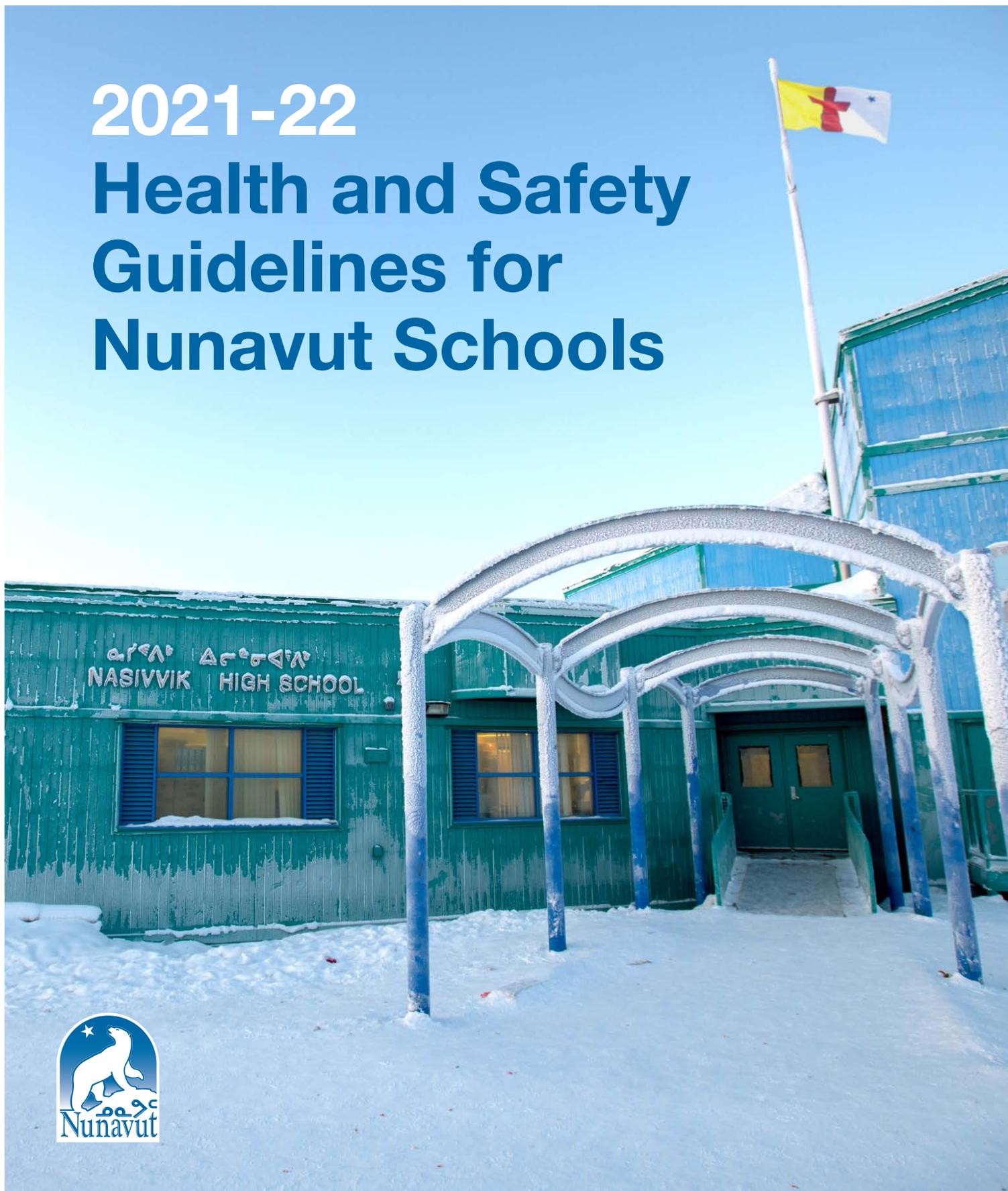


2021-22

Health and Safety Guidelines for Nunavut Schools





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2021-22 Health and Safety Guidelines for Nunavut Schools

Introduction

In the 2021-22 school year, the Department of Education, in collaboration with Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO), will focus on how Nunavut schools can learn to live with COVID-19, mitigate risk, and respond to outbreaks on a community basis. The *2021-22 Health and Safety Guidelines for Nunavut Schools* has been developed by the Department of Education to provide direction on operational health and safety and risk mitigation in Nunavut Schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All health and safety decisions related to school operations are at the full discretion of the CPHO.

How schools respond to COVID-19 will look different this year. Instead of the 4-stage approach used in 2020-21, the CPHO will consider the following factors to determine the impact on school operations:

- Local COVID-19 epidemiology, including transmission of COVID-19 variants
- Healthcare capacity to respond to surges in the community
- Public health capacity to test, trace, and isolate cases
- Vaccine coverage within certain age groups, schools, and communities

Guidelines for schools may be different than for other public or private activities for several reasons, including:

- Schools are controlled environments due to established cleaning protocols, set schedules for students and staff, and scheduled break periods. Any potential spread of the virus can be managed more easily. This includes a simpler process for contact tracing if a case of COVID-19 is identified.
- It is critical to balance the risk of direct infection and transmission of COVID-19 in children with the harms of school closures on their physical and mental health.
- Long-term school closures have the potential to lead to education gaps and other consequences for children.

The information in this document only applies to schools. If there is an inconsistency or contradiction between this document and the CPHO's statements and orders, **the CPHO's statements and orders always take precedence.**

As schools reopen, the health, safety, and well-being of our staff and students must be prioritized. Schools must assess risk and follow preventative health and safety measures based on guidance from the CPHO.

Risk Mitigation Strategies

The risk mitigation strategies that schools must follow are based on the Government of Nunavut's Public Health requirements and Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) guidelines. These strategies are listed below.

Additional support documents and information can be found in the [Educator Toolbox](#), a SharePoint folder accessible to all school staff.

