



# Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



## Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools

December 29, 2021

Due to the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in BC and the emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant, public health has recommended time-limited enhancements to the [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#). While these enhanced measures may provide additional layers of protection, vaccines continue to be the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 within K-12 school settings. Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

### Gatherings and Events

School gatherings are events that bring staff and students together outside of regular learning activities. Schools should seek virtual alternatives where possible when a group is gathered, including for assemblies and staff meetings. If a virtual alternative is not possible, the size of the gatherings should be minimized as much as possible.

School extracurricular and social gatherings and events (including those occurring within and between schools), regardless of location, should occur in line with the guidance in this addendum and the Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools, as well as any applicable local, regional, or provincial public health recommendations and Orders.

Additionally, the capacity for indoor gatherings and events facilitated by a school that involve members of the community beyond staff, students, and necessary volunteers, or that occur within and between schools, should be limited to 50% operating capacity and maximise use of available space. At this time schools are discouraged from hosting indoor events where spectators from the community are invited to attend in-person.

Gatherings and events requiring international travel (e.g., between Canada and the United States) should occur in line with those permitted as per relevant local, regional, Provincial, and Federal public health recommendations and Orders for international travel and community gatherings and events.

All educational activities, including extracurricular, and before, during or after-school programs led by a school should not require proof of vaccination unless otherwise specified in local, regional, or provincial recommendations and public health Orders.

**If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.**



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## Space Arrangement

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Arrange rooms to maximize space between students and staff. Consider different common space, classroom, and learning environment configurations to allow space between students and adults (e.g., different desk and table formations).

## Visitors

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Limit visitors to the school to those that are supporting activities that are of benefit to student learning and wellbeing (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc). Ensure visitors follow school CDP and complete a daily health check before entering the school.

## Limit crowding in common spaces

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Implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition times. This could include staggered start/stop times and staggered recess/snack, lunch, and class transition times.

Consider ways to minimize crowding in common staff spaces, such as encouraging employees to use alternative spaces for lunch and breaks.

This guidance has been issued along with other [extensive public health measures](#) announced December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, by the Provincial Health Officer. This addendum is in place until January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, at which point it will be reviewed. Unless revised or rescinded, the enhanced guidance in this addendum should be used in addition to guidance in the [Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#).

