June
Also, province-wide mandate for masks in all indoor public spaces.
Scott

From: EDUC Stakeholder Engagement EDUC:EX <EDUC.Stakeholder.Engagement@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 12:01 PM
Subject: Deputy Minister's Special Update - August 24, 2021

Deputy Minister's Bulletin
Ministry of Education



Special Update – August 24, 2021

FOR INFO, SUPERINTENDENTS: Back to School Announcement – Earlier today, Education Minister Jennifer Whiteside and Dr. Bonnie Henry [announced](#) that B.C. K-12 students will return to school for full time, in person instruction in September. To ensure a healthy and safe return to school, updates have been made to the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (in alignment with the [BCCDC](#)

[COVID-19 Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools](#)), including the authority for medical health officers to introduce additional regional measures specific to individual schools or school districts where community transmission rates are higher. Masks will also continue to be required in all indoor spaces for all K-12 staff, visitors and students in grades 4 to 12 in schools and on school buses. School district administrators should refer to the updated [K-12 Education Recovery Plan](#) for direction to deliver education programs and supports this school year. The [COVID-19 Protocols for School & District Administrators and Staff](#) have also been updated to provide the latest guidance for managing illness and exposures at school.

Today Dr. Henry also announced an upcoming Provincial Health Officer Order re-instating masks in indoor public spaces. This Order is expected to come into place tomorrow and will address mask wearing in indoor spaces such as grocery stores, retail centres, recreation centres and offices where public services are provided. More information will be made available over the next few days.

[Yesterday's announcement](#) regarding the requirement for proof of vaccination to access certain businesses and events does not apply to K-12 schools (public and independent) and before-and-after school programs as these are covered by specific guidelines for school and child care settings. The Ministry is working with public health officials to clarify how the measures will apply to gatherings and events in K-12 schools attended by parents, families and the public (e.g. theatres, concerts). More information will be provided on this in the near future.

D. Scott MacDonald
Deputy Minister
B.C. Ministry of Education
250-387-2026
DM.Education@gov.bc.ca



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Director, Sector Policy and Performance Branch, Ministry of Education
PO Box 9153 STN PROV GOV
Victoria, BC, V8W 9H1
educ.stakeholder.engagement@gov.bc.ca

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FW: EP Back to School announcement for health and safety guidelines - August 2021

From: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>, Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 17, 2021 2:19:16 PM PDT
Attachments: EP Back to School announcement for health and safety guidelines - August 2021.docx

Hi Will and Keefer

Chandler was looking for EP for Back to School. Can you look this over and let us know if this good to share?

Meribeth

Event Plan

Event Title:

Date: August 24, 25 or 26, 2021 Time: 9:30 a.m. TBC	Media Market: Provincial
Location: Livestreamed virtual event on all government channels, broadcast from the Legislature studio.	English Media Spokesperson: Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education
	Multicultural Media Spokesperson: N/A

THE EVENT

EVENT: Back-to-school update on health and safety guidelines for 2021/22 school year

WHO'S ORGANIZING? GCPE Education and GCPE Events

KEY CONTACTS: GCPE Events: Elena Banfield, 604-842-0984 (Zoom), Katie Wrona (studio), 250-213-1817
Ministry of Education: Sean Leslie, Communications Director, (250) 893-4403
GPCE Media Relations: Tara Gostelow, 250-893-7136

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Speakers: Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education & Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer (PHO)

<i>Time</i>	Event Itinerary
9 a.m.	Pre-brief with Elena Banfield Location: Events Studio, B.C. Legislature In-person: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education• Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer (PHO)
9:25 a.m.	Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside and Dr. Bonnie Henry are led to speaking area of the Events Studio and positioned next to microphone ensuring physical distance.

9:30 a.m.	Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside Makes announcement about the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to school overview including full-time in-class instruction • Return of meal programs and extracurricular activities • No learning groups or cohorts • Minister will introduce Dr. Bonnie Henry to speak about masks, vaccinations and BCCDC guidelines
9:39 a.m.	Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer (PHO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the provincial mask mandate for the upcoming school year and speak to the importance of vaccinations and vaccination rates in B.C. • Outline timelines for vaccinations for children under 12 • Promote health authority clinics and the next "Walk-in Wednesday" which will be aligned with back-to-school
9:52 a.m.	Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks Dr. Bonnie Henry for her remarks and asks for media questions.
9:52 a.m. to 10:10 a.m.	Media questions for Jennifer Whiteside and Dr. Bonnie Henry.
10:10 a.m.	End of questions and event.

BTS Announcement-update

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>, McCrea, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.McCrea@gov.bc.ca>, Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>, Beddall, Scott EDUC:EX <Scott.Beddall@gov.bc.ca>, Charlton, Julie EDUC:EX <Julie.Charlton@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 18, 2021 12:18:23 PM PDT

Hello, sending this to the whole group at once, hope that's okay.

Just wrapped up a call with GCPE HQ, Health, MCFD, AEST and the PO re: various announcements that must be made in the next week.

Per Health, there is still no final decision from the PHO on a mask mandate for K-12 and PSI's, however, it's looking like that's where DBH will land.

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EDUC is being asked to lead our own back to school announcement early next week, with ***support*** from health – I have again specifically asked for Dr. Henry to be a part of that announcement. We're also being asked by GCPE HQ on behalf of Dr. Ballem's Immunize BC team to include in our announcement a "walk in Wednesday" vaccination drive for 12-18 year old's.

We will hold the pen on the news release – Matt has a draft in the works. We will write it on the assumption that there will be a mask mandate. I'm thinking Tuesday, August 24th?

Two other notes – I'm hearing the restrictions imposed on the Central Okanagan due to COVID will be expanded to the entire Interior Health Authority.

And PJH will announce a "vaccine passport" on Friday – a new app that people will have to use to access gyms, bars, theatres, restaurants and a host of other non-essential activities. It will of course not apply to essential public services such as health and education.

Happy to chat – thank you.

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Education
(250) 356-8485(o)
(250) 893-4403(m)

FW: Draft Communication Materials - Back to School announcement for health and safety

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.Whiteside@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Finn, Heather GCPE:EX <Heather.Finn@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 11:39:52 AM PDT
Attachments: Key Messages - Back to School 2021.docx, NR Back to school health and safety guidelines for K12 - August 19 945pm DRAFT.docx, QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 20 850am DRAFT.docx

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 11:17 AM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; McCrea, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.McCrea@gov.bc.ca>; Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>; Beddall, Scott EDUC:EX <Scott.Beddall@gov.bc.ca>; Charlton, Julie EDUC:EX <Julie.Charlton@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Draft Communication Materials - Back to School announcement for health and safety

Sharing these drafts in advance of the meeting. Please note these are written on the assumption the mask mandate will be approved. Cloe and Scott B. have not yet reviewed, just FYI.

Thanks.

Sean

From: Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 11:12 AM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Draft Communication Materials - Back to School announcement for health and safety

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RE: URGENT - Tuesday's Announcement

From: Baxter, Breanne EDUC:EX <Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 3:19:27 PM PDT

Ok perf, done!

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 3:07 PM
To: Baxter, Breanne EDUC:EX <Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: URGENT - Tuesday's Announcement

She's correct, it's at 10am. Lets pop the pre-brief in for 830-930 yeah!

From: Baxter, Breanne EDUC:EX <Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca> >
Sent: August 20, 2021 3:06 PM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca <mailto:William.Beale@gov.bc.ca> >
Subject: FW: URGENT - Tuesday's Announcement
Importance: High

And another one!

We have the announcement scheduled for 8:30 on Tuesday morning but Kathleen mentions below that it will be at 10:00?

Let me know if I should put the pre-brief in the 8:30-9:30 time slot and I can coordinate with Minister Kang's office from there!

Thanks Will,

Breanne

From: Fleurant, Kathleen AEST:EX <Kathleen.Fleurant@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Kathleen.Fleurant@gov.bc.ca> >
Sent: August 20, 2021 2:55 PM
To: Baxter, Breanne EDUC:EX <Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Breanne.Baxter@gov.bc.ca> >
Cc: Waters, Leah EDUC:EX <Leah.Waters@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Leah.Waters@gov.bc.ca> >; Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca <mailto:William.Beale@gov.bc.ca> >; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca> >
Subject: URGENT - Tuesday's Announcement
Importance: High

Hi Breanne,

I am not sure who to reach out to, everyone looks to be away in your office. I've just been informed that Minister Kang will be taking part in your Minister's announcement on Tuesday, August 24th in Victoria at 10:00am and I've been asked to reach out to schedule a pre-brief before the announcement on Tuesday morning with both Minister Whiteside and Minister Kang.

Are you able to assist with this request?

Kathleen Fleurant | Administrative Coordinator
Honourable Anne Kang's Office | Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training
Parliament Buildings
Ph: 778-974-5943
e: Kathleen.Fleurant@gov.bc.ca <mailto:Kathleen.Fleurant@gov.bc.ca>

As of May 4, 2020 amendments to the Lobbyists Transparency Act has come into force. You must ensure that you are in compliance with the registration requirements under the Act. The Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists can assist you to determine if you are in compliance, please contact the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists at <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/>

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BTS DRAFT Materials

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Purdy, Sheila EDUC:EX <Sheila.Purdy@gov.bc.ca>, Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>, Bawa, Reg R EDUC:EX <Reg.Bawa@gov.bc.ca>, Bertrand, Francois EDUC:EX <Francois.Bertrand@gov.bc.ca>, Beddall, Scott EDUC:EX <Scott.Beddall@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 10:01:28 PM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 20 10p DRAFT.docx, Key Messages - Back to School 2021 (003).docx, NR Back to school health and safety guidelines for K12 - August 20 9pm DRAFT.docx

Hello, sorry to send so late on a Friday but wanted these in your respective inboxes for tomorrow morning. And it is TECHNICALLY still before end-of-day, so I'm absolutely meeting the Deputy's deadline. Please note I have sent these separately for factual review by Cloe, Reg, Francois and Scott B. We'll also share with Health GCPE for quote approvals and fact checks. Happy to discuss at any point this weekend, otherwise, chat Sunday – cheers!

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Education
(250) 356-8485(o)
(250) 893-4403(m)

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Draft Documents

From: MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.Whiteside@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>, Beddall, Scott EDUC:EX <Scott.Beddall@gov.bc.ca>, Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>, Purdy, Sheila EDUC:EX <Sheila.Purdy@gov.bc.ca>, Charlton, Julie EDUC:EX <Julie.Charlton@gov.bc.ca>, Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 20, 2021 10:06:44 PM PDT
Attachments: DRAFT - Public Health Guidance K-12 Schools - August 20.docx, Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings - DRAFT - August 20, 2021.docx, COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators and Staff - DRAFT - August 20, 2021.docx, K-12 Education Recovery Plan - DRAFT - Aug 20, 2021.docx

Minister, et al,

Here are the current draft documents for review over the weekend and then discussion on Sunday at 7:00 pm.

