



Guidelines for Maintaining Safe & Healthy Schools in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division
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Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Guidelines for Maintaining Safe and Healthy Schools in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

This document has been created by the Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division to serve as a guide to keep Holy Spirit employees, students, parents, and community partners safe in this time of COVID-19.

This document outlines safety information and protocols that need to be considered. This plan will be updated, as necessary, to continue following guidelines outlined by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Alberta and the Minister of Education.

Please ensure you have the most recent version and this plan is posted at the worksite.

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Mission Statement

We are a Catholic Faith Community, dedicated to providing each student entrusted to our care with an education rooted in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, in partnership with home, parish and society, our schools foster the growth of responsible citizens who will live, celebrate and proclaim their faith.

Our Catholic Faith is the foundation of all that we do.

Introduction

The Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division (Holy Spirit) is receiving guidance and direction from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, local Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Education. The division is adjusting its plans as the situation evolves, while the province continues its response to this pandemic. We are committed to keeping parents, students, staff, and the community informed about health and safety issues in relation to COVID-19.

Holy Spirit's Senior Administrative Leadership Team has been meeting weekly since March 17, 2020, when the Minister of Education announced the suspension of in-school instruction. On March 20, 2020, school divisions were instructed to develop Education Continuity Plans for students based on four guiding principles.

Guiding Principles

1. The safety of students and staff comes first.
2. Student learning will continue.
3. Resources continue to flow to schools.
4. School authorities have flexibility to do what is best for their community

On April 30, 2020, as part of the Province's relaunch strategy, Premier Jason Kenney announced that students would not return to in-school classes for the remainder of the academic year. School divisions developed re-entry plans based on the following scenarios that could exist when the 2020/2021 school year begins in September:

1. A return to near normal operations and routines in schools. Holy Spirit Catholic School Division is calling this **NEAR NORMAL OPERATIONS**.
2. Schools are partially reopened, with some level of restrictions. These restrictions will be determined by Alberta Health Services and Alberta Education. This means that a combination of in-school and at-home learning opportunities may exist. Holy Spirit Catholic School Division is calling this **HYBRID OPERATIONS**.
3. Schools remain closed and students continue learning from home. Holy Spirit Catholic School Division is calling this **AT-HOME LEARNING**.

On July 21, 2020, the Government of Alberta announced that schools would be opening with in Scenario 1, "Near Normal Operations," for the 2020/2021 school year.

Purpose of These Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines for maintaining safe and healthy schools is to:

1. Ensure staff members are aware of Public Health protocols and school division procedures that allow them to safely care for children, colleagues and themselves;
2. Inform school division employees of best practices to reduce the risk of infections through the transmission of COVID-19; and
3. Ensure all school division employees are aware of their responsibility to ensure the health and safety of themselves, other staff and students.

The risk of infection from COVID-19 cannot be eliminated. This makes the workplace potentially hazardous. Because of this, the school division is taking direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, as well as Alberta Education. To mitigate the risk of infection, the school division is implementing a number of controls which include physical barriers and other measures to eliminate the hazard, administrative protocols such as physical distancing, hand washing, and hand sanitizing, and the use of personal protective equipment where necessary.

Responsibilities

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division/Employer

- Comply with the Employer's responsibilities, as outlined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS Act), Section 3*.
- Select, implement, and document risk assessments and appropriate site-specific control measures.
- Ensure resources required to implement and maintain guidelines are made available, as is reasonable and practical (e.g. safe work procedures, worker training, and personal protective equipment (PPE)).
- Ensure workers use appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves and face shields) as required
- Ensure supervisors and workers are informed about the content of safety policies.
- Maintain records of training and inspections.
- Ensure all employees have access to a copy of these guidelines.
- Conduct periodic reviews of the guideline's effectiveness.
- Re-examine all tasks in the workplace, especially those that require the direct care of students, and ensure that safe work procedures are updated with COVID-19 practices.
- Where possible, have workers perform only essential tasks to maintain the student's education and well-being. Tasks that are non-essential should be put on hold until directed otherwise by the provincial health officer.
- Ensure employees do not come to work when:
 - Exhibiting COVID-19 -like symptoms such as fever, chills, sneezing, running nose, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
 - Employees must complete the [Alberta Health COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) and follow the directions regarding testing and/or self-isolation as outlined.

Supervisors

- Ensure that a worker, under the supervisor's supervision, works in the manner and in accordance with the procedures and measures required by the *OHS Act*, regulations, and code. (*OHS Act, Section 4*)
- Ensure that workers are adequately instructed in the controls for hazards at the worksite location, including controls required to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Ensure workers use appropriate PPE.
- Direct work in a manner that eliminates or minimizes risk to workers.

Workers

- Cooperate with the employer and supervisors to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and of other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site where they are working. (*OHS Act, Section 5*)
- Know the hazards of the workplace and controls required to minimize their own risk and the risk of others to exposure to COVID-19.
- Participate in COVID-19 related training and instructions.
- Follow established safe work procedures as directed by the employer or supervisor.
- Use any required personal protective equipment (PPE), as instructed.
- Report any unsafe conditions or acts to the supervisor.
- Know how and when to report exposure incidents.

Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC)

- Ensure a mechanism is in place for workers to raise any concerns about the risk of COVID-19 exposure at the workplace. These concerns should be expressed to the JWHSC or an individual school safety liaison.
- Committee members participate in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of, or in connection with, activities at the work site.
- Ensure that JWHSC members or safety liaisons are involved in the development of control plans for different job tasks.
- Promote approved physical distancing measures.
- Provide feedback on the effectiveness of control measures implemented.

Plant Operations Coordinator

- Maintain an inventory of PPE for caretakers, cleaning and disinfectant products, and well-maintained equipment used for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Provide adequate instruction to caretakers on the hazards associated with cleaning work areas and on the safe work procedures specified in these guidelines.
- Direct the work in a manner that ensures the risk to caretakers is minimized and adequately controlled.
- Revise the work schedule to ensure priority intensive cleaning of impacted work area surfaces and touch points.

Workers' Rights and Responsibilities

Everyone in the workplace has distinct responsibilities regarding health and safety. Employers, supervisors, workers, and contractors have a role to play in keeping the workplace safe.

1. The right to know about hazards in the workplace.
2. The right to participate in health and safety activities in the workplace.
3. The right to refuse unsafe work without getting punished or fired.

Procedure - Refusing Unsafe Work

1. Report the unsafe work condition to your supervisor.
2. Your supervisor must immediately investigate with the worker and ensure that any unsafe condition is remedied without delay.
3. If the employee still believes the work is unsafe and declines to carry out the work assigned, the supervisor must investigate this matter with the worker and a worker member of the JWHSC or an employee selected by the employee's union.
4. The employee may be given a temporary assignment to alternate work, without loss in pay, until the matter is resolved. The worker is required to accept the reassignment of work until the return to original duties. A second worker may be asked to perform the first worker's task given that the nature of the first worker's refusal is explained to the second worker and the second worker agrees to do the task.
5. The supervisor must inform the worker of the investigation results. If the issue is not resolved after investigation with the committee member and the worker still believes it is unsafe to work, the worker and supervisor must immediately notify the Facilities and Safety Supervisor, who will then contact an Alberta OHS Officer to investigate the work refusal.

See the Government of Alberta' webpage for more information about [refusing dangerous work](#).

COVID-19

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses found mostly in animals. In humans, they can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). The disease caused by the new coronavirus has been named COVID-19. While many of the characteristics of COVID-19 are still unknown, mild to severe illness has been reported for confirmed cases. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020.

The [Alberta Health COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) is available for anyone that develops [symptoms](#) and can be used to help determine if you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.

Symptoms

Symptoms for COVID-19 are similar to those for influenza or other respiratory illnesses.

Anyone who has the following symptoms are legally required to [self-isolate](#) and should be tested for COVID-19:

- fever¹
- new onset of cough or worsening chronic cough
- new or worsening shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- sore throat
- runny nose

If you are not tested for COVID-19, you MUST [self-isolate](#) for 10 days following the start of these symptoms and until you are feeling better, whichever is longer.

It is also recommended that you be tested if you present with any of the following additional symptoms:

- chills
- painful swallowing
- stuffy nose
- headache
- muscle or joint ache
- feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion
- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite
- loss of sense of smell or taste
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)

If you have these symptoms, it is strongly advised that you stay home and minimize contact with others until you are feeling better. Complete the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) for more information.

Responding to Illness

- Staff members, parents, and children/students must not enter the school if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Schools must develop procedures to address staff that become symptomatic during the school day to allow that staff member to isolate/leave the school for the time recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Health Services. The staff member should access COVID-19 testing using the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).
- If a child/student develops symptoms while at the school, the child/student should be asked to wear a non-medical mask if they are able to, and be isolated in a separate room. Schools will have a designated sick room. The parent/guardian will be notified to

¹ Average normal body temperature taken orally is about 37°C. For more on normal body temperature and fevers, see MyHealth.Alberta.ca's information for [children age 11 and younger](#) and for [people age 12 and older](#).

come and pick up the child/student immediately. The child/student must be kept at least 2 metres away from other children/students. The parent/guardian of the student should access COVID-19 testing by accessing the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).

- If the child/student requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the child/student until the parent is able to pick up the child/student. The student and staff should wear a mask and close interactions with the student that may result in contact with the student's respiratory secretions should be avoided. If very close contact is required and the child is young, the staff member should also use a face shield or eye protection.
- Staff/students must wash their hands before donning a mask and before and after removing the mask (as per [Alberta Health's guidance regarding the use of masks](#)), and before and after touching any items used by the child/student.
- All items the student touched/used while isolated must be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child/student has been picked up. Items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected (e.g. paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed from the classroom and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 10 days.
- Schools must keep records of a student's known pre-existing conditions. If a student develops symptoms in or outside of the program that could be caused by COVID-19 or by a known preexisting condition (e.g. allergies), the student should be tested for COVID-19 at least once to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the school.
- If two or more staff/students within a cohort are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the school should follow outbreak notification procedures as per routine zone protocols (under review for September 2020).
- Should a case of COVID-19 be identified at a school, in keeping with the *Public Health Act*, neither the school nor the school division will be privy to any confidential information.