Preventing COVID-19 from entering schools

- Personal Hazard Assessment Tool
- Symptoms
- Vaccination
- Masks
- Visitors to schools

Responding to COVID-19 in schools

- Isolation room
- Illness Response Kits
- Symptomatic individual(s)
- Probable case(s)
- Positive case(s)
- General considerations

Risk mitigation strategies for students and staff

- Enhanced hygiene
 - All ages
 - Younger children
 - Older children and youth
- Safely supporting remote instruction
 - Distribution and collection protocols for devices and learning packages
- Students at higher risk of severe disease
- Students with medical, physical, developmental, and/or behavioural complexities
- Individual Student Support Plans (ISSPs) and Personal Emergency Response Plans (PERPs)
- Visitors to schools

- Elders in schools
- Parent-teacher conferences (PTCs)
- Kindergarten orientation
- Infrastructure/regulatory/health inspectors
- Dental health programs
- Mental wellness supports
- Communication supports

Risk mitigation strategies for the school environment

- Enhanced cleaning and custodial measures
- Cohorts and seating arrangements
 - All schools
 - Elementary schools (K-6)
 - Middle school and high school
- Physical distancing and classroom set-up
- School food program and cafeterias
- Sharing food and beverages, and water fountain use
- Student drop-off and pick-up
- Busing
- Enhanced cleaning
- Physical education classes
- Outdoor settings
- Land-based instruction and programming
- Overnight trips and travel activities
- Other recreational activities (intramurals, before- and after-school programs)
- DEA-approved third-party programs
- Music, band, singing, and performances
- Large gatherings and assemblies

Preventing COVID-19 from entering schools

Personal Hazard Assessment Tool

Anyone who has symptoms associated with COVID-19 or has had exposure in the last 14 days is prohibited from entering a school. **Students and school staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home.**

Any individuals from Department of Education-approved school visitor groups who have signs and symptoms of COVID-19 must not enter a school.

Decisions about testing and return to school should be guided by the local public health office, in consultation with the CPHO, and will be communicated to families by the Department of Health.

A **Personal Hazard Assessment (COVID-19 Screening Tool)** has been developed for all school staff to use if they believe they are exhibiting symptoms of or have been exposed to COVID-19. This tool is found on the next page and as a printable PDF in the [Educator Toolbox](#).

Personal Hazard Assessment (COVID-19 Screening Tool)

Use your own pen or pencil to complete this form.

Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Do you have any of the following? Circle all that apply.

Fever	Yes	No
Cough	Yes	No
Difficulty breathing	Yes	No
Sore throat, trouble swallowing	Yes	No
Runny nose	Yes	No
Loss of taste or smell	Yes	No
Not feeling well	Yes	No
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea	Yes	No
Have you been in close contact with someone who is sick?	Yes	No
Has this person been tested for COVID-19?	Yes	No
Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the past 14 days?	Yes	No

If you answered YES to any of these questions, **notify your supervisor, go home or stay home, and self-isolate right away.** Testing for COVID-19 may be appropriate.

Call your health care provider or the COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-975-8601 for detailed instructions to follow to protect you, your family, and your community.

Call the COVID-19 hotline at 975-8601 or 1-888-975-8601 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. to speak with someone. For travel related inquiries, call between 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday. Remember this line is for those who need it and should not be used for general inquiries. If you have questions or need help in an emergency, **call your local health centre.**

Visit the Government of Nunavut's COVID-19 website for more information:

www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus

Symptoms

People who are infected with COVID-19 may have few to no symptoms. You may not know you have symptoms of COVID-19 because they are similar to a cold or flu. Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known infectious period for this disease.

Symptoms include:

- fever
- cough
- difficulty breathing
- pneumonia in both lungs requiring support for breathing

Additionally, if you have provided care to or had close contact with a person who is being treated for COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, you **MUST**:

- Strictly follow the guidance provided to you or your household by Public Health or your local health centre.
- Self-isolate:
 - Stay at home and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Avoid contact with other people.
 - Do not share personal items like dishes, utensils, or towels.
 - Wash your hands often.
 - Ask a friend or family member to get your groceries, or contact your local grocery store for options.
 - Continue to isolate until cleared by Public Health.

If symptoms develop, such as a new or worsening cough, fever, or difficulty breathing, you should continue with self-isolation and complete the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool* again.

Also, remember to always:

- Use and encourage proper hand hygiene. Wash your hands often with soap and water. If that is not possible, use hand sanitizer.
- Use and encourage good respiratory etiquette. Cover your cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Encourage social distancing where possible. Maintain two (2) metres between individuals who are not in your household.

Vaccinations

Encourage COVID-19 vaccinations. In the [Educator Toolbox](#), you will find reproducible materials such as posters, signage, and other resources to inform and encourage individuals to be vaccinated.

It is important to recognize, however, that there may be some individuals who choose not to or are not able to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Masks

The requirement to wear masks is at the discretion of the CPHO. However, even when the CPHO has lifted the requirement to wear masks, the Department of Education requires approved visitors who are not fully vaccinated to wear masks while in the school in accordance with the guidance in this section.

A non-medical mask is most effective when it is worn properly. Uncovering your nose or mouth while wearing a mask exposes you and others to potentially infectious respiratory particles and will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer when you adjust your mask, put your mask on, and/or take off your mask.

Masks are not required during participation in physical education activities or when eating. Further guidance on these two areas is provided in this document. See *School food programs, Physical education classes, and Other recreational activities (intramurals, before- and after-school programs)*.

Anyone choosing to wear a mask in a situation where it is not required must not be discouraged.

School children older than five (5) years of age should wear a mask in school settings except where exemptions apply. Even where exemptions apply, schools should understand that exemptions should be applied only as required to maximize participation in school and avoid gaps in attendance.

Consider the following:

- The ability of the child/youth to complete tasks and follow direction, which will be dependent on a variety of factors (e.g., age, maturity, physical ability, disabilities, comprehension, unique circumstances).
- Younger children or children/youth with disabilities may not be able to wear masks, or consistently use masks correctly and safely during the day without assistance, including during meals and snacks (e.g., they may have difficulty with the procedures to put on, change, and remove the mask).
- The ability to recognize when a mask must be changed due to being heavily soiled or where it may be impeding breathing.

- It should be clearly communicated to students, in an age-appropriate manner, how, and when to [properly wear](#) a well-constructed and [well-fitting](#) mask.
- Students wearing masks should be reminded, in age-appropriate language, not to touch their mask and to comply with frequent hand hygiene and physical distancing.
- Schools should outline clear protocols for when masks are not required for students (e.g., while eating/drinking).
- Schools should outline clear protocols around [proper storage](#) of masks between uses. For example, do not hang the mask from your ears or place it under your chin. Store masks in a clean paper or cloth bag until you put it on again.
- Masks should be changed after they become wet or soiled. Schools have been provided with disposable non-medical masks for students.
- Parents or guardians should be reminded of the appropriate use and cleaning of masks. Parents should provide students with at least one (but preferably two or three) extra clean and dry masks for their child to replace soiled or damp masks.
- A mask could become an unintended hazard (e.g., physical injury if caught on playground equipment), so it is important they are worn properly.
- School staff should monitor for, and address, any discrimination or bullying associated with masks. Students should not be stigmatized for wearing (or not wearing) masks. This behaviour may encourage discrimination or bullying due to other factors such as differences in gender, ethnicity, or ability.

It is important to communicate the importance of individual choice and to share and reinforce harassment and bullying policies. Anyone choosing to wear a mask in a situation where it is not required must not be discouraged. Review your DEA's *Inuugatiigiitsiarniq Policy* for supportive actions to promote safe learning spaces for students and staff.

