

SD84 – Communicable Disease Plan

Gold River Secondary School

(Revised January 5, 2022)



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Key Message

This document provides guidance for educators, administrators, and support staff of School District 84 of what infection prevention and exposure control measures will be implemented during the 2021-22 school year to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

This plan is based on the BCCDC document [Public Health Guidance](#) as well as the MoED document [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#). This document was revised on January 5, 2022 to reflect requirements of the [Addendum - Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Setting](#) issued December 29, 2021.

The key messaging coming from these documents is that:

- **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.

The main differences between this plan and the June Covid-19 Safety Plans are:

- Plans no longer need to be approved by WorkSafeBC
- Cohort requirements and Covid-19 restrictions on gathering sizes are removed
- **Strict social distancing of 2m is no longer required but the school will be arranged to maximize space between people**
- Physical barriers and directional arrows are no longer required
- Cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces **continues at once a day**
- Increased emphasis on ventilation systems.

Attendance and Record Keeping

Schools will 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 will be kept for at least 45 days to assist with contact tracing and retrospective analysis by public health (if needed).

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Ventilation & Air Exchange

All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly.

- Merv-13 filters are installed on all mechanical HVAC systems.
- Outside air dampers are set to increase the amount of outside air into the recirculation system.
- Open windows when the weather permits.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting protocols are reverted to the pre-covid protocols.

- Frequently touched surfaces (those touched by larger numbers of people) and non-frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day.
- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.
- Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices.
- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness.

Visitors

Visitors will be limited to those who are supporting activities that directly benefit student learning and well-being (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, etc.)

Please call the school to arrange a zoom or phone appointment if you need to connect with someone at the school. If you require to come in person, call to make an appointment. In person visitors will be required to ring the doorbell at the entrance to gain access and will need to sign in and confirm they have completed a self-health check prior to their visit.

Gathering and Events - Paused until further notice

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:

Organizers should:

- respect student and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
- use space available to spread people out as much as possible, respecting room occupancy limits, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntarily physical contact between attendees (i.e. overcrowding);
- use gradual transitions to larger gatherings including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person sessions, etc.

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Space Arrangement

Within schools and offices SD84 will take the following steps to maximize the space between people:

- Spread 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.
- Implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition and break times.
- Incorporate more individual activities and activities that encourage greater space between people, and avoid activities that require close face-to-face contact.
- Encourage and 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.
- Limit visitors. Schools will 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 will 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.
- Take activities outdoors when possible (and weather allows)

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.

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.

Itinerant Staff, Temporary Teachers on Call, Parents and Others (also see "Visitors" section)

The district Communicable Disease Plan will be posted near the entrance of all district schools and offices.

- Signs will be posted reminding all who enter to read the plan.
- Specific details such as the use of masks and check-in procedures for visitors will be posted for emphasis at each entry point accessible by visitors.
- Itinerant Staff and TTOC's will be orientated to the plan.

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Curriculum, Programs and Activities

Physical Education

- Spread out students and staff within available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible.
- K-12 staff and students are required to wear masks during PHE/outdoor program classes when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.
- Students are not required to wear masks during high-intensity physical activities⁶ (e.g. stationary bike, weightlifting, basketball, soccer); mask use during these activities is left to Staff are encouraged to move high-intensity physical activities outdoors whenever possible.
- For low intensity activities (e.g. yoga, walking), students are required to wear masks when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.

Field Trips - Paused until further notice

~~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.~~

- ~~● When planning field trips, staff will follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document.~~
- ~~● Additional measures specific to field trips will be taken, including:~~
 - ~~○ For transportation, including school bus transportation, public transit and carpooling, see guidance in the transportation section in this document.~~
 - ~~○ Schools must ensure that volunteers providing supervision are trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines.~~
 - ~~○ Alignment with relevant local, regional, provincial and federal public health recommendations and Orders, including for international travel.~~
 - ~~○ Schools will consider guidance provided for overnight camps from BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodation.~~

Food Programs

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

- Food Safety
 - In the case of food and culinary programs, where food is prepared as part of learning and is consumed by the students who prepared it, the following health and safety measures will apply:
 - Continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements
 - Implement the cleaning and disinfecting measures outlined in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document
 - FOODSAFE Level 1 covers important food safety and worker safety information including foodborne illness, receiving and storing food, preparing food, serving food, and cleaning

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and sanitizing. It is a helpful resource for those seeking education and training on food safety practices

- Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Protocols
 - Practice diligent hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. (Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.) Students and staff will wash their hands in alignment with normal food safety measures and requirements.
 - Refer to the Cleaning and Disinfecting section for cleaning/disinfecting protocols.
 - For laundry, follow the instructions provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of these guidelines.
- Schools can accept food donations to support learning and the delivery of meal programs, breakfast clubs and other food access initiatives.
- Schools will continue to emphasize that food and beverages should not be shared.
- School meal programs will follow regular operating practices.