Daily Screening

- Before leaving home, staff, children/students, visitors, and volunteers who will access the school for work or education, **must** self-screen for symptoms each day that they enter the school using the [Alberta Daily Self-Screening Tool](#).
- Parents and children/students must be provided a copy of the screening tool upon school registration with the expectation that it needs to be completed on a daily basis.
- Schools must keep records of children's/student known pre-existing conditions. If a child/student develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g., allergies), the child/student should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to school.
- Anyone that reports symptoms should be directed to stay home, seek health care advice as appropriate (e.g., call Health Link 811, or their primary health care practitioner, or 911 for emergency response), and fill out the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if they should be tested.
- [Signs](#) must be posted at all entrances reminding persons not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

Building Safety

- Area rugs and furnishings with porous fabric must be removed.
- All classrooms, other teaching spaces, and offices must be de-cluttered.
- Increased frequency of cleaning of permanent carpets is recommended.
- Hand hygiene and cleaning requirements for schools will address:
 - The placement of hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol content (or a non-alcohol-based hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada) in entrances, exits, classroom entrances, near high-touch equipment and other high traffic areas.
 - High contact surfaces;
 - Washrooms;
 - Shared equipment;
 - Auxiliary spaces and common rooms; and
 - Other areas that may apply.
- Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high-touch areas and equipment, inside and outside classrooms.
- Students and staff are required to perform hand hygiene when entering and exiting the school as well as before entering the classroom.
- Proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette will be promoted.
- Students and staff should bring their own water bottles for refilling. Water fountains will be closed, with the exception of water bottle refill stations. Knobs and push buttons are considered high touch surfaces and must be regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Additional Alberta Health Services resources:
 - [Infection Prevention & Control posters](#)
 - [“How to Hand Wash” poster](#)
 - [“How to Use Alcohol-based Hand Rub” poster](#)
 - “If you could see ‘em you’d clean ‘em” posters for young children ([Poster 1](#) and [Poster 2](#))

Cleaning Responsibilities

- Regular, enhanced, and as needed cleaning will be performed by caretaking staff:
 - Daytime caretakers will disinfect contact surfaces and high contact areas.
 - Caretakers will ensure ongoing inspection and filling of hand washing supplies, including alcohol-based sanitizer dispensers.
 - Caretakers will monitor supplies to ensure all necessary supplies are available.
 - Evening caretaking staff will thoroughly clean all areas.
 - The Plant Operations Coordinator will provide cleaning kits with approved disinfectants, PPE and materials.
 - Caretakers will check the sign-in/out sheet at the main entry at every shift to monitor people who have been in the building. All areas in the school that have been accessed must be cleaned.

- Other staff may also be required to clean/disinfect areas as needed in order to maintain a safe environment:
 - Division approved cleaning/disinfecting supplies are provided;
 - Do not bring cleaners from home;
 - Do not take school materials home to clean.
- If cleaning is required, staff should notify the principal or school office.
- The principal or school office will request cleaning, per their protocol with caretaking staff.
- Employees using division vehicles must clean and sanitize the vehicles after use.

Cleaning² and Disinfecting³

Regular cleaning and disinfection is essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces.

Schools will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with [Alberta Health Services' COVID Public Health Recommendations for Environmental Cleaning of Public Facilities.](#)

This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once a day.
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day.
- These include doorknobs, light switches, bathroom faucets, front desk counter, toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, keyboards, toys, etc. Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- All sites will use common, division-provided detergents and disinfectant products and closely follow the instructions on the label.
- Eliminate items from classrooms and other areas that are not easily cleaned (e.g., area rugs, fabric or soft items).
- De-clutter teaching spaces and school office.
- Empty garbage containers daily.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine). Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.

General Cleaning Guidelines

- Clean and disinfect shared high-touch surfaces regularly:
 - Door handles and door edges;
 - Bathroom faucets;
 - Front desk counter;
 - Shared tables.
- Shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms should also be cleaned more often.

² **Cleaning** is the physical removal of visible soiling (e.g. dust, soil, blood, mucus). Cleaning removes, rather than kills, viruses and bacteria. It is done with water, detergents and steady friction from a cleaning cloth. Cleaning for COVID-19 virus is the same as for other common viruses. All visibly soiled surfaces should be cleaned before disinfected.

³ **Disinfection** is the killing of viruses and bacteria. A disinfectant is only applied to objects, never on the human body. It is recommended that high-touch surfaces be disinfected at least twice each day.