For more information on proper mask use, visit www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html#a3.

Visitors to schools

During the 2021-22 school year, schools must prioritize student and staff safety and reduce opportunities for viral transmission of COVID-19. **Members of the public and all non-essential visitors, including parents and guardians, are not permitted to enter schools for the duration of the school year** except as noted in these guidelines. Schools must communicate the importance of this risk mitigation measure widely as it is key to maximizing in-class instruction for all students.

More information on visitors to schools can be found in the section on *Risk Mitigation for Students and Staff*.

Responding to COVID-19 in schools

Every school must develop plans and be prepared to address individuals who become symptomatic and/or are suspected of having COVID-19 while in the school setting or while participating in school-based activities.

Isolation room

At the beginning of the school year, staff must identify an isolated location in the school where anyone showing symptoms of or with expected exposure to COVID-19 must go until they can be transported home. Remember that this may be a difficult experience for an individual. Support them with compassion and dignity and ensure their physical and emotional needs are met while they wait.

Illness Response Kits

Schools have been provided with Illness Response Kits. There should always be enough kits on hand to ensure that all staff members are able to respond safely to identified illnesses. The kits include non-medical masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes. If you require additional kits, have your school administrator contact EDUOHS@gov.nu.ca.

Symptomatic individual(s)

If an individual **shows symptoms of COVID-19 or is identified by Public Health as a *Person under investigation (PUI)* due to symptoms or contact tracing** at any time while in the school or during a school-based activity, school staff must:

- Ensure the individual is given a mask to wear immediately if they are not already wearing one. Use the contents of the Illness Response Kits provided by the Department of Education.
 - Schools must have extra masks easily accessible to provide to an ill individual if they do not have their own mask.
 - Masks **MUST NOT** be placed on anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Isolate the ill individual and have them remain in the isolation room/space until they can go home safely, while avoiding stigmatization and discrimination.
 - Ensure the room is prepared with illness response materials that can be easily accessed by the student. This includes:
 - Disposable mask
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Tissues for respiratory etiquette
 - Waste basket with a fresh garbage bag for safe disposal of used materials.
- Consider supervision needs based on the individual's needs and/or age.
- Consider the needs of individuals with disabilities, such as having someone wait with them to assist with specific needs. Include this when developing their Individual Student Support Plans (ISSPs) or Personal Emergency Response Plans (PERPs).
- Ensure staff minimize their exposure to the ill person as much as possible (e.g., minimize the amount of time in the same room and practice physical distancing).
- Ensure staff know what to do if they need to be in the same room or provide care to the ill individual, such as:
 - Put on a new disposable mask from the Illness Response Kit.
 - Exercise hand hygiene then put on disposable gloves from the Illness Response Kit.
 - Maintain physical distancing in situations where students are old enough or do not require support in moving to the designated illness response space/isolation room.
- Ensure the ill individual practices hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette while waiting to be picked-up/excused.
- Provide tissues for ill individuals who cannot wear masks to ensure respiratory etiquette. Proper disposal of the tissue and hand hygiene must be performed after coughing or sneezing.

- Communicate with parents and guardians about the illness response protocols, including sending home all information provided by Public Health. Develop a plan with parents at the beginning of the school year that will indicate how parents can be contacted in case of an emergency like potential COVID-19 exposure or symptoms.

Probable case(s)

If an individual **is identified by Public Health as a probable case or a *Person under investigation (PUI)* due to symptoms or contact tracing** at any time while in the school or during a school-based activity, school staff must:

- Promptly remove any student or staff showing signs of COVID-19 from programming and take them to the isolation room/space.
- Immediately contact the school administration, inform them of the student moving to isolation room, confirm the use of the illness response materials and adherence to the protocols, and identify needs for additional supervisory supports for the student.
- Immediately contact the local health centre to inform them and request instructions for the parent or guardian picking up the student.
- Ensure that the ill person uses hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and a mask. Anyone interacting with the ill person should also wear PPE and/or follow the directions of the local health centre.
 - Schools have been provided with Illness Response Kits. There are enough kits on hand to ensure that all staff members are able to respond safely to identified illnesses. The kits include non-medical masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.
 - Emphasize that hand hygiene must be followed and remind individuals not to touch their face until hand hygiene has been performed.

Positive case(s)

If a **positive case of COVID-19** is confirmed in your school:

- Public Health will work closely with the Department of Education and school leaders to ensure that all individuals who may be at higher risk are identified and provided with instructions and expectations.
- The Public Health team will provide specific instructions on how to help support with contact tracing, as well as how to respond to specific situations in the school.
- Notify parents and guardians of the instructions provided by the Public Health team. Use the communication supports provided in the [Educator Toolbox](#) for guidance on what information should be prioritized and shared with parents and guardians.

- Ensure that District Education Authorities (DEAs) or the Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut (CSFN) deliver necessary information received from the Department of Health on the local radio station.

Risk mitigation strategies for students and staff

Enhanced hygiene

All ages

- Keep students, staff, and families informed about current public health orders, and how they influence activities in schools.
- Clearly communicate to students why and how they should follow personal preventative practices (e.g., physical distancing, masks, hand hygiene, avoid touching face, respiratory etiquette).
- Post GN-approved signage that is appropriate for age, ability, reading level, and language preferences to remind individuals to practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Using age-appropriate learning resources and tools, teach children and youth about why, how, and when to clean hands and cover coughs and sneezes.
- Implement a schedule for frequent hand hygiene and ensure that hand sanitizer is available in all rooms in the school.
- Provide increased access to hand hygiene/sanitation stations (e.g., by placing hand sanitizer dispensers in easy-to-see locations such as at entrances/exits and cafeterias) and ensure accessibility or assistance as needed.
- Ensure adequate supplies are on hand and to reinforce hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette such as soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol), paper towels, tissues, and no-touch garbage cans.
- Remind students to avoid yelling/shouting in the school setting (e.g., use “indoor voices” or provide “quiet work time”) to create an environment where voices do not need to be raised or close contact is not required to hear others.

Younger children

- Remind children not to touch other people or put toys or objects in their mouths.
- Ensure assistance/supervision of children when performing hand hygiene.
- If increased supervision or support is needed to ensure younger students can follow personal preventative practices, use SSAs, Elders, and other available school staff.
- Incorporate fun strategies to encourage compliance (e.g., drawing or colouring activities, games, contests, etc.).

Older children and youth

- Use classroom and/or grade level projects to encourage students to follow protocols (e.g., poster contests, making short videos to share on social media).