Fundraisers - Paused until further notice

Schools can continue to offer fundraisers that can be implemented in line with the guidelines outlined in this document. If the fundraisers involve the sale of food items, they should also align with the [Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools](#).

Kindergarten Program and Entry (Not Applicable)

- 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.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use. Carpets and rugs (e.g. for circle time activities) can also be used.

Music Programs

- K-12 staff and students must wear masks when indoors and a barrier is not present. Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected as per Cleaning and Disinfecting guidelines and students will be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after music equipment use.
- Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. instrument mouth pieces) will not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.

Shared Office Space for Staff

- The guidelines in this document will be used to determine what measures will be in place within staff-only spaces within a school (e.g. break rooms, school office).

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- WorkSafeBC guidance for workplaces will be used to determine what measures will be in place for non-school spaces operated by a school district or independent school authority (e.g. board/authority offices, maintenance facilities, etc.).
- See the Personal Protective Equipment section for more information on mask requirements for staff.

Playgrounds

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

- Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play
- Attempt to minimize unintentional physical contact between students
- Sand and water can be used for play if children wash their hands before and after play. COVID-19 does not survive well on surfaces, other than hard surfaces. There is no evidence showing that the virus survives on sand, in water or on playdough.

School Sports - Paused until further notice

~~Intra and inter school programs, activities (e.g. intramurals, sports team practices, games), sports academies and events can continue in alignment with the following guidance:~~

- ~~• Requirements of relevant local, regional and provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events.~~
- ~~• Masks are worn by K-12 staff, other adults and students when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.
 - ~~○ Students are not required to wear masks during high-intensity sport activities⁷ (e.g. stationary bike, weightlifting, basketball, soccer); mask use during these activities is left to staff.~~
 - ~~○ Staff are encouraged to move high-intensity sport activities outdoors whenever possible.~~
 - ~~○ For low-intensity sport activities (e.g. stretching, golf), students are required to wear masks when they are indoors and a barrier is not present.~~~~
- ~~• Use all available space to spread students and staff out as much as possible.~~

~~Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document.~~

- ~~• Students will be encouraged to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g. before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.~~
- ~~• Equipment that touches the mouth (e.g. water bottles) will not be shared unless cleaned and disinfected in between uses.~~

~~Sport activities will be held outside whenever possible.~~

Extracurricular Activities - Paused until further notice

~~Intra and inter school extracurricular activities and special interest clubs can occur in alignment with the guidelines in this document and requirements of relevant local, regional and provincial public health recommendations and Orders for community gatherings and events.~~

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Bus Transportation - Resuming Monday, January 10, 2022

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

- Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.
- Passengers are encouraged to wash their hands before and after trips.
- Spread passengers out if empty seats are available.
- Windows are opened when the weather allows.
- All people 12 and older will 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.

Community Use of Schools - Paused until further notice

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

Water Stations & Fountains

Limiting the use of water fountains is no longer recommended. Schools will continue to clean and disinfect water fountains as a frequently touched surface and encourage hand hygiene before and after use.

Daily Health Check

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

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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 will 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 will 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.

Strategies to ensure diligent hand hygiene:

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- 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.
- 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 will assist younger students with hand hygiene as needed.

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

Mask requirements will, at minimum, adhere with any regional or provincial public health Orders.

All staff, adult volunteers and visitors, and all students in “bricks and mortar” schools will 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.) will continue to follow guidance from WorkSafe BC. At this time (fall 2021) staff will wear masks in areas where services to the public are provided.

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

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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 will be prevented from attending or fully participating in school if they are not wearing a mask.

Orientation

SD84 will provide COVID-19 safety orientation opportunities for staff prior to students arriving for the first day of school, and in consultation with their local unions and staff health & safety representatives.

Site Committee and Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings should include discussion and review of resources available to staff through their local unions and/or Human Resource departments (e.g. Employee Assistance Program, Counselling Services, [BCTF Health and Wellness Program](#), CUPE Joint Early Intervention Program, etc).