1. **K-12 Education Recovery Plan** – updates largely complete and requires one clarification from BCCPAC.
2. COVID-19 Communicable Disease **Guidelines for K-12** (formerly the K-12 Health & Safety Guidelines) – working through final feedback from partner. Some sections may require further updates.
3. COVID-19 Protocol **Guide for Administrators and Staff** – updates largely complete and requires a final review with BCCDC.
4. **BCCDC Public Health Guidance for K-12** – updates largely complete except for additional edits

Scott

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Re: Monday 9:15 briefing start time including education

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 22, 2021 6:20:18 PM PDT

Well. No. Sort of. MAK can go last.

Adrian is going to cover most of our stuff when it comes to the passport.

Michael Snoddon
Senior Ministerial Advisor
Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training
cell: 250-818-1035
email: michael.snoddon@gov.bc.ca

On Aug 22, 2021, at 5:49 PM, Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Do you have a preference for order of briefing?

Begin forwarded message:

From: "van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX" <Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca>
Date: August 22, 2021 at 2:23:36 PM PDT
To: "Moran, Roseanne LASS:EX" <Roseanne.Moran@leg.bc.ca>
Cc: "Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX" <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>, "Beale, William EDUC:EX" <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Monday 9:15 briefing start time including education

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 22, 2021, at 12:14 PM, Moran, Roseanne
<Roseanne.Moran@leg.bc.ca> wrote:

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Hi there. I have had a couple of requests the K-12 and AEST be up first – so hoping that can happen. Thinking we give those items 30 minutes and Min Dix 45? Thx team.

From: van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 22, 2021 9:49 AM
To: Moran, Roseanne <Roseanne.Moran@leg.bc.ca>
Cc: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>; Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Monday 9:15 briefing start time including education

Thx

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 22, 2021, at 9:48 AM, Moran, Roseanne
<Roseanne.Moran@leg.bc.ca> wrote:

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi there. Hoping that between you three you can sort out the order of presentations tomorrow morning. Thanks. Roseanne.

From: Moran, Roseanne <Roseanne.Moran@leg.bc.ca>
Sent: August 22, 2021 9:46 AM
To: NDP MLAs - PRIVATE & Exec Director <NDPMLAs-PRIVATE-ExecDirector@leg.bc.ca>
Cc: NDP Management Staff
<NDPManagementStaff@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: Monday 9:15 briefing start time including education

Hi all. Tomorrow morning's briefing will now include Ministers Kang and Whiteside as well as Minister Dix to brief on upcoming announcements. Calendars will be updated first thing Monday. Thanks.

From: Moran, Roseanne
Sent: August 20, 2021 2:25 PM
To: NDP MLAs - PRIVATE & Exec Director <NDPMLAs-PRIVATE-ExecDirector@leg.bc.ca>
Cc: NDP Management Staff
<NDPManagementStaff@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: Briefings week of August 23

Hi everyone. As this week draws to a close, a reminder that while we do not have a caucus meeting booked next week, we have three briefings set up for caucus. Information should be in your calendars (health one just being sent out now.) The briefings are optional but you are encouraged to attend if you can. Thanks and have good weekends.

Monday, August 23 – 9:30 to 10:30 – Minister Dix will briefing on government's plans for proof of vaccination
Wednesday, August 25 – 11 am – Minister Heyman on the IPCC report and Clean BC

Thursday, August 26 – 1 pm with Minister Dean – giving an update on programs and issues in Children & Family Development.

Roseanne Moran | Executive Director | New Democrat BC Government Caucus

T: 778-835-7537 E: roseanne.moran@leg.bc.ca

Fwd: Updated docs

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.Whiteside@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 22, 2021 6:57:58 PM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 22 6pm_DRAFT.docx, NR Back to school health and safety guidelines for K12 - August 22_6pm DRAFT.docx

Updated

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX" <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Date: August 22, 2021 at 6:14:28 PM PDT
To: "Beale, William EDUC:EX" <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, "MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX" <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX" <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, "Silver, Matt GCPE:EX" <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>, "Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX" <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, "Purdy, Sheila EDUC:EX" <Sheila.Purdy@gov.bc.ca>, "Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX" <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>, "Beddall, Scott EDUC:EX" <Scott.Beddall@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Updated docs

These are the latest versions of both the NR and QA document. Speaking notes will come separately. Some comments have been left embedded in the documents as they require further discussion or fact checking.

We will incorporate further edits from MJW or others on the 7pm call – thanks!

Sean Leslie
Communications Director
Ministry of Education
(250) 356-8485(o)
(250) 893-4403(m)

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FW: Updated NR/QA

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
To: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 12:53:56 PM PDT
Attachments: NR Back to school health and safety guidelines for K12 - August 23_10a DRAFT.docx, QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_11am DRAFT.docx

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 11:58 AM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Updated NR/QA

Hello, updated NR and QA attached. Note I have tried to address MJW's comments in the NR but beefing up her quote. We still have some outstanding approvals – TB and DBH quote.

I've reordered the QA (and numbered the questions) in hopes of making the information more accessible for MJW – have moved down less likely questions to the bottom.

Matt has just received edits to the speaking notes from the DM and is incorporating those, so will come in a separate email ASAP.

As for infographic – stay tuned, we are only going to be able to get a fact sheet turned around for tomorrow as a full, pretty infographic will take several days to produce.

Note we are still waiting for your approval on the Media Advisory – lots of time, s.13

s.13

Thanks!

Sean

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FW: For Approval - Media Advisory - Back to School announcement, August 24

From: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 1:26:43 PM PDT

Adding Anna!

From: Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: August 23, 2021 1:09 PM

To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Finn, Heather GCPE:EX <Heather.Finn@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>; Machell, Aileen GCPE:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: RE: For Approval - Media Advisory - Back to School announcement, August 24

Hi Will and Keefer – just want to make sure you're good with the media advisory, which is scheduled to go out at 2:40 p.m. provincewide.

AEST has approved. I checked with Health and they will get back to us soon.

Thanks,
Matt

From: Silver, Matt GCPE:EX

Sent: August 23, 2021 9:50 AM

To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Finn, Heather GCPE:EX <Heather.Finn@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: For Approval - Media Advisory - Back to School announcement, August 24

Importance: High

Hi all, draft media advisory is attached for your approval.

We've shared with AEST and Health; waiting to hear back – need to get this out the door asap today.

Thanks, Matt

=====

August 23, 2021

MEDIA ADVISORY – Ministry of Education

VICTORIA – Media are invited to join Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education; Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training and Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, for an update on health and safety measures for K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions in B.C. for the 2021-22 school year.

Event Date: Tuesday, August 24, 2021

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Livestream with a sign language interpreter will be available:

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BCProvincialGovernment/>

On Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BCGovNews?s=20>

On YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ProvinceofBC>

Note: In line with the BC Centre for Disease Control's physical distancing guidelines, media must call in rather than attend in person.

Special instructions: Participants are requested to dial in 20 minutes prior to the announcement. Media are asked to have the participant pass code ready when they dial in to save time. Failure to do this may mean a delay in you or others joining the call.

Media dial-in information:

Phone Number: 1-888-892-3255

Identification Passcode: 291552

Contact:

Ministry of Education

Government Communications and Public Engagement

250 356-5963

FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.Whiteside@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 1:56:54 PM PDT
Attachments: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM.docx

Please see the latest version of the SNs

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 1:24 PM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM

Hi please see latest version of speaking notes for tomorrow. We still have one comment embedded as waiting for clarity from health on community notification procedures – will advise ASAP.

Thanks

Sean

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

Media Request: CKNW/Back to School Interview

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, McKenzie, Scott GCPE:EX <scott.1.mckenzie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 4:39:28 PM PDT

And here's the request all official-like, for your consideration.

Thanks.

Sean

Reporter

Alan Regan, Producer
CKNW AM 980
alan@cknw.com
604-331-2770 c: 778-957-1233

Deadline ASAP

Request

Interview request for Minister Whiteside to join host Jas Johal on CKNW at 3:05pm, August 24th, re: back to school announcement. Interview would run about 8 minutes.

Recommendation

Background

Updated QAs for COs

From: Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 4:48:54 PM PDT
Attachments: Draft QAs for COs.docx

Heyo,

Waiting on final QAs but I went through the last edit and scrubbed some lines that I didn't think were relevant. Some that I didn't think were appropriate but were still possibly relevant I crossed out and left a comment. Do you want to go through and just do some further cleaning?

Once we get finalized QAs I'll cross-reference and make sure all the finalized language matches up.

Keefer Pelech (*he/him*)
Executive Assistant to
Hon. Jennifer Whiteside
Minister of Education
778-679-7426

Page 197 of 373 to/à Page 207 of 373

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s.13

Fwd: Revised KMQA

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 5:29:41 PM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_11am DRAFT-MO Edits
th.docx

Anna

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Olson, Michael GCPE:EX" <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Date: August 23, 2021 at 5:16:52 PM PDT
To: "Beale, William EDUC:EX" <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, "Lindsay-Baugh, Anna
EDUC:EX" <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Revised KMQA

With Tim's additional edits. I used track changes so you can see where the changes are, and approve as you go through.

Michael Olson
Issues Manager
(250) 893-2046

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s.13

Fwd: Revised KMQA

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Nicholls, Cloe EDUC:EX <Cloe.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca>, McCrea, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.McCrea@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 5:53:17 PM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_11am DRAFT-MO Edits th.docx

Edited QA attached. It's what the Minister is looking at now.

Anna

Begin forwarded message:

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s.13

FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX <Jennifer.Whiteside@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 9:02:19 PM PDT
Attachments: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm.docx

Hi Minister,

Updated speaking notes from Sean are attached. Some notes from him in the email as well.

Cheers,
Anna

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 8:44 PM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>; MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>; Purdy, Sheila EDUC:EX <Sheila.Purdy@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm
Importance: High

Hi, revised SN's attached – hope I caught all of MJW's changes, was typing furiously. I've also updated the KM's to match your version, Will.

Of note there is still a place holder in the attached re: the examples Minister is looking for from Surrey, Kelowna et al, if they are in fact needed for the speech.

In the alternative, could add more from the below, pulled from the QA?

I'm heading home but available on cell, cheers.

Sean

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s.13

QA draft formatted

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 9:08:15 PM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_ DRAFT-MO clean
9pm.docx

Formatting updated for QA, attached.

