



# Addendum - Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings



December 29, 2021

This document is an addendum to the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#). It outlines focused actions and additional prevention measures B.C. public and independent K-12 schools must implement in response to the recent rise of cases of COVID-19 due to the emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant. It builds on the [Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) developed by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure schools have effective measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. This addendum is in place until rescinded.

## Reinforce In-Place Prevention Measures

Variants of COVID-19 spread the same way as the original COVID-19. That means the prevention measures already in place in schools continue to be effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading. These include everyone eligible getting fully vaccinated, doing a daily health check and staying home when sick, wearing masks, and cleaning hands regularly. Schools should ensure the prevention measures already in place are consistently implemented.

## Implement Additional Prevention Measures

Schools **must** implement the additional prevention measures outlined in the table below before January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

## Take Action

### Update Communicable Disease Plans

All schools must update their communicable disease plans to incorporate the additional measures included in this addendum, use the attached checklist to support implementation, and review ongoing prevention measures to identify areas where measures may be inconsistently implemented and to identify mitigation efforts. Measures should be communicated to the school community (e.g., newsletters, posters, etc.) to support awareness and compliance.

### Reinforce Personal Prevention Practices

All schools should support the implementation of personal prevention practices through:

- Providing regular reminders to students, families, and staff about the importance of completing a [daily health check](#), staying home when sick, and following public health recommendations.
- Having staff demonstrate and model how to practice personal prevention measures at school (e.g., wearing a mask, hand hygiene, etc.).
- Sharing trusted information from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

### Supportive School Environments

Schools must continue to support personal prevention practices (including mask use) through positive and inclusive approaches, aligned with existing professional practices to address non-compliant

behaviour. Approaches should not exclude students from participating in school or potentially result in stigma.

Schools should continue to utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g., gatherings and events), including considerations around respecting others personal space.

Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement		
Prevention Measures		Implementation and Examples
<b>Space Arrangement</b>	Maximize space between people.	Different common space, classroom, and learning environment configurations (e.g., different desk and table formations).  Limit and, whenever possible, avoid face-to-face seating arrangements.
	Implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition and break times.	Stagger start/stop times, or recess/snack, lunch and class transition times.  Regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes (e.g., examinations, physical education) should be spread out across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible, but do not need to be reduced in size.
<b>Staff Only Spaces</b>	Hold staff-only gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities) virtually.	
<b>School Gatherings And Events (including Extracurricular)</b>	Hold school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) virtually.  If gatherings and events must be in-person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), minimize the number of people in attendance as much as possible, do not exceed 50% operating capacity, and do not allow spectators.	For indoor spaces without a defined operating capacity, schools should determine a capacity limit that is at most half the number of individuals that would be within the space for that activity or event if prevention measures weren't in place.
<b>Visitor Access</b>	Limit visitors to those that are supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing	E.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc..

## Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement

Prevention Measures	Implementation and Examples
<p><b>Sports</b></p>	<p>Extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused.</p> <p>Sports tournaments are a single or multi-day gathering of three or more sports teams, who come together outside regular league play for the purpose of teams playing against multiple other teams, but does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gathering where team members compete on an individual basis against members of other teams, or</li> <li>• A gathering where the result will decide if a team will advance to play in a national or international competition.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Masks</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">PHO Order – Face Coverings</a> requires all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask indoors at school.</p> <p>Everyone who is able to (i.e., does not have a mask exemption) must wear a mask.</p> <p>Reminders communicated to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wearing masks at school is required under a public health order.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Proper fit</a> is a key factor in mask effectiveness. Masks worn at school should fit well.</li> <li>• Masks are most effective when everyone who is able to is wearing one.</li> <li>• Those with mask exemptions continue to follow any strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Those not able to wear a mask all day continue to be encouraged to wear one as much as they're able to.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Administrators and staff use positive and inclusive approaches, aligned with existing professional practices to address non-compliant behaviour for those able to wear masks. For those with mask exemptions, administrators and staff support other strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures (as outlined in the <a href="#">Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions</a>).</p> <p>For those with mask exemptions, alternative strategies identified are adjusted if needed, based on the additional prevention measures.</p>