

# Health & Safety Orientation Checklist

This checklist is intended to support school districts and independent school authorities in planning their health & safety orientation for staff and students. Orientation sessions should provide a comprehensive overview of the key principles and guidelines outlined in the resources listed below, as well as information on how these principles and guidelines will be implemented at the school level:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#)
- [BCCDC's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)
- [WorkSafeBC's Education \(K-12\): Protocols for returning to operation](#)
- School/district health and safety plan

Schools and school districts should ensure their Joint Health and Safety Committee is established prior to the orientation session. At the beginning of the school year, schools/school districts are encouraged to hold Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings more frequently to help identify and address any health and safety concerns in a timely manner.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

Adopt a trauma-informed approach:

- where possible, have an employee trained in trauma-informed practice deliver some of the orientation
- conduct needs-based assessments and regular 'check-ins' after the orientation session, and provide contact information to students/staff for requesting additional supports
- provide information on how to access counselling services during school start up
- for staff: consider sharing the [Building Compassionate Communities in a New Normal](#) webinar link. This free webinar (scheduled on September 9, 2020 at 10:00 am) developed by the Ministry of Education is intended to provide teachers, education assistants, and administrators with information, ideas and strategies that they can use to create compassionate spaces for students.

Highlight the process used to develop the school/district plan (e.g., alignment with provincial direction, engagement at the local level) and the provincial health and safety guidelines:

- Based on the current epidemiology of COVID-19 in B.C., the latest research, guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, and evidence that children are at a lower risk of developing and transmitting COVID-19, K-12 students can return to full-time, in-class instruction in accordance with current public health guidelines for schools.
- The Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings have been developed by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Indigenous rightsholders and education partners, including district/school leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents.
- These guidelines are based on the public health guidance developed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Discuss the importance of implementing health and safety measures that promote equity and inclusion, and outline how these principles are reflected in the school/district plan

Review the health and safety guidelines and school/district plan, and describe what a school day will look like with the new guidelines (interactions between peers and staff, traffic flow throughout the school, transition time, recess/lunch, school schedule, etc.)

Outline how comprehensive prevention and exposure control measures are being implemented in schools to ensure student and staff safety (see the "Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures" section and the Prioritizing Health and Safety Flowcharts in the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) for more information)

- Discuss measures for extracurricular activities, as well as school-wide activities and events; provide opportunities for staff and students to put forward alternatives to continue to support events in a different format if needed (e.g., virtual events)
- Review school emergency and evacuation procedures (e.g., fire drill) considering the new health and safety guidelines (e.g. establishing additional muster points to reduce gathering size)
- Outline individual responsibilities (e.g., daily health check, stay home if sick, etc.) and remind everyone to do their part (e.g., practice diligent hand hygiene on a regular basis, only bring personal items if they are necessary, specific guidelines for visitors, etc.)
- Outline measures in place to support students and staff who are immunocompromised
- Implement strategies to ensure staff and students who cannot attend orientation are made aware of health and safety protocols (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on health and safety plans)
- Provide enough time and space for staff, students and families to review the school/district plan, ask questions, and provide input; provide contact information for any future questions that may arise
- Describe the process to address concerns and suggestions regarding the health and safety plan (e.g., suggestions to support continuous improvement)
- Outline the process in place to assess and revise the school/district safety plan on an ongoing basis as well as how staff, students and families will be made aware of any changes in the plan
- Communicate proactively and on an ongoing basis about the changes made to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure staff, students and families are informed in a timely manner
- Provide a list of resources and links for more information (e.g., [BCCDC resources](#) – including a [poster on how to wear a mask](#), [resources from the Government of Canada](#) on how to put on, remove, store and clean a non-medical mask/face covering, guidelines developed by provincial associations, [Ministry-developed trauma-informed practice resources](#) or other resources such as [videos from the BC Health Emergency Services](#))

## CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO STAFF

- Walk staff (administrators, teachers, teachers teaching on call, support staff, itinerant staff, etc.) through what the first days of school will look like to welcome students back
  - If appropriate, consider involving school staff representatives in the delivery of information pertaining to specific area of expertise
- Ensure orientation includes specific health and safety protocols for itinerant staff and specialists (e.g., teachers teaching on call, counsellors, education assistants, teacher candidates) including protocols pertaining to site-based scheduling and access to building
- Include itinerant staff as well as on call and auxiliary staff in orientation sessions
- Implement strategies to ensure staff who work at multiple sites are made aware of health and safety protocols in each of the sites (e.g., provide a booklet/a video on health and safety plans for different schools)
- Share procedures and contact information in case of emergencies
- Introduce members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee or any other safety representative (along with their contact information) and outline the committee/representative's role in helping maintain a healthy and safe workplace
- Outline the process to request and conduct a needs assessment pertaining to health and safety (e.g., implementing additional control measures in a specific setting such as a transparent barrier, signage in the school, etc.)