- Clean areas where students and staff are/were present.
- Clean high-touch electronic devices (e.g. keyboards, tablets, smartboards) by spraying microfiber cloth with appropriate disinfectant and wiping device.
- Use damp cleaning methods such as damp clean cloths and/or a wet mop for dusting and sweeping. Do not dry dust or sweep, as this can distribute virus droplets into the air.
- Cleaning to remove debris/soil (e.g. floor care and dusting will be done as time permits).

Cleaning Supplies/Equipment

- Ensure adequate hand washing supplies at all times (e.g. soap, paper towels and alcohol-based hand sanitizer (minimum 60%) where hand washing is not readily available).
- Disinfectants used must have a Drug Information Number (DIN) with a virucidal claim. Solutions containing the following types of disinfectants are currently approved for use in Holy Spirit Catholic School Division.
 - Accelerated hydrogen peroxide (0.5%). These are the preferred type of cleaner disinfectants by the division due to the broad kill spectrum and they are tolerated by most persons.
 - As a last resort, diluted household bleach may be used. Add 9 ml of bleach to 1 litre of water. Please note that bleach is not generally recommended in school environments due to its instability and corrosive nature.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use of cleaning and disinfecting products (e.g. wear gloves, use in well ventilated areas, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used).
- Reusable cleaning items can be washed using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90 degrees Celsius).

Cleaning of Tools/Equipment and Desks/Workstations

- Staff who clean equipment will use gloves, a spray bottle, and a division approved disinfectant solution.
- Staff will follow the directions provided by the manufacturer to clean.
- When cleaning a vehicle, make sure to clean outside in a well-ventilated area with the vehicle windows down.

Staff are responsible for cleaning their tools/equipment and desk/workstation throughout the workday. This will ensure limiting the risk of infection from staff to staff:

- Cleaning shall be conducted, at a minimum, in the morning (prior to commencement of work), afternoon (after lunch), and at the end of the day. Additional cleaning throughout the day shall be repeated whenever possible.
- Allocate enough time to do a thorough cleaning of surfaces of tools/equipment touched during the workday.
- All sets of keys that are used by maintenance staff and keys loaned out to other staff must also be cleaned prior to shift/lending out and upon end of shift/return of keys.
- If any tools/equipment cannot be cleaned, please contact your supervisor for further direction.
- Limit sharing of any tools/equipment with other staff while on shift.

Cleaning of High Touch Surfaces

- School division caretaking staff continue to clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces throughout the workday.
- If school-based staff or other school division site staff require cleaning for their personal desk/workstation/areas, they may request a spray bottle of the disinfectant solution and paper towel from their head caretaker.

Physical Distancing

It is important that we do what we can to try to assist children/students and staff to understand the importance of minimizing the frequency of physical contact with one another and try to maintain a distance of, at least two meters from others, as much as possible. Physical distancing can be challenging in a K-12 educational setting, particularly with younger children. Physical distancing involves making changes in everyday routines, in order to minimize contact with others. Recommendations include:

- Physical distancing (2 metre spacing) is a useful public health measure to help prevent the spread of disease. Increasing the space between persons decreases the risk of transmission. Where 2 metres is not possible between desks, the greatest possible spacing is recommended.
 - If 2 metres cannot be arranged between desks/tables, students should be arranged so they are not facing each other (e.g. arranged in rows rather than in small groups of 4 or a semi-circle). This way, if a student coughs or sneezes, they are not likely to cough or sneeze directly on the face of another student.
- In situations where physical distancing is not possible, face masks must be worn and an extra emphasis should be placed on hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, not participating when sick and cleaning and disinfecting on a regular basis before and after activities is strongly recommended.
 - In circumstances where 2 metres of physical distance is not possible (especially if the circumstance requires prolonged close contact for longer than 15 minutes), teachers, staff and students must wear a nonmedical face mask to protect one another. [Alberta Health Services' guidance on mask use is available here.](#)
- It is still recommended to maintain physical distancing within a cohort whenever possible to minimize the risk for disease transmission (i.e., spacing between desks).
- Avoiding close greetings like hugs or handshakes; remind children to keep hands to themselves.
- Help younger children learn about physical distancing by creating games. Older children can be provided age appropriate reading material and encouraged to self-regulate.
- Take children outside more often, perhaps breaking children into smaller groups.
- Organize learning activities outside including snack time, play-based learning and play time.
- Regularly clean and sanitize items that are designed to be shared, such as electronics.
- Set up mini environments within the school to reduce the number of children in a group.
- Consider different classroom configurations to maintain distance between children (e.g. separating desks) or different locations in the school (e.g. gym, library, outside).
- Increase the space between children and staff during activities such as snack/lunch (e.g. move or separate tables, move chairs farther apart).

- Set up distinct areas for children who may have symptoms of illness until they can be picked up and ensure these areas are sanitized regularly.
- Staggering snack/lunch time to accommodate smaller groups/more space.
- No food or drink sharing of any kind on the premises.
- Use educational videos/online programs/social stories as a part of learning.
- Encourage independent learning and distancing from each other.
- Limiting contact with people at higher risk (e.g. older adults and those in poor health).
- Keeping a distance of at least two meters from others, as much as possible.
- Limit any contacts closer than two meters to the shortest time possible.
- Reduce activities that require close proximity or contact with people.
- Strive to minimize the number of different teachers and education assistants that interact with groups of students throughout the day.
- Stagger pick up and drop off times.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including hallways. Consider the use of one-way systems. The use of markers for floors and/or walls may also be used.