Cheers,
Anna

--

Anna Lindsay-Baugh (*she/her*)
Ministerial Advisor to
Hon. Jennifer Whiteside
Minister of Education
e: anna.lindsaybaugh@gov.bc.ca | p: 778-677-4091

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 8:02:30 AM PDT
Attachments: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm.docx

Good morning, apologies, didn't see this last night – the DM made a few tiny word smithing changes to the notes. I'm not sure they make much difference – have left track changes on, let me know if you want clean copy. Also will you add in any of the other HVAC stuff or did you need me to?

From: MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 10:13 PM
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>; Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm

Three minor comments – track changes

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s.13

QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 24_ DRAFT-MO 8am

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Lindsay-Baugh, Anna
EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX
<Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX
<Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, Silver, Matt
GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 8:20:03 AM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 24_ DRAFT-MO 8am.docx
Good morning have updated the Q with the answer below – Cloe is checking to see if there's any update this morning.
Sean

s.13

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s.13

BCCDC: Final: Guidance and key messages

From: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>, Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 8:52:07 AM PDT
Attachments: KM_Back_to_school_k-12_08242021_final.pdf, FINAL - Public Health Guidance K-12 Schools - August 24.pdf

FYI

BCCDC finals on guidance and KMs. Their site will go live at 9:30 too.

Mb

Back to School: K-12 Guidance

August 24, 2021

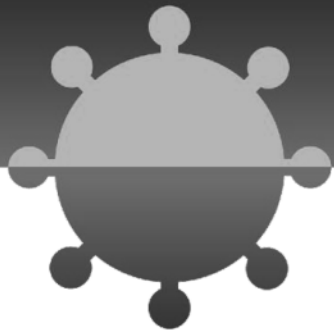
BACKGROUND

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Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools

August 24, 2021

Key Messages

- This document outlines the prevention measures recommended for public, independent, and First Nations K-12 schools in B.C. to reduce the risk of communicable diseases, including COVID-19, in K-12 schools.
- Schools continue to be considered low-risk settings for COVID-19 transmission, particularly in the context of a highly immunized population.
- Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19. School exposures are more likely in communities with lower vaccination uptake/greater community risk.
- Local Medical Health Officers may recommend regional prevention measures during times of increased community risk.

Introduction

This document provides guidance for educators, administrators, and support staff (hereafter referred to as staff) at public, independent and First Nations Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) schools of what infection prevention and exposure control measures should be implemented during the 2021-22 school year to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19. It also outlines how public health expects to manage COVID-19 cases impacting schools, if and when they occur.

Our experience in B.C. during the 2020-21 school year, which aligned with evidence gathered nationally and internationally, saw schools as lower-risk sites for COVID-19 transmission when infection prevention and exposure control measures (also called prevention measures) were in place. Various surveys, including the COVID-19 SPEAK survey from BCCDC, have reported that school-aged children have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, including worsened wellbeing, more child stress, less connection with friends, less engagement in extracurricular activities and learning impacts. Enabling children to return to closer-to-normal learning, recreational and social activities is an important pandemic recovery action. Both risks and benefits of preventive measures were considered in the development of this guidance. An evidence summary is included as Appendix A.

With the B.C. population highly immunized, there is significantly greater community protection against COVID-19, including against variants of concern detected in B.C. Variants spread the same way as the original COVID-19, which means established prevention measures continue to protect against it. As of when this guidance was published, the



Ministry of
Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

Delta variant was the most commonly detected variant in B.C. While the Delta variant appears to spread more easily, emerging evidence shows it presents the greatest risk to unvaccinated adults, with risk increasing with age. Currently, it does not appear that the Delta variant results in a greater risk of serious outcomes for children. Children continue to be at low risk for serious outcomes from COVID-19, including variants of concern detected in B.C.

With greater community protection against COVID-19, schools can return to closer-to-normal operations, with some prevention measures continuing to be in place to keep schools as lower risk settings for communicable disease transmission. While COVID-19 is present in our communities, there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools and cases amongst students and staff. Because cases in schools reflect those in the community, these are more likely to occur in communities with lower vaccination uptake. However, with most people 12 and older immunized and effective prevention measures in place, exposures are less likely to lead to further transmission. Local public health officials (school medical health officers) consistently monitor cases of COVID-19 in schools and the community and will continue to offer support and guidance.

Public health will continue to review emerging evidence and monitor cases and transmission trends of COVID-19 to determine if actions should be taken to prevent or control spread, including updating this guidance.

The Ministry of Health and BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) fully respect the authority of individual First Nations to make decisions about the operation of First Nations schools in the best interests of their students, schools, and communities. This includes their authority to decide if and how to use this guidance to inform planning and if and how to reopen their schools.

The Ministry of Education works with Indigenous rights holders and K-12 education and health partners to build on public health guidance to establish the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#).

The guidance in this document may not be relevant to distributed learning (including learning in non-traditional settings) or homeschooling. Administrators and leaders for those settings are encouraged to use guidance from this document, as well as guidance issued for other sectors as relevant, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in their unique environments.

BCCDC is the primary source of information about COVID-19 in B.C. Resources on the [BCCDC](#) website can be used to support learning and to respond to questions from school communities.



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Supportive School Environments

Schools can support students to practice personal preventive measures like wearing a non-medical mask when recommended, and regularly practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette by:

- Having staff model these behaviours.
- Sharing reliable information to parents, families, and caregivers. Information and resources are available from BCCDC.
- Promoting them through visual aids like posters.

Schools can also support students to consider and respect others' personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.

Staff and students choosing to practice additional personal prevention measures (e.g., wearing a non-medical mask beyond when it is recommended, wearing a face shield in addition to a non-medical mask, etc.) should be treated with respect.

Schools are encouraged to support student personal practices using positive and inclusive approaches. Schools should avoid punitive measures or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma.

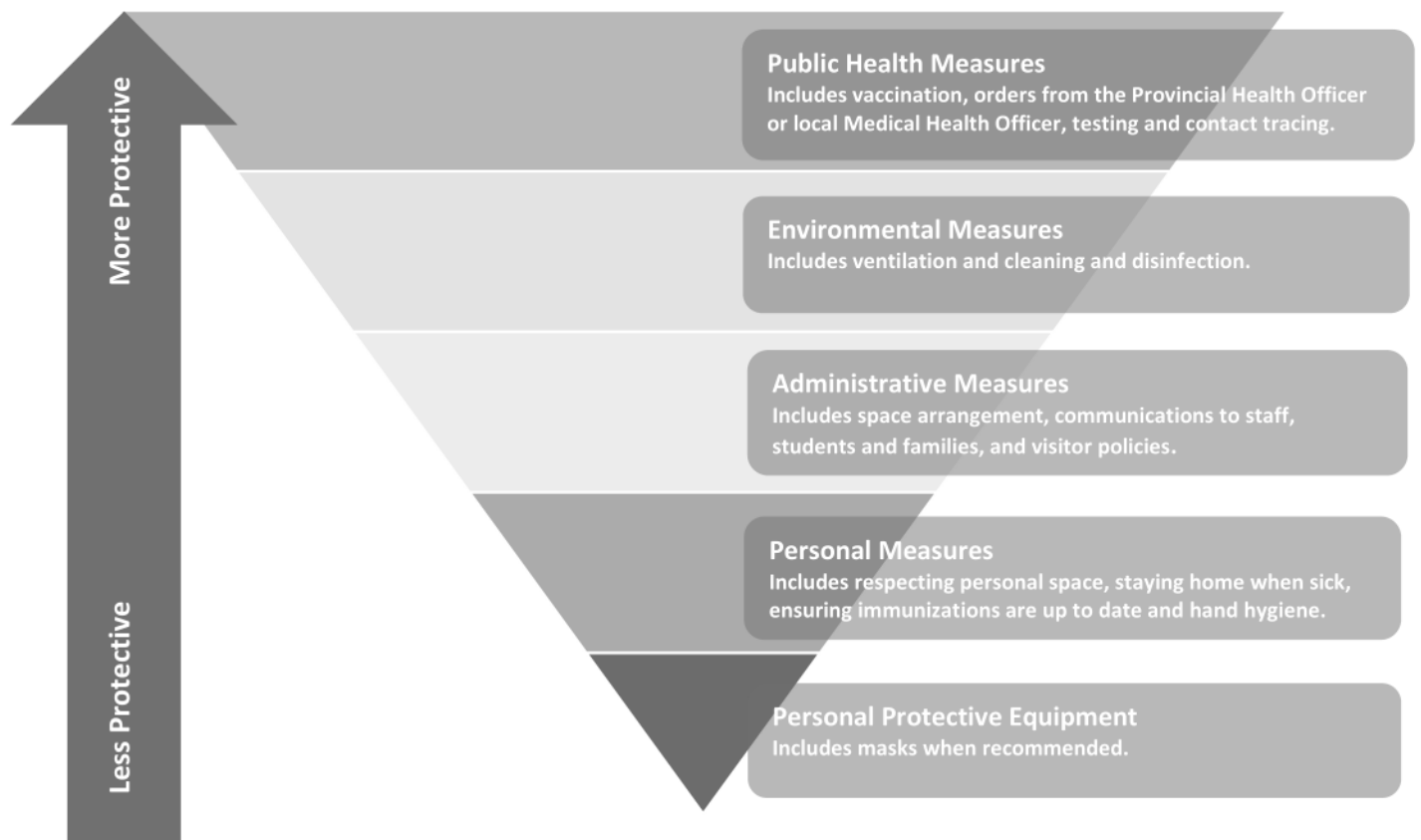


Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures (Prevention Measures)

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

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



Public Health Measures

Vaccines

Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools. Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive 2 doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them – including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated. Both doses are needed to get the most effective protection against serious cases of COVID-19 and provide longer-lasting protection.

The vaccines used in B.C. are highly effective against COVID-19, including among variants of concern. Vaccinated people aged 12 and older tend to have milder illness if they get infected and are also less likely spread COVID-19 than unvaccinated people 12 and older. As of August 22nd, 83% of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 75% had received their second dose. As of August 22nd, approximately 72% of people aged 12-17 had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 58% had received their second dose. Up to date information on vaccinations coverage is available from [BCCDC](#).

People who are not vaccinated are at higher risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. Most COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are now among unvaccinated adults, and are predominantly occurring in communities with lower general vaccination uptake.

While children under 12 are not currently eligible to be vaccinated, they continue to be less likely to get and spread COVID-19 and have a low risk of serious outcomes if they do get COVID-19. It is strongly recommended that adults interacting with children under 12 be fully vaccinated.

Schools are encouraged to share evidence-based information and promote opportunities to be vaccinated in partnership with public health.