All school staff

- Follow strict hand hygiene. Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing. Use hand sanitizer when access to soap and water is not readily available.
- Follow strict respiratory etiquette. Cough and sneeze into elbow or tissue. Wash hands afterwards, following strict hand hygiene.
- Post signage about hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and other healthy living guidelines in your classroom and around your school. This signage can be found in the [Educator Toolbox](#).
- Encourage students to keep their hands away from their and others' face and mouth.
- Remind and encourage students and staff to stay home when sick. Students should tell their parent or guardian if they are not feeling well and together make a plan to stay home from school.
- Encourage students and staff to stay healthy by eating healthy foods, keeping physically active, and getting enough sleep.
- Provide reassurances to students, staff, and community members that they are safe and that following these hygiene protocols will help them stay healthy.
- Keep parents and guardians informed using the communication supports in the [Educator Toolbox](#).

Safely supporting remote instruction

During the 2021-22 school year, there will be times when individuals or cohorts will be involved in a Public Health investigation or are required to isolate. Schools must continue to stay in contact with and provide learning support to these students. More information about supporting remote instruction can be found in *Learning to Be Together Again: Support for Nunavut Schools in 2021-22*.

At the beginning of the school year, schools should plan for how to safely support remote instruction in the event of a school closure. This may involve allowing school staff to access the school building to gather materials or use materials to continue supporting student learning, while strictly adhering to risk mitigation measures. The principal or delegate will be required to conduct daily building checks and to support staff and students as required.

Schools may provide learning packages or devices to students to support remote instruction. Information on how to safely distribute this information can be found in the next section. For information on Edsby, the online learning platform that the Department of Education has put in place for supporting remote instruction, refer to the *Edsby FAQ* in the [Educator Toolbox](#).

Distribution and collection of learning packages and/or devices

All schools must plan for the distribution of materials to students, such as learning packages and/or devices, to support remote instruction.

Follow these guidelines for distribution and collection:

- All participants, including staff, students, and parents/guardians must wear PPE, including masks (reusable is highly encouraged, disposable non-medical otherwise). Staff distributing materials should wear disposable gloves. If individuals do not have a mask, the school must provide a disposable non-medical mask. All schools were provided non-medical masks in their bulk shipment from BluMetric and the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit. The Department of Education will continue to supply additional masks to support schools to be prepared for an outbreak.
- Complete the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool* before distributing learning packages or devices. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness must not participate in the distribution.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene. Ensure a hand sanitizing station is easily accessible for everyone participating in the distribution.
- Set up tables up outside the school, weather permitting. Tables should be set up so that individuals can maintain physical distance (2 metres), both indoors or outdoors.

- If pick-up must take place inside the school due to weather, prop open doors to avoid unnecessary contact with high-touch surfaces. Immediately close fire separation doors when distribution is complete.
- Use signs or markers to indicate physical distancing requirements (2 metres) and help direct one-way traffic.
- Avoid touching surfaces, including tables. Sanitize surfaces regularly throughout the distribution.
- After distribution, use enhanced cleaning dilute solution (1 part bleach, 50 parts water) on surfaces, such as tables. Allow the solution to sit on the surface for one minute before wiping it off. Place the table in a safe location for the next use.
- Plan ahead to allow parents or guardians who have more than one student at a school to pick up learning packages or devices for all of their children at the same time.
- Parent must sign out devices. Set up a staging area for this to be done safely. The area should include a single pen left out for each parent/guardian. After each use, the pen should be placed in a box or bucket to be disinfected, and a new pen set out for the next person. At the end of the day, pens must be disinfected using wipes or dilute solution. Wear PPE when disinfecting.
- When students return to school, they must return devices. Use the sign-out sheet to ensure all devices have been returned and follow up as necessary.
- Create a timed schedule and set location for parents/guardians to pick up and drop off learning materials to avoid crowds. Communicate this with parents/guardians and advise them of the protocols, including wearing masks, maintaining physical distance, and not bringing children from their household with them to the distribution.

Students at higher risk for severe disease

Most children and youth with underlying medical conditions should be able to safely attend school, provided that the appropriate safety measures are in place (enhanced cleaning, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene).

However, it is recommended that parents and guardians discuss this with the child's healthcare providers so that they can make informed decisions based on individual circumstances. This is particularly relevant for children with newly-diagnosed illnesses. When concerns are raised about students who are at risk for more severe disease or outcomes, encourage them to consult their healthcare providers.

If necessary:

- Develop alternate ways to provide meaningful programming (if possible) so that children/youth do not fall behind in their studies and maintain a sense of belonging.

- Make accommodations for children/youth with limited access to electronic devices and the internet and, where possible, consider opportunities for Department of Education devices and internet connectivity to access online learning platforms such as Edsby.
- Encourage required visitors who are at risk of more severe disease or outcomes, such as Elders, to avoid contact with the school, where possible.
- Remind parents/guardians to inform and discuss with healthcare providers if anyone residing with a student has an increased risk of more severe disease or outcomes.

Students with medical, physical, developmental, and/or behavioural complexities
The return to school will present unique challenges to children and youth with medical, physical, developmental, and/or behavioural complexities, and their families. Parents and guardians may consider scheduling appointments with their healthcare providers and school leaders for a return to school consultation.

Schools will ensure that students receive supports for learning, including education support services for students following Individual Student Support Plans, following appropriate physical distancing measures.

Set up meetings with parents by phone if possible. If not possible, follow the guidelines for ISSPs and PERPs face-to-face meetings in the following section.

Individual Student Support Plans (ISSPs) and Personal Emergency Response Plans (PERPs)

There are times when a face-to-face meeting is more practical for students with specific needs. This section was created to support schools who require face-to-face meetings to develop ISSPs and PERPs.

When planning face-to-face meetings, schools must:

- Adhere to all public health orders, including masking requirements as determined by the CPHO.
- Ensure that the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool* is used regularly. Anyone with symptoms of illness must not participate in the meeting and they must not enter the school. Once symptoms subside, they may reschedule the meeting.
- Use hand hygiene upon entry and exit of the school. Place sanitation stations at entrances and exits and have hand sanitizer available on the table.
- Emphasize the requirement to use respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing into your elbow).
- Maintain records of all meeting participants.
- Ensure that physical distance can be maintained between all non-household participants where possible.

- Ensure that staff and parents or guardians who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask during in-school meetings for the duration of the meeting, even when the CPHO does not require masks for the public. Schools should communicate this requirement ahead of time and have disposable non-medical masks available.

Operational planning

- Scheduling: Strict schedules must be put in place to ensure that sufficient space is available. Planning should include sufficient time between meetings to avoid gatherings or overlap of parents/students with another parent/student.
- Operational impact/overlap: Should take place during non-operational hours or after all students have left for the day, to avoid interaction with students. Include language that ensures that parents/students do not linger before or after. They must come straight in and go straight out, and not linger in or around the school.
- Location: Gymnasiums are ideal locations as they allow more space for physical distancing. If procedures can be developed to minimize the impact and avoid any interaction with other staff in the school, and there is sufficient space to accommodate, the library or another large classroom may be used.
- Group sizes: Spacing is critical to safe planning. Acknowledge that typical planning sessions for ISSPs include the teacher, principal, ilinniavimmi inuusiliriji, SST, or learning coach. PERPs may include the teacher, SST, school leader, and local healthcare provider.
- Parent/guardian: One parent/guardian is recommended but if spacing permits, a second parent/guardian is permitted to enter for orientation with the child.