Staff Members

- Greet with a wave instead of a handshake.
- Follow task specific safe work procedures outlined in this plan.
- Practice regular hand washing and physical distancing.
- Separate yourselves from others and go home as soon as you have any symptoms.

Students Requiring Assistance with Personal Care

During the school day, staff members working with students who require assistance with personal care should follow all of the steps above for students for whom maintaining physical distance is possible, in addition to the following steps:

- Follow all health and safety measures in place prior to the COVID-19 situation for provision of personal care assistance.
- Do not have other students in the room with the student.
- Where PPE has been identified for tasks prior to COVID-19 pandemic, continue to use this PPE when performing these tasks.
- If required to work within close proximity to a student such as assisting the student with toileting a face shield shall be worn.

Students for Whom Maintaining Physical Distance is NOT Possible

Maintaining physical distance is not possible for all students. This may include young students, students with intellectual disabilities, students whose functioning is impacted by specific neurological or health issues. If this is the case, additional controls (PPE) may be required.

The Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

On August 4, 2020 the Government of Alberta made the following pertaining to masks:

- **Kindergarten to Grade 3 Students** - Mask use is optional. However, ALL students are required to wear a face mask while riding a school bus.
- **Grade 4 to Grade 12 Students** - Mask use is required in all shared and common areas such as hallways and buses. Mask use in classrooms is required when 2 metres of physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- **Staff** - Mask use is required in all situations, including classrooms, when 2 metres of physical distancing cannot be maintained.

The use of other PPE such as face shields will not be mandatory. While face shields can help to reduce exposure, they are not equivalent to a mask. Therefore, staff who choose to wear a face shield must also wear a face mask.

Where PPE has been identified for tasks prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, continue to use this PPE when performing these tasks.

Any use of personal protective equipment that impacts the employee's work must be reviewed by the Facilities and Safety Supervisor in consultation with the supervisor.

Behaviour Support Plans

At times, students may exhibit challenges with self-regulation that presents as mal-adaptive behavior. The school learning team will develop a behavior support plan that addresses specific strategies required for the student to be successful in the learning environment. For some students that exhibit behavior that may place themselves or others in imminent danger a reactive safety plan may be developed.

Some student behavior, such as spitting or biting, may increase the risk of transmission of viruses including COVID-19 through exposure to bodily fluids. Although this behaviour is challenging, if the student is asymptomatic and healthy, the risk of transmission is low, especially if the behaviour is paired with hand washing and cleaning.

If during the course of interaction with students, staff are exposed to bodily fluid such as saliva the following recommendations are in place:

- Wipe down any area contacted by saliva with approved sanitizer or disinfectant wipes.
- If in contact with saliva, wash hands and/or affected areas.
- If in contact with saliva, wash hands and/or affected areas.
- Wear gloves.

Personal Care Plans

Students with complex health needs may require support for activities of daily living (feeding, toileting, etc.). The same personal protective equipment needed prior to COVID-19, such as masks, gloves, and gowns, as identified and required supporting a student's personal care needs, continues to be required during this time of concern due to COVID-19. No additional personal protective equipment is required unless identified on a case by case basis by the health authority. For particularly complex cases, example feeding tubes, direct inquiries to the Director of Support Services.

School Site Protocols (Mandatory Protocols for School Sites)

The following protocols will ensure controlled access and movement for currently active school sites.

Arrival and Movement Procedures

Entering and Exiting

- There should be no non-essential persons allowed into the school.
- Access to the school by non-school division individuals, including parents, is by appointment only. Principals must approve all visits.
- Division support staff, including maintenance, and Board Office Staff, must access schools through appointment only.
- Division maintenance staff must use sign in procedures when entering the building.
- Designated entrance(s) and exit(s) and reduce contact when passing.
- Signage on designated entrances and exits to provide instructions and public health information.
- Limit access times and days for staff or students to be in the building (e.g. Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm access only).
- Sign in/out for all visitors – name, phone number, date, time in, time out, areas visiting.
- Hand washing/sanitizer at point of entry for use on arrival.
- Part-time staff will enter/exit buildings according to their regular schedule.

Occupancy Limits in Rooms

In order to reduce risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19, review small or shared spaces to limit the number of people in spaces.

Visitors and Access to Schools

- All visitors to the school are required to wear a face mask any time 2 metres social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Continue to follow school division visitor procedures (e.g. sign in at the main office).
- A record of all visitors must be kept, including contact information
- Limit school visits. Visitors must phone the office to make an appointment (e.g. pick up student information, materials, etc.).
- Parents/caregivers can leave messages for staff/teachers to call back when available.
- Contact information for making appointments posted on the school website and school door.
- Drop off and pick up of children will be outside only and if available, located at the exterior classroom door. If this is not available, a school plan will be developed to ensure a limited number of students are in one area.
- Parents/caregivers should not be permitted to attend classrooms, or walk throughout the school.
- Office waiting area with designated sitting/standing area; adjust furniture and use signage.
- All visitors should complete the [Alberta Daily Self-Screening Tool](#).