While COVID-19 is present in our communities, there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools and cases amongst students and staff. However, with people 12 and older highly immunized, exposures are unlikely to lead to further transmission. Public health considers vaccination status when investigating school exposures. Staff and students who are not at least 14 days past receiving their second dose (i.e., aren't fully immunized) and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-isolate.

Evidence-based immunization information and tools for B.C. residents is available from [BCCDC](#) and [ImmunizeBC](#).



Public Health Case Management

Public health (including the Provincial Health Officer and BC Centre for Disease Control) will continue to offer individual and community guidance and recommendations to manage the risk of COVID-19 in B.C.. Public health will continue to monitor cases of COVID-19 and determine if actions should be taken to prevent or control spread.

Schools should continue to maintain daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors (including itinerant staff, teachers on call, parents/caregivers, and volunteers), and keep accurate class and bus lists to assist with contact tracing if necessary. This includes maintaining attendance records for all school-supported activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips. Daily attendance records should be kept for at least 45 days to assist with contact tracing and retrospective analysis by public health (if needed).

Public health will continue to collaborate with schools and school districts on sharing public health information with staff, students, and families, including providing direction on if and when exposure notifications should be sent.

School Exposures & Notifications

An exposure occurs if a person attends school when they may have been potentially infectious with a communicable disease (e.g. COVID-19) and there is a risk of transmission to others. When a potential exposure at a school is identified, public health will work with the school to understand who may have been exposed and determine what actions should be taken, including identifying if other students or staff have been exposed.

Public health considers vaccination status when investigating school exposures. Staff and students who are not fully immunized and are identified as close contacts are more likely to be asked to self-isolate than those who are fully immunized.

To ensure personal privacy rights are maintained, public health will only disclose a confirmed case of a communicable disease if the person was infectious when they attended school. Public health will only provide the personal information needed to support effective contact tracing.

With the B.C. population highly immunized against COVID-19, public health expects to transition to notification practices that ensure those who are potentially at risk for communicable diseases, such as COVID-19, due to an exposure at school (e.g., those who are close contacts) are directly notified and informed of what subsequent actions they should take (e.g., monitor for symptoms, self-isolate, seek testing, etc.). Public health continues to consider practices for general exposure notifications.

School administrators or staff should not provide notifications to staff or students' families about potential or confirmed communicable diseases cases (including COVID-19) unless the school administrator is directed to do so by the school medical officer. School Administrators are to follow processes outlined in [COVID-19 Protocols for School and District Administrators: Management of Illness and Confirmed Cases.](#)



Schools and districts should contact their local MHO if they are considering closing a school due to operational challenges related to increased absenteeism from staff required to self-isolate, self-reported illness of students and staff, or other factors that may impact the ability of a school to stay open.

Outbreaks and Clusters

A cluster refers to two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 that occur among students and/or staff within a 14-day period, and isolated transmission is suspected or confirmed to have occurred within the school.

An outbreak is when there is sustained, uncontrolled, widespread transmission of COVID-19 within a school, and a Medical Health Officer determines extraordinary public health measures are necessary to stop further transmission in the school or school community.

If a cluster or outbreak occurs, additional measures may be recommended or required by a Medical Health Officer to prevent further transmission of a communicable disease. This may include implementing additional health and safety measures within the school, testing of all potentially exposed individuals or in rare cases, ordering the school to close for a certain amount of time.

Regional Differences and Local Public Health Orders and Recommendations

Medical Health Officers continue to be able to place local Public Health Orders requiring additional health and safety measures beyond this guidance at their own discretion, based on their authority under provincial legislation. These may be put in place during times of increased community transmission of COVID-19, and within communities with low vaccination uptake. They are based on local epidemiology and are proportional to risk.

Local Public Health Orders may be placed for whole regions or communities, or for specific businesses or activities within a health authority region. For example, a health authority may issue a regional Gatherings & Events Order that limits indoor gatherings to a specific number of people or to a specific type of activity. Schools within that region would need to ensure extracurricular and social gatherings and events complied with the Order unless schools were specifically excluded.

For schools, the local Medical Health Officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, for all schools within a health authority region, or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk.

Additional measures are likely to be similar to some of those in place during the 2020-21 school year. For example:

- Limits on gatherings and events,
- Spreading people out as much as possible through different space arrangements, including arranging desk/tables to maximize space between students and avoiding seating arrangements where students directly face one another,
- Incorporating more individual activities and activities that encourage greater space between people, and avoiding activities that require close face-to-face contact,



- Limiting visitors,
- Taking activities outdoors when possible (and weather allows), and
- Recommending increased mask use.

Measures identified will be commensurate with risk, take into consideration specific local context, and seek to minimize operational impacts wherever possible. Cohorts/learning groups are not expected to be an additional prevention measures for regional recommendations.

At their independent discretion, the responsible Medical Health Officer will determine if additional measures are necessary based on information relevant to the school(s), district(s) and/or geographic area under consideration, who a local recommendation or Order applies to, what additional health and safety measures should be implemented, and for how long the additional measures should be in place.

School Communicable Disease Checklist

Schools can use the checklist included as [Appendix B](#) to help build their own communicable disease plan.

Environmental Measures

Ventilation and Air Exchange

Continue to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained as per standards and specifications for ongoing comfort of workers ([Part 4 of OHS Regulation](#)), and that they are working properly. Open windows when the weather permits, if it doesn't impact the functioning of ventilation systems.

When using air conditioners and fans in ventilated spaces, air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to another's. Avoid horizontal cross breezes. Use of portable air conditioners and fans in unventilated spaces with doors and windows closed should be avoided, except when necessary during high or excessive heat events. More information on workplace ventilation and air circulation is available from [WorkSafe BC](#).

Communicable disease prevention measures need to be balanced against other risks, like excessive heat events in warmer months or poor air quality from wildfire smoke. Schools are encouraged to use BCCDC resources, including on [Heat Event Response Planning](#) and [Wildfire Smoke](#) to support planning.

While taking students outside more often is no longer specifically recommended for COVID-19 prevention, it is still encouraged due to its overall health benefits.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g. door handles, hand rails, tap faucets, shared gym equipment, etc.).



Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g. desks used by a few students, lockers, manipulatives) should be cleaned at least 1x/day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices.

Objects made of materials that are not easily cleaned (e.g., foam, playdough, etc.) or typically cleaned intermittently (e.g., fabrics, soft toys, etc.) can continue to be used. They should be cleaned (if possible) according to regular practices.

Textbooks, paper, other paper-based products, laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers do not need to be cleaned and disinfected, or quarantined for any period of time.

Physical Barriers

Physical barriers are no longer recommended for communicable disease prevention.

Administrative Measures

Gatherings & Events

School extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders.

Gatherings and events requiring international travel (e.g., between Canada and the United States) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for international travel and community gatherings and events.

Space Arrangement

In learning environments, schools can return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches. Use all available space. Cohorts/learning groups are no longer recommended. They are also not expected to be used as additional prevention measures for regional recommendations.

In indoor spaces, people should have enough room to carry out the intended activity without involuntarily physical contact with another person. In indoor common spaces (e.g., hallways, cafeterias, etc.), schools may continue to use floor markings and posters to direct traffic flow.

For indoor activities that bring together multiple classes or other groupings of students in close proximity for a prolonged period of time (e.g., school assemblies, multiple classes doing physical activity in a gym), schools should ensure that people are spread out within the available space. This is expected to be achievable within room capacity limits (where applicable).

For breaks and other unstructured time in indoor settings, there should be enough space available to prevent involuntary physical contact.



Taking students outside more often is still encouraged (when the weather allows) due to its overall health benefits.

Staff-Specific Considerations

[WorkSafe BC guidance for workplaces](#) should be used to determine what measures should be in place within staff-only spaces within a school (e.g., break rooms, individual offices) or for non-school spaces operated by a school district (e.g. board offices, maintenance facilities, etc.).

Staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development days, etc.) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for workplace gatherings and events and any related WorkSafe BC guidance.

Visitors

Schools should continue to ensure visitors follow the school's communicable disease plan, including completing a daily health check and not entering the school if they are sick. Schools should continue to keep a list of the date, names, and contact information of all visitors who enter the school for 45 days following their visit.

Curriculum, Programs and Activities (including Extracurricular Activities)

As previously noted, extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including sports and arts events within and between schools) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders.

For music and physical education, schools should continue to implement universal communicable disease prevention practices specific to the activity. For example, equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., water bottles, instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in-between use. Hands should be cleaned before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball).

Local and international field trips should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for local and/or international travel.

Schools should consider guidance provided for overnight camps from the [BCCDC](#) and the [BC Camps Association](#) when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.

Transportation

For school buses, schools can return to regular seating and onloading/offloading practices.

Frequently-touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day and when visibly dirty. These include items touched by larger numbers of people (e.g. door handles, hand rails, etc.). Surfaces touched by fewer people (e.g. seats) should be cleaned 1x/day. Other general cleaning should occur in line with regular practices.



Schools should continue to:

- Encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene and before and after trips and to practice respiratory etiquette as needed,
- Spread passengers out if space is available, and
- Open windows when the weather allows.

All people 12 and older should wear masks on school buses, with exceptions outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section of this document and the additional exception that bus drivers can remove their masks while driving.

Students 9 - 11 are encouraged to wear a mask according to the guidance outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section of this document.

Students' under 9 years of age use of masks should be based on their personal or family/caregivers' choice.

For carpooling, schools should share the following guidance with staff and families:

- Continue to spread out as much as possible,
- Travel with the same people whenever possible,
- Set the vehicle's ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and do not recirculate the air,
- Open the windows when the weather allows,
- Clean hands before and after trips, and
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.

All people 9 and older are encouraged to wear masks while carpooling, with exceptions outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section of this document. Students under 9 years of age mask use should be based on their personal or family/caregivers' choice. Additionally, masks are not suggested if carpooling with members of the same household.

For people taking mass transit (e.g. municipal buses, the SkyTrain, ferries, etc.), hand hygiene should be practiced before and after trips. Riders should follow any other safety guidance (including mask guidance) issued by the relevant transit authority.

Other methods of active transportation (e.g. walking, biking, skateboarding, etc.) should continue to be encouraged wherever possible due to its overall health benefits.

This guidance should be adapted to what is most suitable for modes of transportation not mentioned here.

Food Services

Food services (e.g., meal programs, cafeterias, fundraisers, etc.) can return to regular operational and food safety practices. Effective food safety practices are important for everyone preparing and distributing food. [FOODSAFE Level 1](#) covers important food safety and worker safety information including foodborne illness, receiving and storing food, preparing food, serving food, and cleaning and sanitizing. It is a helpful resource for those seeking education and training on food safety practices.



