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 This addendum is in place until rescinded.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 10th, 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
Space Arrangement	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.
Staff Only Spaces	Hold staff-only gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities) virtually.	
School Gatherings And Events (including Extracurricular)	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.
Visitor Access	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
Sports — Extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused.	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: • A gathering where team members compete on an individual basis against members of other teams, or • A gathering where the result will decide if a team will advance to play in a national or international competition.
Masks — The PHO Order – Face Coverings requires all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask indoors at school. Everyone who is able to (i.e., does not have a mask exemption) must wear a mask.	Reminders communicated to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff that includes: • Wearing masks at school is required under a public health order. • Proper fit is a key factor in mask effectiveness. Masks worn at school should fit well. • Masks are most effective when everyone who is able to is wearing one. • Those with mask exemptions continue to follow any strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures. o Those not able to wear a mask all day continue to be encouraged to wear one as much as they're able to. 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 Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions). For those with mask exemptions, alternative strategies identified are adjusted if needed, based on the additional prevention measures.

COVID-19 School Communicable Disease Checklist – January 2022

Complete this checklist with your school's health and safety committee to assess your school's safety plan with the [Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) and this Addendum. Measures below should always be in place.

SCHOOL:_____ DATE:_____

Administrative Measures		
Entrance and Exits	Strategies are in place to prevent crowding during class transition times (e.g., staggered start/stop times, or recess/snack, lunch and class transition times).	☐ Included
Space Arrangement	In indoor spaces, people have enough room to carry out intended activities without involuntary physical contact.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Spaces are configured to maximize space between people.	☐ Included
Staff-Only Gatherings	Staff gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, etc.) occur virtually.	☐ Included
Itinerant Staff, Temporary Teachers on Call and Other Visitors	Process in place to ensure itinerant staff, Teachers On-Call and visitors are aware of the school's health and safety measures and their responsibility to follow them at all times.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Gatherings & Events	School gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, etc.) are held virtually, whenever possible.	☐ Included
	If gatherings and events must be in-person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), the number of people in attendance is minimized as much as possible, does not exceed 50% operating capacity, and spectators are not present.	☐ Included
Extracurricular Activities	Sports tournaments are paused.	☐ Included
Hand Hygiene	Hand cleaning facilities are available and accessible throughout the school and are well maintained.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Bus Transportation	Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Administrative Measures		
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Everyone on the bus (without exemptions), wear masks in accordance with the PHO Order on Face Coverings.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Practices are in place to encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene before and after trips.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Passengers are spread out if empty seats are available.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Windows are opened when the weather allows.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Environmental Measures		
Learning Space Configuration	Learning spaces are arranged to maximize the space available and to avoid people directly facing one another (where possible).	☐ Included
Increased Cleaning and Disinfecting	Frequently touched surfaces (those touched by larger numbers of people) are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Ventilation and Air Exchange	All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Environmental Measures		
	Schools with recycled/recirculated air systems have upgraded their current filters to MERV 13 where possible or have identified mitigation efforts.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	If using portable fans or air conditioning units, ensure they are set up to move air downward and not blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to other occupants of a room. Avoid horizontal cross breezes.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Risk mitigation strategies are identified for excessive heat events or times of poor air quality.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Personal Measures		
Daily Health Checks	Parents and students are reminded of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check and are provided with resources on how to complete one (e.g., the K-12 Health Check app).	☐ Included
Stay Home When Sick	Staff and students are reminded to stay home when they are sick.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Symptoms Develop at School	Practices are in place to appropriately respond when a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness while at school.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Personal Protective Equipment		
Masks	Everyone at school (without exemptions), wear masks in accordance with the PHO Order on Face Coverings.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Schools work with those with mask exemptions to explore potential strategies to reinforce and enhance other safety measures, as described in the COVID-19 Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
	Masks are available for those who have forgotten theirs.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes

Supportive School Environments		
Personal Prevention Practices	Strategies are in place to routinely support students to practice personal prevention measures like wearing a mask and hand hygiene (e.g., signage, including in morning announcements, etc.).	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Personal Space	Strategies are in place to encourage staff and students to consider and respect others personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person.	☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
Positive and Inclusive Approaches	Positive and inclusive approaches aligned with existing school/sector practices to address behaviour/personal practices are used.	☐ Included