Elders in schools

Elders provide valuable learning opportunities for students. The Department of Education continues to strongly encourage having Elders in schools, following COVID-19 protocols at all times. This includes:

- Strict adherence to the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool*. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness must not be permitted entry in the school.
- Masking requirements as determined by the CPHO.
- Following hand hygiene upon classroom entry and exit.
- Maintaining records of the time and class(es) attended by the Elder.
- Remaining diligent, considering the risks, and discussing the increased risk of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations when there are students at the school under isolation protocols.
- In a scenario where a class or multiple classes have student(s) placed in COVID-19 isolation, staff must remain diligent and consider the increased risk of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations.
- Not permitting Elders in those classes or in any other classes with students from that class until the isolation period for those individuals is complete.

- Ensuring that Elders who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask while in the school visiting classes. They must acknowledge and accept the risks of increased transmission based on their vaccination status.
- Consistently maintain a 2-metre distance from students and staff at all times.

Parent-teacher conferences (PTCs)

Parent-teacher conferences should take place by phone, where possible, to minimize student and staff exposure opportunities to the community. Parent-teacher conferences required to take place in schools should consider implementing the following risk mitigation measures:

- Communicate the need to strictly follow the Personal Hazard Assessment Tool. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness must not attend.
- Communicate the expectation that anyone entering the school must use strict hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette while in the school.
- Set up meeting stations or tables with distancing between teachers and parents.
- Create one-way traffic for entry into the gym and to the meeting stations, and exit through a different location.
- Limit participation to one parent or guardian per student, where possible.
- Parents and guardians and students must wash their hands immediately upon entry into the school. Where that is not possible, ensure everyone uses hand sanitizer upon entry and exit.
- Surface areas, such as tables and desks, should be disinfected between each use.
- Maintain records of visitors, times, and the teacher(s) they are meeting with using a sign-in sheet.
- If classrooms are used, hand sanitizer should be used upon entry and exit of the classrooms.
- Classrooms must be large enough to accommodate physical distancing for all participants.
- Even when the CPHO does not require masks for the public, during in-school meetings, staff and parents or guardians who are not fully vaccinated **MUST** wear a mask for the duration of the meeting. Schools should communicate this requirement ahead of time and have disposable non-medical masks available.

Kindergarten orientation

Elementary schools typically hold Kindergarten orientation each year to lessen fears and familiarize new students with their new school and teachers. Schools must:

- Use the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool*. Anyone with symptoms of illness must not participate and they must not enter the school. Once symptoms subside, they may reschedule.
- Ensure that both parents or guardians and children follow proper hand hygiene. Where hand washing is not possible, use hand sanitizer upon entry and exit.
- Emphasize and encourage respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing and sneezing into your elbow.)
- Maintain records of all attendees.
- Ensure that physical distance can be maintained between all participants at all times.
- Ensure that during in-school meetings, staff and parents or guardians who are not fully vaccinated **MUST** wear a mask for the duration of the meeting, even when the CPHO does not require masks for the public. Schools should communicate this requirement ahead of time and have disposable non-medical masks available.

Operational planning

- Scheduling: Strict schedules must be put in place to ensure that sufficient space is available. Schedules should also factor in time to accommodate the need for enhanced cleaning.
- Operational impact/overlap: Kindergarten orientation must take place outside of operational hours or after all students have left for the day to avoid interaction with students.
- Location: Gymnasiums are ideal locations as there is enough space to accommodate physical distancing at all times. Kindergarten classrooms may be used if there is enough space to accommodate physical distancing.
- Participants: Recognizing that a typical orientation includes the teacher, principal, ilinniarvimmi inuusiliriji, student support teacher, or learning coach, spacing is critical to safe planning. To reduce the workload on custodial staff, one parent or guardian and child per time slot is ideal. If schools have the space to accommodate physical distancing, groups may include a maximum of five (5) children and their parent/guardian.
- Parent or guardian: One parent or guardian is permitted to enter orientation with one child. If a household has two children entering orientation, each child may have a parent or guardian accompany them.
- Food: If a healthy snack is being provided, ensure it is individually wrapped and served to the participants, rather than helping themselves.

Other approved visitors (infrastructure/regulatory/health inspectors)

It is important that services critical to the well-being of staff and students continue, while making every effort to keep COVID-19 out of schools. This includes conducting infrastructure inspection visits. The Department of Education has worked closely with other organizations to develop protocols and ensure that these groups adhere to the school rules.

It is essential that school leaders provide opportunities for their staff and students for dental health, mental health, counselling, student support services, Public Health/Community Health Representatives, and the RCMP. Additionally, schools require inspections by the Office of the Fire Marshal, WSCC, and Environmental Health.

When these groups come to provide support and inspect the school, they will be required to:

- Contact the school ahead of time to schedule a visit.
- Strictly adhere to the Personal Hazard Assessment Tool. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness must not be permitted entry into the school.
- Follow masking requirements as determined by the CPHO.
- Use strict hand hygiene upon classroom entry and exit. Ensure hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms.
- Identify the time and class they attend so that the school can maintain records of their visits.

In a scenario where a class or multiple classes have student(s) placed on COVID-19 isolation, staff must:

- Not permit support providers and inspectors into classes with students who have been placed on COVID isolation until the isolation period for those individuals is complete.
- Ensure support providers and inspectors who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask while in the school visiting classes. These individuals must acknowledge and accept the risks of increased transmission due to their vaccination status.
- Consistently maintain a two (2) metre distance from students and staff at all times.

Oral Health Programs

The Department of Education has worked closely with the CPHO and Dental Health Programs to create a program that will help support the dental health of our students as it is a crucial service for student health. These services will be provided to students up to Grade 7 with the intention of reducing pain and infection in the mouth while keeping children's teeth healthy. The project requires a signed consent form and

parents/guardians are not permitted to be present for the dental services. The Department of Education continues to support Nunavut's Oral Health Project.

The Departments of Education and Health have collaborated to establish a safety protocol for all oral health providers to ensure that school safety protocols are being met.

Mental wellness supports

Schools will ensure that counselling and wellness programming will continue regardless of the impact of COVID-19 on their school community. Schools should also ensure that students remain connected to in-person mental health supports as needed. Students will continue to learn about self-regulation to cope with changes at school and in remote learning scenarios wherever possible. Refer to the *RESTORE School Toolkit for Nunavut Schools* in the [Educator Toolbox](#) for more information on mental health supports in schools.