Students involved in food preparation and distribution should be taught and supported to practice relevant food safety practices, including hand hygiene.

Community Use of Schools

Schools can continue to allow community use of school facilities. Community use should be aligned with related public health guidance, recommendations, and Orders.

Water Stations & Fountains

Limiting the use of water fountains is no longer recommended. Schools should continue to clean and disinfect water fountains as a frequently touched surface and encourage hand hygiene before and after use. Schools should ensure non-drinkable (non-potable) water sources are not used for drinking water, and that these sources are labelled as such ([Part 4 of OHS Regulation](#)). More information is available from WorkSafe BC.

This guidance is in addition to the Ministry of Education policy on [Testing Lead Content in Drinking Water of School Facilities](#). The Ministry of Health has also issued [Guidelines on Evaluating and Mitigating Lead in Drinking Water Supplies, Schools, Daycares and Other Buildings](#)

Personal Items & School Supplies

Students and staff can continue to bring personal items and school supplies to school for their own use.

Personal Measures

Daily Health Check

School administrators should ensure that staff, other adults entering the school, parents, caregivers and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick. School administrators can support this practice by regularly communicating the importance of everyone doing a **daily health check**.

A daily health check means a person checking daily to ensure they (or their child) are not experiencing any symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) before coming to school. Daily health checks can be supported by the BCCDC resource on [when to get tested for COVID-19](#) or the Ministry of Education's [K-12 Health Check](#). Schools do not need to confirm a daily health check has been done or monitor students and staff for symptoms of illness.

Nobody should come to school if they are sick or otherwise directed to self-isolate by public health.



Symptoms Develop at School

If a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness at school:

1. Move the person to a space that is comfortable, safe, and supervised (if necessary). This can be a separate location (e.g. another room, a common space, or outdoors if weather allows), or in the same space (e.g. a classroom) if the person can consistently be 2-metres away from others.
2. Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible (if applicable).
3. If the ill person requires assistance, where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance. If not possible, staff should wear a mask if available and tolerated.
4. Provide the person with a mask (if available and tolerated) or tissues if they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms (to cover their coughs or sneezes). Masks should not be worn if the person has gastrointestinal symptoms (e.g. is at risk of vomiting). Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.
5. Avoid touching the person's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva, vomit). If you do, practice hand hygiene.
6. Practice hand hygiene after the person has left.
7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning should clean and disinfect the surfaces in spaces where the person's body fluids may have been in contact while they were ill (e.g., their desk in a classroom, the bathroom stall they used, etc.).

Some students may arrive at school sick, and/or unable to be picked up immediately, due to many reasons, including a lack of available childcare. Following the steps outlined above helps ensure there is not a significant risk of illness to others, including those who are supporting them while they are ill.

What To Do When Sick

School administrators can encourage staff and families to go to the [BCCDC website](#) to find information about what to do when they are sick with COVID-19 symptoms. Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the [BC Self-Assessment Tool](#) app, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance. Information on region-specific services (e.g., testing and vaccination sites) is available on [health authority websites](#).

Staff and families can also be encouraged to visit [HealthLink BC](#) or call 8-1-1 for support on what to do when sick with any symptoms of illness, including non-COVID-19 symptoms.

Returning to School After Illness

When a person can return to school after being sick depends on the type of illness they had.

- If they had COVID-19 or another communicable disease, they can return according to the guidance provided to them from public health.
- For other illnesses, generally, the person can return when their symptoms have improved and they feel well enough to participate in all activities at school.

If a person is unsure if they are well enough to attend school, they should call 8-1-1 or their health care provider for guidance.



Schools should not require a health care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.

Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the household member tests positive for a communicable disease (including but not limited to COVID-19), public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on next steps.

Hand hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water reduces the spread of illness. Everyone should practice diligent hand hygiene.

How to practice diligent hand hygiene:

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
 - Temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water, though warm water is preferred for personal comfort.
- If sinks are not available (e.g., students and staff are outdoors), use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (also called alcohol-based hand rub) containing at least 60% alcohol.
 - 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 hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating microbes. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If it is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by alcohol-based hand rub.
- To learn about how to perform hand hygiene, please refer to the BCCDC's [hand hygiene poster](#).

Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:

- Facilitate regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene.
 - Use portable hand-washing sites or alcohol-based hand rub dispensers where sinks are not available.
- Promote the importance of diligent hand hygiene to staff and students regularly.
 - Use posters and other methods of promotion.
 - Consider student-friendly posters on [how to wash your hands](#).
 - Show [handwashing videos](#).
- Ensure hand washing supplies are well stocked at all times 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.

An information sheet on when students and staff should practice hand hygiene is included as [Appendix C](#).



Respiratory Etiquette

Everyone should:

- Cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

Parents and staff can teach and reinforce these practices among students.

Personal Protective Equipment

Non-Medical Masks and Face Coverings

Public health continues to monitor community risk of COVID-19 as we progress toward high levels of vaccine coverage. Schools continue to be considered low risk settings for COVID-19 transmission, particularly in the context of a highly immunized population; however, non-medical masks will be recommended for the start of the school year. This will allow for an added layer of protection as schools transition to new measures. The non-medical mask guidance is expected to be reviewed later this fall with the intention that wearing a mask will eventually transition to a personal choice. Regional recommendations may also be issued by local medical health officers based on community risk. Mask requirements should, at minimum, adhere with any regional or provincial public health orders.

At the beginning of the school year, all staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and all students 12 years and older in “bricks and mortar” schools should wear a non-medical mask or face covering (a “mask”) at all times while indoors at school, subject to the following exceptions:

- If a person is unable to wear a mask because they don’t tolerate it (for health or behavioural reasons*);
- If a person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. actively playing a wind instrument, high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier (e.g., a divider, a cubicle, or in a room by themselves);
- While providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements are important.

Staff at non-school sites (e.g., administrative offices, maintenance facilities, etc.) should continue to follow guidance from WorkSafe BC.

Students 9 - 11 years of age are encouraged to wear a mask at school, in line with the guidance included here.

Mask use for students under 9 years of age should be based on their personal or family/caregivers’ choice.



If an activity cannot be implemented in line with this guidance, it should be adapted or another activity should be selected.

Schools continue to be encouraged to support student mask use through positive and inclusive approaches, and not punitive or enforcement activities that exclude students from fully participating in school or that could result in stigma. Schools are also encouraged to ensure there are opportunities throughout the day for students to remove their masks (like providing opportunities to go outside if weather allows).

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating in school if they are not wearing a mask.

*Health or behavioural reasons include health impacts experienced during excessive heat events or poor air quality.

Information on non-medical masks is available from [BCCDC](#).

PPE When Providing Student Services

Those providing services to students with medical complexity, immune suppression, receiving delegated care, or with disabilities and diverse abilities that require them to be in close proximity to a student should follow their standard risk assessment methods to determine what PPE is needed for general communicable disease prevention in accordance with routine practices.

Additional PPE

Additional PPE, such as gloves and eye goggles, are not needed for most staff beyond that used as part of routine practices for the hazards normally encountered in their regular course of work.



Appendix A: Evidence Summary

The information below summarizes high-level evidence gathered since early Spring 2020 about COVID-19, including its impacts on people and K-12 schools in B.C., nationally and internationally. Up-to-date information about COVID-19 is available from [BCCDC](#).

COVID-19 in B.C.

- B.C. currently has variable community prevalence of COVID-19; some parts of the province have relatively low community transmission while other parts have relatively high levels of community transmission. Communities with high levels of transmission are typically those with lower vaccination rates.
 - Since early summer 2021, the rate of COVID-19 cases has increased due to spread of the more transmissible Delta variant and the easing of pandemic restrictions. Most cases, hospitalizations, and deaths were among unvaccinated individuals.
- B.C. has a [highly vaccinated population](#), with the majority of those aged 12 and older having received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. As of August 22nd, 83% of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 75% had received their second dose.
 - Vaccinated individuals tend to have milder illness if they get infected and are also less likely to pass virus on than unvaccinated individuals. Severe outcomes in fully vaccinated individuals are infrequent.
 - Everyone eligible is encouraged to be fully vaccinated (i.e., receive two doses) against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them.
- Four [COVID-19 Variants of Concern](#) have been detected in B.C.: Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. Currently, Delta is the most common. The vaccines delivered in B.C. remain highly effective against variants, including the Delta variant, especially against severe outcomes.
 - The Delta variant is currently the predominant variant in B.C. This variant spreads more easily and may lead to more severe disease.

COVID-19 and Schools

Based on [national and international evidence](#) collected between January - July 2021:

- There is little high-quality evidence to suggest that having schools open meaningfully contributes to community transmission.
- The likelihood of a person attending school while infectious with COVID-19 reflects local community prevalence.
- The consistent implementation of prevention measures, particularly in communities with higher transmission and/or lower vaccination uptake, is critically important to limiting the spread of COVID-19.
 - Within clusters and outbreaks, adult to adult transmission appears more common than child to adult or adult to child.
- Widespread asymptomatic transmission is not commonly occurring within schools.
- Evidence continues to be gathered about the impact of staff and student vaccinations on mitigating risk of COVID-19 transmission at school.



During the 2020-21 school year in B.C.:

- COVID-19 cases in schools reflected the number of cases in their communities. Most cases of COVID-19 among students and staff were acquired outside of school, in their community or household.
- Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health led [school transmission studies](#) to understand transmission in school settings:
 - In Vancouver Coastal Health from September 10 – December 18, 2020, out of 699 cases among students (77%) and staff (23%), 55 cases (8% of student and staff cases) were likely acquired in school. When transmission did occur, a case would typically lead to 1 or 2 other cases in the school.
 - In Fraser Health from January 1 – March 7, 2021, out of 2049 cases among students (83%) and staff (17%), 267 cases (13% of student and staff cases) were likely acquired in school. When transmission did occur with a school setting, a case would typically lead to 1 other cases in the school.

Regional school medical officers noted that these results were similar to those seen in all health authority regions, based on case reviews.

- School staff do not seem to be at any greater risk of getting COVID-19 at work compared to other workplaces that include people.
 - In [Vancouver School District](#), despite a high rate of reported exposure to COVID-19 cases, the rate of COVID-19 infections among school staff (detected by sensitive serology testing) was the same as the local community. This suggests school staff did not experience a greater risk from COVID-19 than the general population with the measures implemented during the 2020-21 school year.
- In February, B.C. teachers [reported](#) impacts on their mental health, fewer opportunities to connect with students and the school community, and workload increases.

