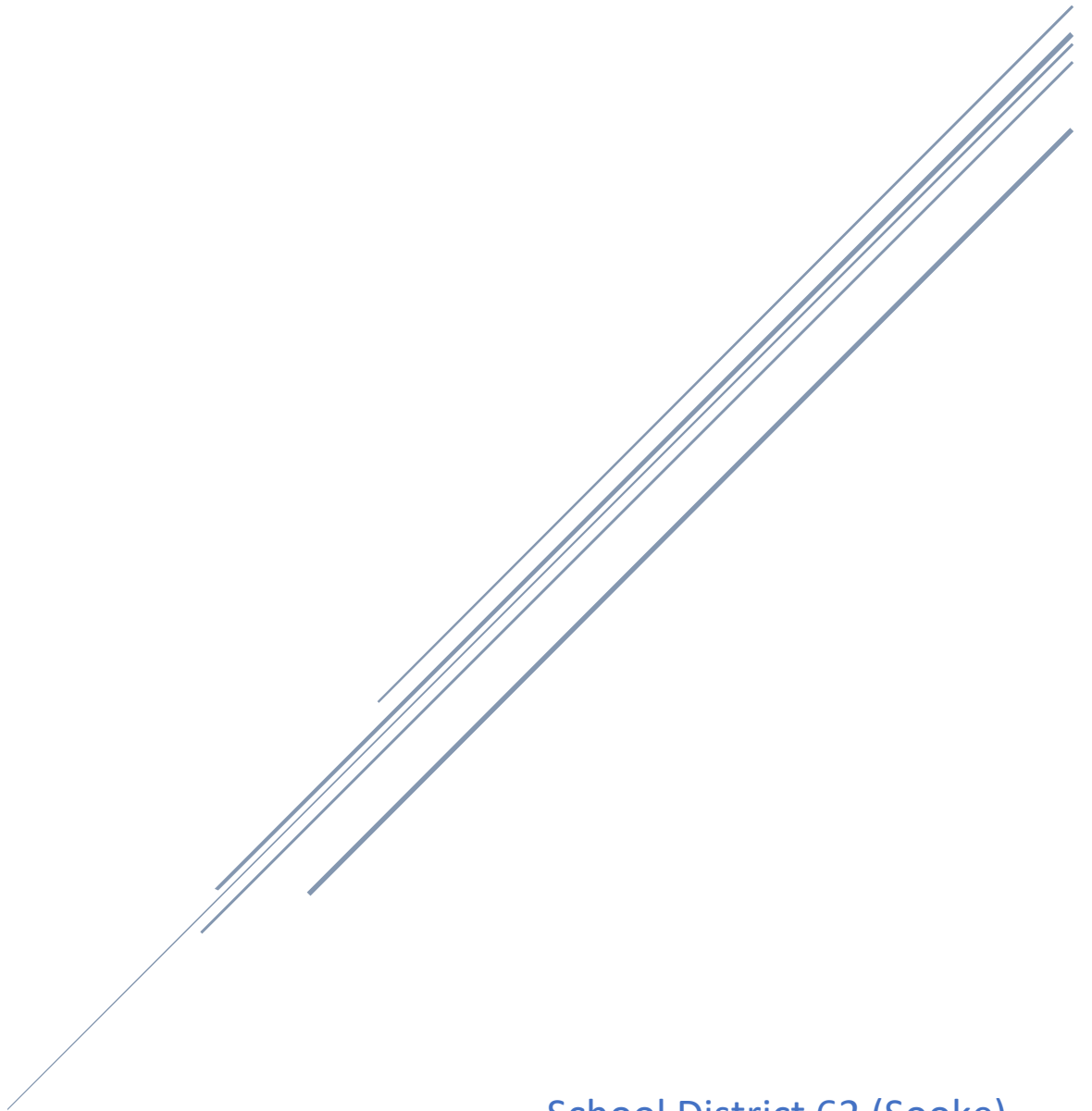


# SD62 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION PLAN FOR PARENTS

April 20, 2022 V. 8



School District 62 (Sooke)

## SD62 Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

### **Purpose**

The intent of the Communicable Disease Prevention Plan is to inform School District #62 Sooke (SD62) staff regarding the Operations and Health & Safety processes for SD 62 sites to prevent transmission of communicable disease(s) (e.g. COVID-19).