- Visitors who have travelled outside Canada or had any symptoms in the past 14 days should not enter the school.

Movement by Staff in Schools

To accommodate staff members being in schools and worksites and to ensure physical distancing, the following guidelines must be followed:

- All staff are required at all times to practice physical distancing.
- All staff entering or exiting schools or buildings must sign in and out each day.
- Any staff demonstrating any symptoms of cold, flu, or COVID-19 must remain at home under self-isolation. Staff are asked to use the online self-assessment tool [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if their symptoms pose a risk to public health.
- If a staff member has been in a building and subsequently develops symptoms, this must be reported to the principal/supervisor immediately.
- During the re-engagement period for staff, principals/supervisors will develop a schedule for staff to access/exit the building. This will ensure that only a specific number of people will be using the entrance to the building at any one time.
- No part of the school or facility may be used for personal business, including self-isolation.

Movement by Staff and Students in Schools

- School teams will create a plan for entrance and exit with physical distancing during lunch, recess, and the beginning and end of school. Outside classroom doors will be used.
- A plan for recess and lunch will be developed to ensure that no more than 100 people including staff and students are using the playground at one time. Classes will each be assigned a different playground/gym space to use to ensure physical distancing.
- Limit contact of students and staff from different classrooms by staggering time outdoors (e.g. schedule shifts), break/recess time, lunch time in classrooms, and staggering entry times.
- Elementary and Junior high schools will be considered closed campuses, meaning students will not be permitted to leave the school during breaks. High school students are encouraged to remain on campus throughout the day to minimize risk of exposure.
- Follow entry/re-entry of school protocol.

Use of Water Dispensers and Water Fountains

- Students and staff should bring their own water bottles.
- Fill stations (water dispensers) can be used to fill individual water bottles.
- Do NOT use fountain or mouthpiece features of the water dispensers.
- Do NOT use water fountains.

Use of Washrooms by Students in Schools

- Student access to the washrooms should be staggered to avoid congregation.

- Doors to washroom entrances should remain open.
- Caretakers will clean washroom faucets, surfaces, and doors handles regularly.
- Washrooms should be designated to allow for appropriate cleaning.

Classrooms

- As a precautionary measure, classrooms should limit the number of students entering at the same time to ensure physical distancing of two meters.
- Furniture should be spread out to reduce close contact when students are sitting.
- Students should practice physical distancing.
- Students should wash their hands when they enter and leave the classroom/school.

Fire and Emergencies

- In the event of a fire alarm or other emergency, physical distancing may not be possible.
- Follow all regular emergency procedures outlined in the school emergency management plan.

Staff Meetings, Assemblies and Large Gatherings

- No in-person school assemblies or large gatherings will occur.
- In person staff meetings may occur so long as physical distancing requirements are adhered to. If not, face masks must be worn.
- Google Meet should be used for class/school presentations.

School Based Requirements

Designated Sick Room

- Principals will select a room with a door that can be used for isolating a sick student and/or staff member while waiting for a parent/caregiver or transportation to arrive.
- Designate a sufficiently large room, preferably close to the pick-up doorway entrance. Put signage up on the doorway (e.g. sick room).
- Designate a washroom nearby for use by symptomatic students only. Put signage up on the washroom door.
- Students that present symptoms of illness must use the sick room until they can be picked up by a parent/guardian.
- The selected area will ideally have a sink with running water and hand washing supplies. Hand sanitizer should be available if no running water is available.
- The room must have a sign posted that this room is in use.
- The selected sick room must not impede the timely provision of school first aid services.
- A Pandemic First Aid Kit will be available with appropriate PPE such as face masks, face shields, and gloves.

High Traffic Areas in School Facilities

Schools must institute controls to promote physical distancing between all attendees in areas in and outside of the classroom, including hallways, washrooms, and common areas. This may include:

- Staggering start and end-times for classes to avoid crowded hallways.
- Posting signs, using stanchions and marking floors.
- Removing and restaging seating in public areas to prevent gathering.
- Considering limiting bathroom occupancy at any one time.

If 2 metres of physical distancing cannot be maintained in any situation, then facemasks must be worn.

De-Cluttering of Classrooms

- Classrooms must be decluttered to minimize the number of surface contacts and items that will need to be cleaned and disinfected.
- Attempts should be made to minimize the number of learning resources made available to students. This includes toys and manipulatives.
- Unnecessary or unused items should be removed from the classroom.
- Desktops and counter surfaces must be kept clear to facilitate ongoing cleaning and disinfection.
- Teaching staff will direct students to take home any unnecessary personal items
- Staff will clearly label toys, manipulative and resources that were used and need to be disinfected. These items will be placed in plastic bins or agreed upon containers to clearly identify the need for cleaning.
- No soft toys, furniture or items not easily cleaned should remain in the classroom (e.g. teddy bears, bean bag chairs).