See the [Educator Toolbox](#) for additional mental health supports, including counselling and wellness programming for school staff.

Communication supports

Communication with staff, students, and families remains a vital part of COVID-19 risk mitigation and outbreak management. In the [Educator Toolbox](#), you will find communication supports to guide how school communities can stay connected during the pandemic. Public Health and the Office of the CPHO will also provide information to schools, and schools should adapt and share any appropriate information with staff, students, families, and stakeholders as needed.

Risk mitigation strategies for the school environment

Enhanced cleaning and custodial measures
Schools will be provided with cleaning supplies.

Routine cleaning is performed by custodial staff assigned to the school on a regularly scheduled basis. Routine cleaning includes cleaning and disinfecting all washrooms, sweeping all floors, sanitizing table surfaces, emptying trash daily, and other designated tasks.

Supplemental cleaning is performed by custodial staff and is focused on cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces, specifically for the purpose of preventing the spread of disease. School leaders will receive a copy of the Department of Education's *COVID-19 Guidance and Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting Training* video. The video provides school staff with information on COVID-19 enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, PPE, and other school programming best practices.

Principals will set a schedule for custodians to review and follow for regular and supplemental cleaning. Refer to the [Educator Toolbox](#) for a complete list of enhanced custodial guidelines.

School staff share a responsibility with custodians to keep their classrooms clean. School staff will be responsible for keeping their personal workspaces clean, such as their desks, computers, phones, or other personal items. School staff also have a responsibility to each other to ensure common areas such as staff rooms are kept tidy and that items are returned to their original state after individual use. School staff are to maintain hand hygiene after accessing common areas and shared touch points or devices. Schools must ensure that hand sanitizer is available in every room in the school, including sanitation stations at all entrances and exits.

NOTE: Heavily soiled areas should be cleaned first with detergent and water and then disinfected using a bleach-water solution or other disinfectant. **Bleach should never be mixed with any other cleaning products.** High-touch surfaces should be cleaned twice per day and when visibly soiled. (See *Enhanced cleaning and custodial guidelines* in the [Educator Toolbox](#).)

Cohorts and seating arrangements

The purpose of cohorts is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that if a child or staff member contracts COVID-19, the risk of exposure is reduced. Cohorts support efficient and timely contact tracing efforts. It is recommended that students be cohorted by class if possible. It is recognized that cohorts can be more easily adopted by elementary schools. However, cohorting should not be done in a manner that compromises daily attendance or alters the curriculum and programming options available to students. Additionally, the daily school schedule should not be disrupted to accommodate smaller cohorts.

School planning should aim to minimize interactions between individuals and cohorts they have not been assigned to and enable individuals to maintain physical distance during interactions. **It is important to note that these measures can and will change as vaccination rates increase in communities.**

Guidance specific to age and community will be provided to those communities from the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit upon notification by the CPHO.

All schools

- When there is a high number of new/active cases or an increasing trend of COVID-19 in your community, consider modifying the delivery of programs or the intervals at which cohorts are altered.
 - Identify opportunities to use alternate learning spaces, increased land-based instruction, and outdoor programming.
 - Reduce mixed-cohort programming such as levelled reading groups or home rooms that is typical when there is no active COVID-19 in a community.
 - When considering the numbers of individuals in a space, it is important to consider the type of activity taking place, the size of the space, the number of individuals (including their ages), and their needs and abilities to practice physical distancing.
 - In general, the larger the crowd and the smaller the room, the faster potentially infectious respiratory particles can build up in the air.
- Increase distance between desks. Space out desks and tables to maximize the space between students.
- Ensure that all classes have two (2) metres space at the front of the class to allow teachers to physically distance at all times when there is a high number of new/active cases of COVID-19 in your community.
- Reinforce general practices to maintain physical distancing, such as replacing physical greetings like high fives, fist bumps, and hugs with friendly verbal greetings.
- Restrict or manage the flow of people in common areas including hallways, entrances, foyers (e.g., with entry and exit procedures).
 - The use of floor arrows with the expected direction of traffic assists in avoiding unnecessary face-to-face contact.
 - Where possible, in narrow hallways or aisles, use one-way travel where possible by painting or placing arrows on the floor.
- Use visual cues to encourage physical distancing (e.g., GN-approved signage, floor arrows).
- Indoor assemblies are **NOT** permitted. However, as local epidemiology is assessed, including age- and community-specific vaccination rates, the CPHO may approve outdoor assemblies. Schools will be informed via operational

updates by the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit when large outdoor gatherings are permitted.

- School food programs must not include large gatherings of multiple cohorts.
 - In-class delivery is the optimal mode of delivery.
 - Consider staggering the timing of breaks (for both students and staff) during the day to limit the number of people in the same location at the same time.
- Limit the number of concurrent users in libraries and other common areas.
- Reduce noise levels in classrooms, common areas, and hallways so people can hear one another while maintaining physical distancing (e.g., turn off or reduce volume of background music) to avoid having to speak loudly.

Elementary schools (K-6)

- Develop fixed seating arrangements.
 - Whenever possible, seats should be arranged so they are not facing each another to limit face-to-face contact.
 - Document if a student is required to be moved in a class and the date of the changes. When a class or multiple classes have student(s) placed on COVID-19 isolation, staff should not make changes to seating arrangements for the duration of the isolation, to support contact tracing efforts.
- Encourage children to have individual bathroom breaks as needed instead of group bathroom breaks, with supervision.
- When playing games, maintain physical distancing where possible.
- Ensure children maintain physical distancing during large group activities (e.g., for reading/circle time).
- Consider moving large group activities outside when space and weather permits.
- See *Student drop-off and pick-up* later in this document.

Middle and high schools

- Develop strict fixed seating arrangements to support potential contact tracing.
- Avoid seating arrangements where students sit facing each other.
 - Document if a student is required to be moved in a class and the date of the changes. When a class or multiple classes have student(s) placed on COVID-19 isolation, staff should not make changes to seating arrangements for the duration of isolation, to support contact tracing efforts.
- Consider having teachers travel to classes, rather than students travelling to different classrooms throughout the day.
- Limit and post the capacities of allowable concurrent users in common areas based on physical distancing (e.g., libraries, computer labs, cafeterias, lockers/changerooms, etc).

Physical distancing and classroom set-up

In the classroom setting, it is crucial to balance the risk of COVID-19 against the harms of school closures. Desk spacing in classrooms may depend on the size and capacity of the room. Schools must be able to make judgement calls when it comes to their specific situation. Schools must consider the unique factors of their school based on classroom size, the number of students in that particular class or grade, and other learning spaces in the schools. The Department of Health's Public Health team will work closely with school leaders to maximize learning opportunities for students and review concerns around specific classroom needs.