### **Background - COVID-19**

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
  - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- There is little high-quality evidence to suggest that having schools open meaningfully contributes to community transmission.
- Widespread asymptomatic transmission is not commonly occurring within schools.
- 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 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 (BC CDC, Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools, October 1, 2021).

### **Transmission Mitigation Strategies**

- Daily Health Checks for Staff and Students before entering any SD62 site.
- The consistent practice of good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
- No sharing of food.
- Follow the guidelines from the Health Minister and Self-Isolate, when required.
- Do not share food (e.g. fruit trays, deli trays, etc.).
- No skin to skin contact with others (handshaking, hugging, etc.).
- Avoid touching your face with your hands.
- All staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses.
- All students Grades K to 12 are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a nonmedical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses.

### **Space Arrangements**

Schools can return to classroom and learning environment configurations and activities that best meet learner needs and preferred educational approaches, though should still consider implementing strategies to help create space between people and to support students and staff using a trauma-informed approach:

- Remind students and staff about respecting others personal space. Use visual supports, signage, prompts, video modelling, etc. as necessary.
- Schools can return to routine pick up/drop off practices, though should still consider strategies to prevent crowding at pick-up and drop-off time. Parents/caregivers and other visitors should respect others’ personal space while on school grounds, including outside.
- Use available space to spread people out, both in learning environments and for gatherings and events, where possible.

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### **Work Environment**

The following are considerations for classrooms and other SD62 buildings,

- At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, would contribute to the spread of the virus. Good indoor air ventilation alone cannot protect people from exposure to COVID-19; however, it may reduce risk when used in addition to other preventive measures (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).
  - As per WorkSafeBC legislative requirements (*OHSR 4.79*) if air quality concerns are brought forward, they will be investigated accordingly.
  - Natural ventilation (operable windows, etc.) and portable HEPA filter units should be considered in regularly occupied classrooms that do not have mechanical ventilation systems. Hand wash stations will have liquid soap (NO bar soap) and paper towel. (or air dryer).
  - If no handwashing sink is located in the classroom, students will have access to designated handwashing stations, washrooms or hand sanitizer dispensers.
- Gatherings and Events:
  - Organizers should apply a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g. gatherings and events), including respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space.
    - Gradual transitions to larger gatherings (e.g. school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc. (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).
  - Organizers should apply a trauma-informed lens when planning, including considerations of:
    - Respecting student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
    - Gradual transitions to larger gatherings (e.g. school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc. (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).
- Staff and students should be encouraged to not share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g. food, drinks, unwashed utensils, wind instruments).
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products (e.g. children's book or magazines) and items with plastic covers (e.g. DVDs) are low risk. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).
- Schools should utilize positive and inclusive approaches to support personal practices aligned with existing professional practices to address behaviour. Approaches should not exclude students from participating in school or potentially result in stigma (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

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### **Vaccine Disclosure**

SD62 has implemented a proof of vaccination procedure to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among staff and students.

### **Programs and Activities**

All curriculum, programs and activities should operate in alignment with Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community-based programs/courses) Schools should continue to implement ongoing communicable disease prevention practices (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette) specific to the activity (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).

- Capacity should follow that outlined within the Gatherings and Events section of this document (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).

### **Music / Physical and Health Education (PHE) / Outdoor / Food and Culinary / Theatre, Film and Dance / Other Shared Equipment Programs:**

- Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected as per the Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students should be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after shared equipment use.
  - Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces, water bottles, utensils) should not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

### **Trades in Training / Work Experience Programs**

- Students enrolled in individual training/work experience programs should follow the communicable disease prevention plan required by the workplace/facility.
- Classes (or other similar groupings of students) participating in training/work experience programs together should follow the more stringent measures (if applicable) between the school and the workplace/facility's communicable disease prevention plans (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

### **Kindergarten Program and Entry:**

- Include information about communicable disease prevention measures that will be in place as part of communications to students and their families prior to school start.
- Parents/caregivers must follow guidelines for visitors.
- Provide opportunities for Kindergarten students to learn and practice respecting personal space, recognizing they are unlikely to be able to do this at all times.
- Gently remind students of the expectations throughout the day and encourage students to kindly support one another.
- Frequently-touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) and carpets and rugs (e.g., for circle time activities) can be used (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

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### **Field Trips**

When planning field trips, staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:

- Schools should make every effort to avoid venue/locations that place additional requirements that could prevent a person from being able to participate, particularly students. If this is not possible (and the field trip/travel cannot occur otherwise), schools can require participants to confirm they are able to meet the additional requirements (e.g., are able to provide proof of vaccination).
- Students and staff may also be required to follow the communicable disease prevention plan of places attended on a field trip. Where there is a conflict with a school's communicable disease prevention plan, the more stringent safety protocols should be followed (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

### **Student Transportation**

#### **Buses**

- Bus drivers and students should be encouraged to practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Bus drivers, teachers and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 may choose to wear masks or face coverings when they are on the bus (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

### **Hand Hygiene**

Follow these guidelines to ensure effective hand hygiene in schools:

- Facilitate regular opportunities for students to practice hand hygiene:
  - This can include using portable hand-washing sites and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers containing at least 60% alcohol.

### **Illness and Self Assessment Process**

#### **Health Awareness**

Health awareness reduces the likelihood of a person with a communicable disease coming to school when they are infectious. This includes a person checking regularly they (or their child) are not experiencing symptoms of illness (including but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms) to ensure they are not coming to school when they are sick (including if they are unable to participate fully in regular activities due to symptoms of illness) (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

- Parents and caregivers should assess their children daily to determine if they are experiencing symptoms of illness before sending them to school.
  - If ill they are experiencing symptoms of illness parents/caregivers and students can utilize the BC Self-Assessment Tool at [BC COVID 19 \(thrive.health\)](https://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/covid-19/assess-yourself) to determine next steps.

#### **If a student becomes ill while on site:**

If a student develops symptoms at school/site, the schools/site should:

- Notify their site-manager or principal/vice-principal.

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- Parents/guardians must be notified and advised to pick-up the child immediately.
- Schools should have a space available where the student or staff can wait comfortably and is separated from others and should have non-medical masks available for those experiencing respiratory symptoms who would like to wear one.
- Schools must provide supervision for younger children.

### **School and School District Responsibilities**

School administrators should ensure that everyone entering a school is aware and routinely reminded of their responsibility to practice health awareness. This can be supported through communications (e.g. emails/letters to parents and staff), orientation activities (e.g., meetings, videos) and other reminders (e.g., signage on doors) (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).

### **Building Access:**

- We recommend visitors or contractors book an appointment to access the site or visit the office upon entry, to log the visit on the SD62 website.
  - Where possible, parents/caregivers should be encouraged to drop-off/pick-up students outside of the school.
  - Site-manager or principal/vice-principal must ensure that visitor and contractors are aware of the Communicable Disease Prevention Plan and requirements prior to entering the school (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).
    - Information on communicable disease protocols and requirements for visitors should be posted by the entrance to the school, on the school's website and included in communications to students and families.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- The decision to wear a non-medical mask or face covering is a personal choice for staff, students and visitors. A person's choice should be supported and treated with respect.
- Schools should continue to have non-medical masks on hand for those who have forgotten theirs but would like to wear one, or who experience respiratory symptoms at school/work and would like to wear one (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022).
- Students and staff may choose to wear masks, face shields or other personal protective equipment in schools, and those choices must be respected (Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, March 10, 2022).

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once per 24-hour period.
- Frequently touched surfaces are items touched by larger numbers of students and staff. They can include doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains and toilet handles, as well as shared equipment (e.g., computer keyboards, PE/sports and music equipment), appliances (e.g., microwaves) and service counters (e.g. library circulation desk).

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- Frequently-touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g. fabrics) or at all (e.g. sand, foam, playdough, etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use. Carpets and rugs (e.g. in Kindergarten and StrongStart classes) can also be used.

### **Behaviour Support Plans, Personal Care Plans and Worker Safety Plans**

Student plans to support specific needs are reviewed on a case-by-case to determine levels of support required to safely bring students into the school environment. Any support plans will be provided to the Principal/Vice-Principal.

### **References**

MOE, Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings, April 8, 2022.

[Attachment 3 - Provincial COVID-19 Health Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings November 17 2020 - DRAFT \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

BC CDC, Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools, March 10, 2022.

[Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf \(bccdc.ca\)](#)

BC CDC March 16, 2022.

[About COVID-19 \(bccdc.ca\)](#)

CDC, February 25, 2022.

[Your Guide to Masks | CDC](#)