Hand Washing and Sanitizers

- When available, students and staff members should use classroom sinks to wash hands regularly with soap.
- Classrooms without sinks must have hand sanitizers available for staff and student use.

Desk/Workstation Placement

- Classrooms should be organized in a manner that promotes physical distancing.
- Workspaces and desks must be separated from each other by a minimum of two meters, where possible.

Keyboards and Electronic Devices

- Mobile and other frequently touched electronics like tablets, remotes, keyboards, mice, Chromebooks and gaming consoles can carry germs. These electronics should be cleaned and disinfected after use.
- Personal electronic devices that are not used for learning should be left at home.
- Many school division devices have been borrowed by students and staff to accommodate school work at home. When they are handed in, the school will ensure that each machine is disinfected and cleaned, inspected for defects, and checked in.

To disinfect electronic devices:

- The school will be given computer cleaning supplies; a mixture of 70% isopropyl alcohol / 30% water, a microfiber cloth, and disposable gloves made of latex (or nitrile gloves if you are latex-sensitive) to clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Turn off the device and disconnect AC power. Remove batteries from items like wireless keyboards. Never clean a product while it is powered on or plugged in.
- Disconnect any external devices.
- Moisten the microfiber cloth with a mixture of 70% isopropyl alcohol / 30% water. Do not use fibrous materials such as paper towels or toilet paper. The cloth should be moist, but not dripping wet.
NOTE: Do not immerse or spray any liquids directly onto the product.
- Starting with the display and ending with any flexible cables (like power, keyboard and USB cables), gently wipe the device with the moistened microfiber cloth.
NOTE: Do not allow any moisture to drip into areas like keyboards, display panels, or USB ports located on the printer control panels. Moisture entering the inside of an electronic product can cause extensive damage to the product.
- Inspect the device for defects (e.g. screen, trackpad, keyboard) to ensure it's in good physical working order. Make sure the charger is returned with the machine and note any defects for follow up service.

Musical Instruments

- Wind instruments must not be used.
- Other musical instruments should not be shared at this time. If students are playing musical instruments, each instrument should be labelled for individual use and disinfected after each use.
- If musical instruments must be shared, they must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Shared Equipment

- Personal school supplies should not be pooled and/or shared.
- Use of shared items or equipment is to be avoided where possible.
- Equipment that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Arrangements for storage of personal items should be made.
- Children/students should be provided with an area for storing personal items.

Physical and Health Education

- Gymnasiums can be used to deliver physical education programming. However, when possible, physical education should be delivered outdoors.
- Teachers should choose activities or sports that support physical distancing requirements.
- Students need to participate in activities that allow them to use their own equipment (e.g. yoga, individual skills, running).
- Exercise equipment can only be accessed for individual use (e.g. skipping rope). These items must not be shared. Equipment needs to be disinfected after each use.

Food Services

- No activities that involve the sharing of food between students or staff should occur.
 - Classes that teach food preparation may occur as long as students do not share the food they prepare with other students or staff.
- For classroom and staffroom meals and snacks:
 - Food provided by the family should be stored with the student's belongings.
 - Families should not send food to school that need to be re-heated as microwave ovens will not be accessible at this time.
 - Students should be encouraged to eat their lunch at their desk.
 - No self-serve or family-style meal service. Instead, switch to pre-packaged meals or meals served by designated staff.
 - Close the food preparation areas off that could be accessed by students/children, non-designated staff, or non-essential visitors.
 - Ensure that food-handling staff practice meticulous hand hygiene and are excluded from work if they are symptomatic.
 - Students/children should practice physical distancing while eating.
 - There should be no common food items (e.g., salt and pepper shakers, ketchup).
 - Utensils should be used to serve food items (not fingers).
 - If a school is using a common lunchroom and staggering lunch times, ensure that it is cleaned and disinfected after each use, including all surfaces of the tables and chairs (including the underneath edge of the chair seat) are cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Food Service Programs (Cafeteria) - should follow Alberta Health Services' [COVID-19 Guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs](#)
 - School Cafeterias must use alternate processes to reduce the numbers of people dining together at one time.
 - Remove/rearrange dining tables or place signs on tables/chairs that are not to be used to maintain physical distancing.
 - Place tape or other markings on floors to maintain a physical distancing of 2 metres.
 - Stagger meal service times to reduce the numbers of people present at any one time.
 - Adapt other areas to serve as additional dining space to increase spacing among persons in the same room.
 - Do not use buffets. Instead, switch to pre-packaged meals or meals served by staff.
 - Dispense cutlery, napkins and other items to students/children, rather than allowing them to pick up their own items.