Physical distancing is a proven, high-value risk mitigation measure that must be diligently followed, especially in scenarios where masking is not as easy to monitor, such as in cafeterias and during food programs, physical education, and outdoors.

All classrooms must leave two (2) metres of space at the front of each class. This space is to ensure that teachers can maintain physical distancing while providing instruction to students. It also allows enough space for students to exit the classroom comfortably.

All desks must be set apart equally to maximize the space available in the classroom for students. All students must maintain assigned seating arrangements. All changes to classroom seating arrangements must be recorded as seating records are vital to contact tracing efforts. Unrecorded changes to seating may inadvertently leave individuals out of contact tracing efforts. When there is an increasing trend of COVID-19 in a community, consider reducing programs that mix cohorts, such as homerooms or levelled reading groups.

Classroom consistency is essential to reducing the potential opportunities for widespread school transmission. School leaders should monitor classrooms for consistency and the use of physical distancing and seating arrangements.

School food programs and cafeterias

The CPHO and the Department of Education strongly encourage the continued operation of food programs provided in schools to support student health and well-being. In addition to the risk mitigation measures described throughout this document, there are special considerations for food programs and cafeterias to ensure ongoing food options for students.

Food programs should continue to focus on reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Consider:

- How the food program aligns with and adheres to the *Enhanced cleaning and custodial guidelines* in the [Educator Toolbox](#).
- Delivering food directly to classrooms.
- Having students stay in their designated classroom seats.
- Having dedicated staff to prepare and deliver the food.
- Communicating and reinforcing no-sharing policies for food and drinks.
- Encouraging students to bring their own reusable water bottles.
- Individually wrapping food.
- Emphasizing and reinforcing enhanced hygiene, including hand hygiene prior to and after eating, and following respiratory etiquette.

To minimize interactions between individuals/cohorts or enable interactions at greater distancing in cafeterias, consider:

- Limiting the number of individuals permitted in cafeterias at any given time.
- Ensuring at least two (2) metres distance between seats in cafeterias.
- Increasing signage and floor markings in cafeterias to remind students/staff to practice physical distancing and have one-way flow of foot traffic in narrow aisles or stairways.
- Increasing the number of accessible hand sanitizer stations within the cafeteria, with a minimum of one station at each entrance and exit.
- Alternate spaces for students to eat meals, such as classrooms or outdoors (weather permitting).
- Limiting seating areas in cafeterias (e.g., cordon off spaces, remove seating).
- The use of cohorts for cafeterias during designated times.
- Discontinuing self-serve style models (e.g., avoid buffet-style options, remove shared food/condiments/utensil stations).
- Reducing touching of food by individually wrapping or packing food when on display.

Sharing food and beverages, and water fountain use

- Ensure proper scheduled environmental cleaning and disinfecting, especially for washrooms, cafeterias, or food service locations, and high-touch surfaces or objects (e.g., knobs and push buttons, water fountains, faucet handles, etc.)
- Reinforce no-sharing food and drink policies, including potluck-style meals.
- Encourage students to bring filled water bottles to school rather than having them drink directly from the mouthpiece of water fountains. Use the water bottle faucet, when possible, to avoid the increased risk of transmission associated with common use water fountain mouthpieces.
- Encourage students to follow hand hygiene practices before and after using shared surfaces/objects and prior to touching their face, or objects that contact the face.

Student drop-off and pick-up

Parents must plan for curb side drop-off and pick-up and will not be permitted entry to the school, except under unique circumstances and where arrangements have been made ahead of time.

Busing

Communal transportation can increase the risk of COVID-19 in children/youth and staff. However, Nunavummiut rely heavily on buses to get students to school and home safely. To reduce the risks of transmission of COVID-19 in school buses, schools must work closely with bus service providers to include risk mitigation strategies in their planning and scheduling.

Masks

All individuals on the bus (students, bus monitors, and bus drivers) must adhere to mask requirements determined by the CPHO. When masks are required at the direction of the CPHO, bus service providers should carry boxes of disposable masks for students who have forgotten or soiled their masks.

For the most recent Public Health information on masks, visit

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/nunavuts-path>. **These measures can and will change as vaccination rates increase in communities.** Age- and community-specific guidance will be provided to communities from the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit upon notification by the CPHO.

Personal preventative measures

Talk to staff, students, and families about the importance of using the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool* to evaluate a student's health prior to leaving home and boarding a bus in the morning. Anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or who have had exposure to COVID-19 in the last 14 days is not permitted to board the bus.

Reinforce the importance of personal preventative measures (hand hygiene upon boarding, avoiding touching face, respiratory etiquette) to all riders. Communicate the importance of these measures to parents and use opportunities prior to getting on the bus to remind students.

Post GN-approved signage on the bus about hand hygiene, physical distancing, and masks. Emphasize the importance of facing forward at all times and avoiding singing or loud voices. Offer all students hand sanitizer as they enter the bus.

Contact EDUOHS@gov.nu.ca for hand sanitizer for buses. Ensure that the hand sanitizer is safely secured before the bus goes into operation to avoid spills.

Seating and cohorts

Schools must work closely with bus service providers to establish assigned seating for all students. The use of assigned seating can reduce the number of students impacted in the event of a COVID-19 exposure on the bus. Where assigned seating is not manageable, it is strongly recommended that all passengers wear a mask prior to boarding and for the duration of their time on the bus.

Where possible, leave the first two rows of seats behind the bus driver empty to maintain a two-metre space between the driver and students.

Records of the seating assignments must be maintained and any changes by administration to the seating chart must be noted, as well as the date of when the change took place. **These measures can and will change as vaccination rates increase in communities.** Guidance specific to ages and communities will be provided to those communities from the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit upon notification by the CPHO.

Bus capacity

Where buses are near or over capacity, the DEA and schools should collaborate with bus service providers to implement staggered starts or alternate routes.

Enhanced cleaning

Routine cleaning must be performed by busing service providers on a regularly scheduled basis. This routine cleaning includes sweeping floors, emptying trash daily, and other designated tasks.

Enhanced cleaning requires the sanitization of high-touch surfaces to prevent the spread of viral illness. High-touch surfaces should be cleaned once daily and/or when visibly soiled. High-touch surfaces on buses include seat tops and benches, handrails, and window ledges. Water and household detergents and common disinfectant products are sufficient for cleaning and disinfecting in buses.

If household detergents or commercial disinfectant are not available, hard surfaces can be cleaned using a dilute solution mixture of 1-part bleach (2% sodium hypochlorite) and 50 parts water.

Ensure that accurate measurements are used when creating dilute solution. Use measuring cups, or where trained with alternate measuring, follow the training instructions. Ensure that the dilute solution contacts the surface for one (1) minute of disinfection before being wiped off.