COVID-19 and Children

- Most children are not at high risk for COVID-19. If they do get COVID-19, most children will have mild symptoms, or they may have no symptoms at all (“asymptomatic”).
- COVID-19 continues to have a [relatively low infection rate](#) among school-aged children (5-18).
 - Research is underway to understand the impact of the Delta variant on children, including differences in how it spreads and if there is increased risk of more severe illness in children who are not yet eligible to be vaccinated (i.e., under age 12).
- As of August 22nd, approximately 72% of people aged 12-17 had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 58% had received their second dose.
- At this time, no COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for use in children under the age of 12. Clinical trials are currently underway. More information is available from [Health Canada](#).
- Various surveys, including the [COVID-19 SPEAK](#) survey from BCCDC have reported that school-aged children have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, including worsening wellbeing, more child stress, less connection with friends, less engagement in extracurricular activities and learning impacts.



Appendix B: School Communicable Disease Checklist

Complete this checklist with your school's health and safety committee to assess your school's communicable disease plan with the Ministry of Education's COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, which includes detailed guidance on the measures noted below. This checklist should be used in addition to the guidelines to develop and assess your school's communicable disease plan.

Measures below should always be in place.

Public Health Measures		
Attendance & Record Keeping	Practices in place to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain daily attendance records for staff, students, and visitors (including teachers on call, itinerant teachers/specialists, district/authority personnel, parents/caregivers, and volunteers), and maintain accurate class and bus lists. Daily attendance records should be kept for at least 45 days.	
Environmental Measures		
Ventilation & Air Exchange	All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Portable air conditioners and fans are only used in ventilated spaces, with air moved from high to low.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Risk mitigation strategies are identified for excessive heat events or times of poor air quality.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Cleaning and Disinfecting	Frequently touched surfaces (those touched by larger numbers of people) are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included



Administrative Measures		
Gatherings & Events	School extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools) are in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial and Federal health recommendations and Orders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Space Arrangement	In indoor spaces, people have enough room to carry out intended activities without involuntary physical contact and all available space is used.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	For indoor gatherings, people are spread out within the available space and room capacity limits are not exceeded.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	During breaks and other unstructured time in indoor settings, strategies are in place to ensure there is enough space available to prevent involuntary physical contact.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Staff Specific Considerations	WorkSafe BC guidance for workplaces is used to determine measures for staff-only spaces within a school and/or for non-school spaces operated by the school district/authority.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Staff-only gatherings (e.g., meetings, professional development days, etc.) occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for workplace gatherings and events and any related WorkSafe BC guidance.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Visitors, including Itinerant Staff, Temporary Teachers on Call, Parents and Others	Processes are in place to ensure itinerant staff, teachers on call and visitors are aware of the school's communicable disease plan and their responsibility to follow measures at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Curriculum, Programs and Activities	For music and physical education (and other subjects as necessary), prevention practices specific to the activity are implemented (e.g., cleaning mouth pieces and water bottles between use).	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Local and international field trips occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for local and/or international travel.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Bus Transportation	Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Practices are in place to encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene before and after trips.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Passengers are spread out within the available space.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Windows are opened when the weather allows.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included



	Bus drivers, adult volunteers and visitors, and students in Grade 4 or higher wear masks according to the guidelines or applicable public health orders/recommendations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Grade K-3 students wear masks based on their personal or family/caregivers' choice.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Food Services	Food services (e.g., meal programs, cafeterias, fundraisers, etc.), are following regular operational and food safety practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Community Use of Schools	Community use of school facilities is aligned with related public health guidance, recommendations and Orders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Water Fountains	The use of water fountains is not limited.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included

Personal Measures		
Daily Health Checks	Staff, parents and students are regularly reminded of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check and are provided with resources on how to complete one (e.g., the K-12 Health Check app).	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Stay Home When Sick / What To Do When Sick	Staff and students are regularly reminded to stay home when they are sick and are provided with resources on what to do when they are sick (e.g., the BC Self-Assessment Tool app).	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Symptoms Develop at School	Practices are in place to appropriately respond when a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness while at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Returning to School After Illness	Health care provider notes (i.e., a doctor's note) are not required to confirm the health status of any individual, beyond those required to support medical accommodation as per usual practice.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette	Hand cleaning facilities are available and accessible throughout the school and are well maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included

Personal Protective Equipment		
Masks	Staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and students in Grade 4 and higher in "bricks and mortar" schools wear a non-medical	<input type="checkbox"/> Included



	mask or face covering (a “mask”) according to the guidelines or applicable public health orders/recommendations.	
	Grade K-3 students wear masks based on their personal or family/caregivers’ choice.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
	Masks are available for those who have forgotten theirs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included

Supportive School Environments		
Personal Prevention Practices	Strategies are in place to routinely support students to practice personal prevention measures like hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (e.g., signage, included in morning announcements, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Personal Space	Strategies are in place to encourage staff and students to consider and respect others personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included
Positive & Inclusive Approaches	Positive and inclusive approaches identified to support students’ personal prevention practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Included

The information included in this checklist is based on the Ministry of Education COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings. As such, there may be differences between the checklist and the information in this guidance document.



Appendix C: When to Perform Hand Hygiene at School

When Students 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 classes (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.



SN

From: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
To: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 8:52:19 AM PDT
Attachments: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 24 851am.docx

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

Fwd: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_ DRAFT-MO clean 10pm

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 9:21:35 AM PDT
Attachments: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_ DRAFT-MO clean 10pm.docx

Updated

Anna

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Beale, William EDUC:EX" <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>
Date: August 24, 2021 at 8:17:44 AM PDT
To: "Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX" <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021 - August 23_ DRAFT-MO clean 10pm

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

QA/NR - K-12 schools

From: McKenzie, Scott GCPE:EX <Scott.1.McKenzie@gov.bc.ca>
To: Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>, Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>, Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 9:48:54 AM PDT
Attachments: 2021EDUC0058-001663.pdf, QA - Back-to-school August 24 2021.docx
Hi Keefer, please see the attached for caucus use.

Thanks,

Scott

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2021EDUC0058-001663
Aug. 24, 2021

Ministry of Education

Health, safety remain focus for new school year

VICTORIA – B.C. students will return to school next month and can look forward to full-time, in-person learning and resuming sports, music and other extracurricular activities, while mask requirements and other health and safety measures remain in place to keep schools safe.

“We know how excited students and families are about being back in school with extracurricular and sports programs and how important it is for children to be connected to their teachers and friends on a full-time basis,” said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education. “We also know we can do this safely, even as the pandemic continues to present challenges. B.C. was one of the few jurisdictions in Canada to keep schools open and safe last year thanks to the monumental efforts of everyone in the education system. The precautions we are announcing today allow students to continue learning in school with safeguards in place, so they have every opportunity to achieve their best.”

Research by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) last year noted a significant impact on students from remote learning, including interrupted learning, increased child stress, decreased connection, increased loneliness and mental and emotional health effects. Studies by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and Fraser Health Authority showed that after a resumption of in-class learning, schools were not significant sources of COVID-19 transmission.

In addition to the continuation of indoor mask requirements for all K-12 staff, visitors and students in grades 4 to 12, changes to the health and safety measures also include the ability for health authorities to introduce additional regional measures specific to individual schools or school districts in instances where community transmission rates are higher.

There will be greater opportunities for school sports and extracurricular activities, continued increased ventilation and improvements in schools, and daily cleaning and disinfecting protocols, along with a continued focus on hand hygiene. Students will continue to be required to complete daily health checks and stay home when feeling sick. Rapid response teams will continue to operate throughout B.C., working with health authorities and school districts to provide support and review school communicable disease plans to keep schools safe.

“We know last school year was challenging in many different ways for B.C. students, but they persevered and finished the school year strong,” said Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer. “While we are encouraged to see rising vaccination rates in most parts of the province, we need every eligible British Columbian, including children and youth aged 12 to 19, to receive vaccinations as they begin the new school year.”

School districts will continue to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated and maintained to their standards and specifications so

they continue to work properly. All school HVAC systems will continue to be regularly inspected and, moving forward, provincial funding will continue to be made available to upgrade or replace HVAC systems through routine capital programs.

A total of \$87.5 million has been used to improve school ventilation in B.C. schools, including \$77.5 million through provincial routine capital funding specifically for HVAC system upgrades or replacements in 2020-21 and 2021-22. The projects supported through this funding include full boiler and air-handling system replacements, larger ductwork, updating occupancy sensors and direct digital control units for building automation controlling air-flow rates and portable HEPA filtration units in classrooms. Plus, in the 2020-21 school year, school districts used \$10 million in federal pandemic-specific funding to upgrade more than 45,000 ventilation filters in B.C. schools.

The updated provincial K-12 communicable disease guidelines were developed in collaboration with the BCCDC, Office of the Provincial Health Officer and K-12 Education Steering Committee, which includes rightsholders and education partners.

The public health guidance for child care settings remain in effect.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is for all British Columbians who are eligible to get vaccinated. Health authorities will target students, teachers and school staff in vaccination campaigns over the coming weeks.

“As part of your back-to-school preparations, we encourage youth to walk in now to get vaccinated at one of B.C.’s vaccination clinics, or go to a pop-up or mobile or community vaccine event around the province,” said Dr. Penny Ballem, executive lead of B.C.’s immunization effort. “As students, parents and families prepare and plan for back to school, they can take advantage of the many locations and opportunities to receive a first or second dose. It’s more convenient than ever to get a COVID-19 vaccine.”

The return to school is being supported with additional resources.

In June, the Ministry of Education announced \$43.6 million in COVID-19 relief funding for the 2021-22 school year. This included \$25.6 million in new one-time funding to support health and safety measures, First Nations and Métis students, mental health services and independent schools. The remaining \$18 million was allocated for school districts to address learning loss due to the pandemic.

Quick Facts:

- There are approximately 1,900 K-12 schools in B.C. In the 2020-21 school year, 40 schools closed temporarily for a short period of time due to COVID-19.
- Two studies conducted by health authorities during the 2020-21 school year found:
 - in Vancouver Coastal Health, 92% of school-associated cases of COVID-19 were acquired from outside of the school environment; and
 - in Fraser Health, 87% of school-associated cases were acquired through community/household transmission, not from the school setting.
- The COVID-19 Immunity Task Force released a report in June that found there was no greater risk to school staff acquiring COVID-19 in a school setting compared to their community.