Student Transportation

- Student have access to transportation under Scenario 1. As approved at the June 2020 Regular Meeting of the Board, effective September 2020, bus transportation will only be provided to and from school for students who reside 2.4 kilometres or further from their designated school.
- Transportation protocols for schools in Bow Island, Taber, Coaldale, Picture Butte and Pincher Creek will be managed by the school divisions that manage the transportation in those municipalities.
- Masks are required for all students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 on school buses. This is in keeping with City of Lethbridge bylaw requirements that masks are to be worn on all public transportation, including school buses.
- Parents and children/students must not be in the pick-up area or enter the bus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to transport students to school, if possible, to decrease transportation density.
- To align with physical distancing, field trips and activities requiring group transportation will not be permitted at this time.
- Students will have assigned seating and a record of this seating plan will be kept in order to assist with contact tracing in the event that a student contracts COVID-19.
- Students who live in the same household should be seated together if on the same bus.
- Schools, in collaboration with Transportation personnel, will develop procedures for students loading, unloading and transfers that support physical distancing when possible between all persons (except household members).
- If a child becomes symptomatic during the bus trip, the driver will contact the school so that they may contact the parents/guardians and make the appropriate arrangements for the child/student to be picked up.
- Bus cleaning records will be maintained.
 - Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces such as door handles, window areas, rails, steering wheel, mobile devices and GPS prior to each run.
 - Buses will be cleaned and disinfected nightly. Drivers will carry sanitizing wipes to routinely wipe down high-touch areas between routes.

Expectations for Drop-Off / Pick-Up and Entry Areas at Schools

- Schools must develop procedures for drop-off/pick-up that support physical distancing of 2 metres, where possible, between all persons (except household members). If physical distancing cannot be maintained, then wearing facemasks is required.
- Consider strategies to support physical distancing such as staggering drop-off and pick-up times and locations or put in place other protocols to limit contact between staff/parents/guardians/children/students as much as possible.

Staff or Students Who Become Symptomatic at School

If two or more staff/students within a cohort are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the school should follow outbreak notification procedures as per routine zone protocols (under review for September 2020).

Staff who Become Symptomatic While at Work

Any staff member who develops the symptoms of influenza or COVID-19 during the workday while at school will immediately distance themselves from others, report the concern to their supervisor, and remove themselves from the facility without delay.

Schools must develop procedures to address staff that become symptomatic during the school day to allow that staff member to isolate/leave the school for the time recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Health Services. The staff member should be encouraged to access COVID-19 testing by accessing the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).

Students who Become Symptomatic While at School

If a child/student develops symptoms while at the school, the child/student should wear a non-medical mask, if they are able to, and be isolated in the designated sick room. The parent/guardian should be notified to come and pick up the student immediately. If a separate room is not available, the child/student must be kept at least 2 metres away from other children/students.

- If the child/student requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the child/student until the parent is able to pick up the child/student.
- The student and staff must wear a mask and close interactions with that student, which may result in contact with the student's respiratory secretions, should be avoided. If very close contact is required, and the child is young, the staff member should also use a face shield or eye protection.
- Staff/students must wash their hands before donning a mask and before and after removing the mask (as per [Alberta Health mask guidance](#)), and before and after touching any items used by the child/student.
- All items the student touched/used while isolated must be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child/student has been picked up. Items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected (e.g. paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed from the classroom and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 10 days.
- Schools must keep records of a student's known pre-existing conditions. If a student develops symptoms in or outside of the program that could be caused by COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies), the student should be tested for COVID-19 at least once to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the school.
- The student/parents should be encouraged to access COVID-19 testing by accessing the [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#).

Absenteeism Reporting Process

Staff will continue to follow the current school division procedure regarding absenteeism reporting.

Reporting to Public Health

- School leaders must report unusual absenteeism patterns or symptoms in staff or students who recently attended the school.
- School leaders should notify the Facilities and Safety Supervisor when absenteeism rates of students or staff members is greater than 10% would be expected or severe illness is observed.

Training and Education

All school division personnel are required to:

1. Review this document;
2. Report concerns to your supervisor immediately;
3. Support the site safety liaison; and
4. Follow the guidelines outlined in this plan.

WHMIS

- Employees working with or using disinfectants, detergents or hand sanitizers must review safety data sheets and ensure products are stored out of the reach of children.
- All chemicals must be properly labelled, in accordance with WHMIS requirements. If product is not labelled, request assistance from the Head Caretaker.
- Safety Data Sheets for all cleaning products are available through Head Caretaker. These sheets and instructions can also be accessed through Public School Works.

Additional Resources

For the latest resource materials, please reference the following:

- [Alberta Education's K to 12 School Reentry Resources](#) (Added August 26, 2020)
- [COVID-19 Information for Albertans](#)
- [Alberta 2020-21 School Re-Entry Plan 061120](#)
- [Alberta Daily Self-Screening Tool](#)
- [Alberta Health COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Government of Alberta Fact Sheets and Posters](#)
- [Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's OHS Portal](#)
- [St. John Ambulance Poster "How to Remove Gloves"](#)
- [Hand-washing Steps Using the World Health Organization's Technique](#)