NOTE: Heavily soiled areas should be cleaned first with a detergent (soap) and water and then disinfected using dilute solution or other disinfectant. **Bleach should never be mixed with any other cleaning products.** Bleach should not be stored in hot areas.

Physical education classes

Sports and physical education class should be encouraged and continued with enhanced cleaning and risk mitigation strategies in place. Ensure hand hygiene before students enter the gym and after they leave the gym. Where hand hygiene cannot take place, equipment must be disinfected between user groups.

Outdoor settings

It is acknowledged that the transmission of the virus will likely be reduced in outdoor settings. Outdoor play and learning have many benefits for children and youth. Schools should incorporate outdoor learning activities into the curriculum as much as possible. Activities requiring students to leave the school property must follow land trip guidelines, including risk management protocols. Students should perform hand hygiene before and after sports, activities, outdoor play, and playground use.

Land-based instruction and programming

Land-based instruction or learning outdoors can be offered as an alternate learning space as the curriculum and weather permits. Outdoor gathering limits first will be subject to public health orders, and second to the number of supervisors based on the Department of Education *Excursion and Land Trips Policy*. It is important to note that learning outdoors is encouraged at any time operations allow when there are identified learning outcomes to benefit students.

For general health and safety information about land-based instruction, refer to the *Excursion and Land Trips Policy* in the [Educator Toolbox](#).

Overnight trips and travel activities

Evidence suggests that COVID-19 can spread within all age groups, and that children may have similar transmission dynamics with their close contacts as adults. Research has also demonstrated that transmission of COVID-19 can occur among students in schools and that younger and older children may have similar rates of infections in these settings. However, children, especially those under 10 years of age, appear to experience symptoms of COVID-19 less frequently and less severely.

Extended periods of enclosed exposure in scenarios without other risk mitigation measures in place, such as overnight stays in cabins and hotels, increase the risk of transmission. It is recommended that to avoid higher-risk situations, all overnight trips and travel activities do not take place until vaccination rates for age and community specific targets demonstrate an acceptable reduction in transmission risks.

Other recreational activities (intramurals, before- and after-school programs)

Schools may run intramurals and before- and after-school sports programs if:

- Participants are students in the community and are of eligible age for the most current vaccine being offered in the community.
- Participants who are not of eligible age for a vaccine may not participate in recreational activities at other schools.
- Programs are run by a school staff member.
- Records of participants must be maintained.
- No spectators are permitted for these programs.
- Emphasize hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and strict adherence to the *Personal Hazard Assessment Tool* (e.g., anyone exhibiting symptoms of illness must not be in the school at any time).
- Ensure hand hygiene takes place before and after class. Where hand hygiene cannot take place, all equipment must be disinfected between each user group.
- Enhanced cleaning of equipment should take place at the end of the day following the final activity.

DEA-approved third-party programs

To support access to extra-curricular activities, the CPHO has allowed increased flexibility in using gymnasiums during non-school programming hours. DEAs and the CSFN may consider applications by external groups to use gymnasiums in accordance with current Public Health orders, including the requirement for users to conduct enhanced cleaning and disinfecting. To maintain a controlled and safe environment for students, it is critical that school spaces are left clean to avoid delays or interruptions to school programming.

It is strongly recommended that schools work closely with their DEA or the CSFN and communicate any concerns related to third-party user groups to avoid the need for cancellation of the third-party activities in the school's gymnasium.

The Department of Education strongly supports and encourages accommodating groups who have dedicated significant efforts to supporting Nunavummiut during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the Canadian Rangers Patrol (the Rangers). The Rangers have demonstrated a thorough application of public health guidance to their programs and provide good opportunities for Nunavummiut to support each other.

Music, band, singing, and performances

Playing wind or brass instruments may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission, although the risk is not fully understood at this time. The evidence is evolving and will continue to be monitored and updated. Although there is a lack of definitive evidence of increased COVID-19 transmission related to these activities, additional precautions should be taken. This will reduce the risk of transmission due to the production of infectious droplets and aerosols while playing a wind or brass instrument, or playing an instrument recently used by an infected person.

When possible, consider outdoor music and band practices and adapt stage or orchestral pit space to maintain physical distancing. For those students who play a brass or wind instrument, the length of the instrument should be considered an extension of the individual and included when determining the spacing between musicians, as well as the need for increased distance as droplets may be projected out of a wind instrument.

Key risk mitigation strategies include:

- Use hand hygiene before and after using the instruments.
- Do not share instruments or accessories.
 - If shared, clean using a disinfectant or alcohol wipe as per standard protocol for the instrument after each use and between users.
 - Do not share cleaning cloths or instrument brushes.
 - Do not share mouthpieces, reeds, or harmonicas.
- When cleaning individual instruments with saliva build-up (e.g., spit valves), cleaning should take place at least two (2) metres away from others and by blowing into a disposable cloth or container that will collect the saliva, to reduce the risk of exposure of others.
 - Do not blow the spit onto the floor.
 - The cloth or container should be placed in a garbage can or cleaned immediately. Wash hands immediately afterwards.

Singing and choir may elevate the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The risk is considered even greater when singing takes place in a closed space with poor ventilation, or in a crowded setting. When there are new or active cases or an increasing trend of COVID-19 in a community, in-person singing and choir must not take place in the school.

When there are no new or active cases, singing and choir can take place with the following risk mitigation measures for in-person choir and singing activities:

- Consider outdoor singing activities, weather permitting.
- Keep at least two (2) metres distance between each singer.
- Organize the choir formation so singers are not facing each other directly or standing less than two (2) metres behind each other.
- Consider opting for practice performances with fewer performers if distancing cannot be maintained.
- Singers who are members of the same household are at less risk and can sing together while being distanced from other.

Schools are currently not permitted to hold indoor concerts. Outdoor concerts and performances are permitted in accordance with the gathering limits of the public health orders at the time of the event. **These measures can and will change as vaccination rates increase in communities.** Guidance based on age and community will be provided to those communities from the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit upon notification by the CPHO.

Large gatherings and assemblies

Activities that bring individuals together from multiple groups or classes, including assemblies, are currently not permitted. Large gatherings and assemblies must not take place until an explicit notification is received from the Office of the CPHO. **These measures can and will change as vaccination rates increase in communities.**

Guidance based on age and community will be provided to those communities from the Department of Education's Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness unit upon notification by the CPHO.

Reproducible signage

In the [Educator Toolbox](#), you will find reproducible signage that can be displayed in your school to support physical distancing and appropriate personal hygiene.

Contact information

For information regarding the status of COVID-19 in your community, visit the Department of Health website at <https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>.

For further information regarding operational health and safety, contact EDUOHS@gov.nu.ca.

For general queries to the Department of Education, contact info.edu@gov.nu.ca.



info.edu@gov.nu.ca
gov.nu.ca/education