Learn More:

For information about getting a vaccination, go to the Vax for BC website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/vaxforbc>

For a Fraser Health study on school-aged children from Aug. 24,

2021: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus/keeping-our-community-safe/schools/data#.YSUOEvpKjIX>

B.C. COVID-19 safe schools website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-safe-schools>

BCCDC's updated health and safety guidelines for K-12 schools:

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

BCCDC's public health guidance for child care settings:

http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

Ministry of Education

Government Communications and Public

Engagement

250 356-5963

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND

For Immediate Release
2021EDUC0058-001663
Aug. 24, 2021

Ministry of Education

Updated COVID-19 guidelines for K-12 schools

The updated provincial COVID-19 communicable disease guidelines for K-12 schools in the 2021-22 school year include, but are not limited to, the following changes:

- The mask mandate in place at the end of the 2020-21 school year will stay in place to start this school year. All K-12 staff visitors, and students in grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical masks in all indoor areas of the school and on school buses. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be strongly encouraged to wear masks.
- The mask guidance will also be supported by a provincial health order on mask wearing.
- Cohorts, also known as learning groups, are no longer recommended by public health as a COVID-19 mitigation measure and will not be used.
- Local public health orders may be put in place for entire regions or communities, including schools. For schools, the local medical health officer may issue a recommendation for an individual school, a grouping of schools, a school district, all schools within the health authority region or some combination thereof, to implement specific additional health and safety measures during times of elevated risk.
- Any additional regional measures put in place by local medical health officers are likely to be similar to those in place during the 2020-21 school year, and may include:
 - limits on gatherings and events;
 - changing room arrangements or incorporating more activities that maximize space between people and reduce face-to-face contact; and
 - limiting visitors.
- The following cleaning frequency guidelines must be adhered to when cleaning and disinfecting schools:
 - General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period and when visibly dirty.
- Extracurricular activities are allowed, in line with any local, regional, provincial or federal health orders in the community.
- Although physical distancing of two metres is no longer a recommended public health measure for the K-12 setting, there are strategies that schools can continue to use to create space between people and to support students and staff going back to school. Examples include:
 - reminding students and staff about respecting others personal space, and using visual supports, signage, prompts, video modelling, etc. as necessary;
 - using available space to spread people out where possible for gatherings and events;
 - taking students outside more often, where and when possible; and
 - managing flow of people in common areas, including hallways and around lockers, to minimize crowding and allow for ease of people passing through.

- Food programs (e.g., meal programs, cafeterias and fundraisers) can proceed under normal and regular operation.
- Water fountain use will no longer be restricted.
- Outdoor classes will still be encouraged, based on their health and learning benefits.

Public health continues to support the BC Centre for Disease Control's current health and safety guidelines for child care settings.

- The child care guidance recommends staff should wear non-medical masks when interacting with adults in indoor areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Children may wear a mask based on personal or family choice. However, infants under two years old should not wear masks, as it may make it difficult for them to breathe.

Contact:

Ministry of Education
Government Communications and Public
Engagement
250 356-5963

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect



Questions & Answers:
Back-to-school for 2021/22 announcement
August 24, 2021

Key Messages:

- B.C. students will return to school full-time this year and can look forward to in-person classes while resuming sports, music and other extracurricular activities.
- While we recognize that families and students are looking forward to September, we know there is some anxiety about what school will look like. Safety remains our top priority for students, staff, parents and families.
- Continued mask wearing, daily health checks, staying home when sick, a continued focus on hand washing, daily cleaning and disinfecting protocols, and other health and safety guidelines will help keep students, teachers and staff safe.
- For the start of this school year, all K-12 staff, students in grades 4 to 12 and visitors are required to wear non-medical masks in all indoor areas of the school, including at their desks and on school buses. Students in Kindergarten to grade 3 are strongly encouraged to wear masks.
- We know in-person learning is crucial for the social and emotional wellbeing of students.
- The updated COVID-19 communicable disease guidelines for K-12 schools align with current public health advice and were developed in collaboration with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, BCCDC and the Education Steering Committee.
- These guidelines will allow us to safely continue in-class learning and will further allow for additional regional responses to the pandemic as needed throughout the school year.

Q1: Isn't the government concerned about COVID-19 exposures in schools due to increasing case counts?

- While COVID-19 is present in our communities, there will continue to be COVID-19 exposures in schools and cases amongst students and staff. However, when

most people 12 and older are immunized, such exposures are even less likely to lead to further transmission.

- The updated provincial communicable disease guidelines for K-12 schools to operate in the 2021/22 school year have been guided by science, the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and BCCDC, and developed in consultation with the K-12 Education Steering Committee.
- The updated guidelines for K-12 schools include requirements for mask wearing, daily cleaning of schools and many layers of protection to safeguard students and staff. As well, Medical Health Officers in the health authorities can introduce additional regional measures in the event of local COVID outbreaks or rising infections.

Q2: What does B.C.'s mask mandate for students and staff look like for this school year?

- The rules around mask wearing are the same as last year and as directed by the PHO – all K-12 staff, visitors, and students in grades 4 to 12 are required to wear non-medical masks in all indoor areas of schools and on school buses.
- Students in Kindergarten to grade 3 are strongly encouraged to wear masks.
- We know that masks are only one layer of protection and the best way to protect everyone is for people who are eligible to get vaccinated.
- That protects not just them, but also the broader school community including the younger children who aren't able yet to receive the vaccine.

Q3: Why doesn't the new vaccine passport include K-12 schools?

- Schools are not included in the vaccine passport because they are controlled environments with comprehensive health and safety measures already in place. As well, in schools we know who is in the building and when people are in the building.
- About half of all K-12 students are under 12 years old, so the vaccine passport would not be applicable to those students.
- If schools do host an event (like a concert open to parents/public) the vaccine passport would apply to that event.

Q4: Do you know how many teachers and school staff have been vaccinated in B.C.?

- We don't have data on their vaccination rates, but we know that educators and school staff are strong advocates for safe learning and working environments and we expect there would be high rates of vaccination among those groups.
- We deeply appreciate the strong messaging from the BCTF and CUPE encouraging their members to get vaccinated.
- For everyone working in our school system – if you haven't already done so and are eligible, please get vaccinated before the new school year to keep our schools safe.

Q5: Alberta said it will have vaccine clinics for the public in its K-12 schools. Will B.C. do the same?

- Decisions regarding vaccine clinic sites are made by regional health authorities.
- There are already many places in communities where eligible British Columbians can receive a vaccination against COVID-19.
- In addition to large vaccination clinics led by health authorities, there are also pharmacies and smaller clinics providing vaccinations.
- In the summer, the government and Interior Health partnered to create pop-up vaccination clinics in a few K-12 schools.
- In the 2021/22 school year, we will look at setting up pop-up vaccination clinics in schools for eligible students and staff if this is requested by local health authorities.

Q6: How will school exposure notifications be handled this year?

- If your child has been exposed to COVID -19 you will continue to be notified by public health.
- If there is a case in your child's class or they are a close contact to a positive case you will be notified by public health.
- The Ministry of Education has not been notified at this point of any changes to the school exposure notification process.
- Further questions on this should be directed to Dr. Henry.

Q7: How will the added health restrictions in the Interior Health Authority affect back to school in communities like Kelowna, Penticton, Enderby or Nelson?

- At this point, schools in the Interior will open in September in line with the safety measures we've announced today.
- We understand there are active discussions between the Interior Health Authority and school districts, and parents will be informed before school starts of any additional measures.
- The most important message remains – everyone 12 and over who is eligible should get vaccinated before the start of the school year in order to keep everyone safe.

Q8: The BCTF has said there hasn't been a focus on upgrading ventilation systems in schools or an inventory done of schools with adequate ventilation available. How are improvements being made to ventilation systems in schools to keep students and staff safe?

- The Ministry and BCTF has been meeting regularly since June to review ventilation information and address specific questions regarding air quality and ventilation in schools.
- Health research and studies of COVID-19 have found that ventilation is not a source of virus transmission.

- In terms of ventilation in B.C. schools, we have ensured school districts have the funding and resources they need to maintain their facilities to keep students safe.
- School districts are required to ensure heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed, operated, and maintained to Occupational Health and Safety and WorkSafeBC standards.
- Since 2017, Government has provided routine capital funding for over 400 HVAC upgrade and replacement projects – these investments have supported school districts in improving ventilation in approximately a quarter of B.C. schools.
- The Ministry has invested \$77.5 million in 2020/21 and 2021/22 alone, through provincial routine capital funding, for HVAC system upgrades or replacements in B.C. schools.
- This past school year (2020/21), school districts used \$10 million in federal pandemic-specific funding to upgrade more than 45,000 air or ventilation filters in B.C. schools.
- We've increased annual maintenance programs by 20% since 2017, for a total of \$240.5 million this year. And Budget 2022 commits more than \$400 million in routine capital funding for 2022/23 and 2023/24, which will remain available to support school districts with HVAC system upgrades, replacements along with other maintenance projects to keep students and staff safe.
- We're also investing an additional \$14.4 million in the 2020/21 school year to further support health and safety measures, which can be used by school districts to improve air quality in schools.
- And we have worked with the BC Teachers Federation (BCTF) to survey all school districts on ventilation systems in all B.C. schools.

Q9: What's happening with the lifting on the ban with extra-curricular activities?

- Under the updated provincial COVID-19 communicable disease guidelines for K-12 schools, the following applies to extracurricular activities:
 - Intra- and inter-school extracurricular activities and special interest clubs can occur in alignment with the provincial health and safety protocols for K-12 schools, and with requirements of relevant local, regional and provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events.
 - For activities such as music and sports, schools should continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices specific to the activity.
 - For example, equipment that touches the mouth (e.g., water bottles, instrument mouth pieces) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in-between use. Hands should be cleaned before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g., before and after a sports game using a shared ball).

Q10: Will students still be able to take online courses if they don't feel safe returning to school? What about immune-compromised students?

- Parents and caregivers will continue to have a range of choices in September.

- As has always been the case, any student who cannot safely attend school due to medical reasons, including immune-compromised students, will be accommodated by their school district through locally developed approaches.
- Other students who may not want to return to in-class learning have options through online learning or homeschooling.
- Parents who have questions about the options for their children should contact their school.
- It's expected that school districts will provide information to parents on the number of available options to meet their students' needs.

Final speaking notes

From: Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
To: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>, Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>, Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>, Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 24, 2021 3:36:36 PM PDT
Attachments: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 24 9am.docx

MJW's final speaking notes from today.

-Anna

--

Anna Lindsay-Baugh (*she/her*)
Ministerial Advisor to
Hon. Jennifer Whiteside
Minister of Education
e: anna.lindsaybaugh@gov.bc.ca | p: 778-677-4091

INTRODUCTION:

- Good morning, everyone. My name is Jennifer Whiteside. I'm B.C.'s Minister of Education.
- I would like to acknowledge with respect and gratitude that I am speaking to you today from the traditional territory of the Lekwungen speaking people of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.
- I'd like to thank Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training and Dr. Bonnie Henry, our Provincial Health Officer for being here.
- I want to start by extending my heartfelt thanks to teachers, school leaders, support staff, administrators, custodial staff, bus drivers, students, parents, education partners, Rightsholders, trustees, advocates and everyone who supports our education system.
- Your work was key to our collective success in keeping schools safe and open during this last school year.
- We are committed – as we have been from the beginning – to following the science and the direction of public health while working collaboratively with all of our education partners,

Rightsholders, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), Dr. Bonnie Henry and her staff as we navigate the COVID pandemic.

- I'd also like to extend my deep gratitude to our provincial K-12 education steering committee, which has been working throughout the summer and for more than a year now to bring us to today and our plans for the 2021/22 school year.
- Today we are providing a Back-to-School update and I'll begin with our plan to continue to keep schools open and safe for K-12 students and staff.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

- September always brings a special feeling. We know students and staff are looking forward to returning to school – and that there is some anxiety about what that will look like.
- In June we announced health and safety guidelines for the coming school year – and that we were holding off on determining a policy around masks until we saw how the pandemic changed over the summer.
- Today, we are confirming that we are students are returning for full time in person learning and a requirement for all k-12 staff to wear a mask as well

as students for grades 4 and up, along with other health and safety measures to keep students and staff safe.****

- This means students can look forward to a resumption of safe, in person, full-time learning – and extra curricular activities, sports, performing arts and music.
- We know they're also looking forward to seeing their friends, teachers, librarians and coaches
- We are committed to safe in-class learning, not just for the educational growth of students but also for their social and emotional wellbeing.
- We also recognize that COVID is an ever-changing pandemic and that will continue to challenge us this year.
- But we are not in the same situation this year as we were last September.
- Because we now have safe and effective vaccines that we know protect us from COVID.
- In the spring, many health authorities made frontline educators a priority for vaccines.

- And going into this school year, all British Columbians 12 years and older are eligible to receive the vaccine and many in this age group have been receiving vaccinations against COVID-19 over this summer.
- As of this past week, 72% of 12 to 17-year-olds in BC had received their first dose....and 57% were fully vaccinated.
- I want to say to you -- if you are eligible and you haven't received your vaccination yet – now is your time.
- We know that getting vaccinated is the single most important step we can take now to keep all students safe this year.
- We've been working collaboratively with the steering committee and BC CDC and have revised guidance to update our health and safety guidelines.
- I'd like to provide a brief overview of these guidelines, which were developed in consultation with our K-12 education steering committee.

- What we announced in June was that we would continue this school year with the foundations of our health and safety guidelines:
 - Ongoing hand hygiene
 - Daily health check and attendance management
 - Ensure that students and staff do not come to school when sick
 - Enhanced cleaning (One time per day)
 - Health & safety checklist for school administrators

The mask requirement that was in place last spring – will continue in place to start this upcoming school year. This means all K-12 staff and all students in grades 4 to 12 will wear non-medical masks in all indoor areas of school including classrooms and school buses. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will continue to be encouraged to wear masks.

Extra curricular activities are allowed, in line with any local, regional, provincial or national health orders in the community.

–
As announced in June, the **Rapid Response Teams** will continue to work with school districts and health authorities to support local districts and schools with their safety plans.

These provincial measures may be supplemented by regional measures as needed.

School Medical Health Officers in the health authorities will continue to be able to introduce local measures in the event of COVID-19 outbreaks or arising number of infections. This may include orders aimed at individual schools, groups of schools, or an entire district.

—

- Also as announced in June the guidelines are supported by \$43.6 million in pandemic-specific funding including funding to address learning loss.
- **(pause)**
- We know ventilation in schools is important for the health of students and staff.
- Between last school year and this upcoming school year, \$87.5 million in provincial and federal funding has been invested specifically for air quality improvements at schools.
- Our government has invested \$77.5 million from the Province's capital budget to support numerous air quality projects in school districts.

- 44 of BC's 60 school districts have updated their HVAC systems.
- We have 1,571 public schools, 100% are working on ventilation. And the Ministry continues to work with all school districts to ensure all mechanical HVAC systems are designed, operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, to ensure they are working properly.
- I wanted to highlight one example of the work that's underway to support air quality improvements in schools.

The Vancouver School Board reports all central HVAC and school room ventilation systems have been upgraded with MERV-13 filters in every school in the district.

- We will continue to work with districts to ensure they continue to provide clean and safe air to our students.
- I would also remind everyone that in June we announced an additional \$5 million dollars to support pandemic-related mental health programs and services.

support pandemic-related mental health programs and services.

- School districts are using that funding to maintain the mental health programs they developed last year or to enhance supports available to students.
- I would like to provide a special thank you to Minister Sheila Malcolmson and Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions staff for their ongoing support of this work.
- If you or your child need mental health support now or leading up to the start of the school year – please visit our erase website for immediate links to care.

(pause)

CONCLUSION:

- I know educators, principals, and superintendents are really looking forward to welcoming students back to school on September 7th

- We're working hard to make sure that is a successful return to school.
- I want to reinforce the most important thing we can do right now is to make sure everyone 12 and up who is eligible gets vaccinated.
- That will keep students safe.
- The system has been extremely resilient and adaptable over the past 18 months.
- I know everyone from educators to staff to trustees have worked so hard to put students first.
- I really want to thank the educators who remain focused on children as we start the new school year.
- Thank you.
- I would now like to introduce Minister Anne Kang to speak about health and safety for post-secondary institutions.

---30---

From: [Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX](#)
To: [Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX](#)
Cc: [Beale, William EDUC:EX](#); [Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX](#)
Subject: FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm
Date: August 23, 2021 9:02:21 PM
Attachments: [SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm.docx](#)
Importance: High

Hi Minister,

Updated speaking notes from Sean are attached. Some notes from him in the email as well.

Cheers,
Anna

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 8:44 PM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>; Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>; MacDonald, Scott D EDUC:EX <D.Scott.MacDonald@gov.bc.ca>; Purdy, Sheila EDUC:EX <Sheila.Purdy@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 830pm
Importance: High

Hi, revised SN's attached – hope I caught all of MJW's changes, was typing furiously. I've also updated the KM's to match your version, Will.
Of note there is still a place holder in the attached re: the examples Minister is looking for from Surrey, Kelowna et al, if they are in fact needed for the speech.
In the alternative, could add more from the below, pulled from the QA?
I'm heading home but available on cell, cheers.
Sean

s.13

s.13

Event Information / Speaking Notes – Minister Jennifer Whiteside

Event: Back-to-school announcement on K-12 health and safety guidelines for the 2021/22 school year

When: August 24, 2021, 9:30 a.m. to 10:25 a.m.

Where: Press Theatre – B.C. Legislature

Event Details: Minister Whiteside will be joined by Minister Kang and Dr. Bonnie Henry to announce the back-to-school plan for B.C. K-12 schools, and advanced education which will include updated public health guidance provided by BCCDC.

Length: 55 minutes

Key Participants: Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education, Dr. Bonnie Henry (PHO), Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Audience Size: N/A

Contact: Joleen Badger, GCPE Events (604) 916-3551 and Sean Leslie, Communications Director (250) 893-4403

Itinerary:

Time	Event Itinerary
9:00 a.m.	Pre-brief with Joleen Badger, GCPE Events (604) 916-3551 Location: Events Studio, B.C. Legislature (TBD) In-person: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education• Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training• Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer (PHO)
9:05 a.m.	Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training Anne Kang and Dr. Bonnie Henry are led to speaking area of the Press Theatre and positioned next to microphone ensuring physical distance.
9:30 a.m.	Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside Makes announcement about the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back to school overview including full-time in-class instruction, health and safety guidelines including mask guidelines/guidance• Return to extracurricular activities and sports• No learning groups or cohorts
9:38 a.m.	Minister Whiteside introduces Minister Kang
9:39 a.m.	Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, Anne Kang <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight health and safety measures for post-secondary institutions in B.C.

9:43 a.m.	Minister Kang finishes speaking. Minister Whiteside introduces Dr. Bonnie Henry to speak about masks, vaccinations and BCCDC guidelines
9:43 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.	Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer (PHO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the provincial mask mandate to begin the school year and speak to the importance of vaccinations and vaccination rates in B.C. Outline timelines for vaccinations for children under 12
9:50 a.m.	Minister Jennifer Whiteside thanks Dr. Henry .
9:51 a.m.	Media questions for Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training Anne Kang and Dr. Bonnie Henry
10:25 a.m.	End of questions and event.

KEY MESSAGES:

- While we recognize that families and students are looking forward to September, we know there is some anxiety about what school will look like. Safety remains our top priority for students, staff, parents and families.
- We know that masks are only one layer of protection and the best way to protect everyone is for people who are eligible to get vaccinated.
- That protects not just them, but also the broader school community including younger children who aren't yet able to receive the vaccine.
- Our government has invested over \$77 million in HVAC replacements and upgrades in the past year, including more than 45,000 ventilation filter upgrades.
- Health authorities will be able to introduce additional regional measures and restrictions for individual schools or school districts if necessary, in order to prevent the spread of COVID.
- We know in person learning is crucial for the social and emotional wellbeing of students.
- That is why we worked together last year to enable kids to be in class, and we will continue to work together to make sure schools are safe for students and staff.

PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE:

- Dr. Bonnie Henry (PHO), Advanced Education Minister Anne Kang and thank the Provincial K-12 education steering committee

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY:

- I would like to acknowledge I am on the traditional territory of the **Lekwungen speaking people of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.**

Page 353 of 373 to/à Page 360 of 373

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

From: [Beale, William EDUC:EX](#)
To: [Whiteside, Jennifer EDUC:EX](#)
Cc: [Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX](#); [Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX](#); [Olson, Michael GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM
Date: August 23, 2021 1:56:55 PM
Attachments: [SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM.docx](#)

Please see the latest version of the SNs

From: Leslie, Sean GCPE:EX <Sean.Leslie@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: August 23, 2021 1:24 PM
To: Beale, William EDUC:EX <William.Beale@gov.bc.ca>; Pelech, Keefer EDUC:EX <Keefer.Pelech@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Burton, Meribeth GCPE:EX <Meribeth.Burton@gov.bc.ca>; Silver, Matt GCPE:EX <Matt.Silver@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: SN - Back to school announcement public health guidance - MJW - August 23 1245pm RB DM

Hi please see latest version of speaking notes for tomorrow. We still have one comment embedded as waiting for clarity from health on community notification procedures – will advise ASAP.

Thanks

Sean

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

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