

**BULLETIN 25 • September 9**  
**CUPE K-12**



## Health and safety

### 36 Will staff have access to masks and face shields?

Schools will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff.

*(See page 10 "Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.")*

Staff are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained (e.g., itinerant teachers, specialists interacting with multiple learning groups). Staff can also wear a mask, a face covering or a face shield within their classroom or learning group if that is their personal preference.

Schools and school districts will have non-medical masks available for staff and students, including anyone who becomes ill while at school. Schools and school districts should consider distributing masks and face shields at the beginning of the school year on an opt-out basis, rather than at the request of students/staff.

Wearing a non-medical mask, face covering or face shield in schools outside of the circumstances outlined above is a personal choice for students and adults. It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Those that choose to wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields must still seek to maintain physical distance from people outside of their learning group. There must be no crowding, gathering or congregating of people from different learning groups, even if non-medical masks are worn.

*(See page 20 "Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.")*

## BCCDC School FAQ

The following FAQs are under the Schools section on the BC Centre for Disease Control website. This information was updated on September 4. Find answers to questions [here](#).

### Is it safe to be with older people, like grandparents or Elders, once schools are back in session?

Each family is different. Some families may live with older people or Elders. Other families may visit or depend on them to help with childcare. Families need to think about their own unique situation to decide if and how to be with older people, like grandparents and Elders, in the safest way possible.

If you live with or spend a lot of time with older people or Elders, there are things you can do to lower the chances of getting and spreading the virus. This may include decreasing the number of contacts your family has outside of your household. For example, you can limit contacts to only family members outside of school, work and other commitments. You can also visit outside when the weather is good and keep a 2 metre distance when visiting.

Adults and children are more likely to catch COVID-19 in the community than in schools, based on the rigorous health and safety measures that will be in place.

### Can students and staff without symptoms go to school if someone else in their household is sick?

Students and staff without symptoms can still go to school even if someone else in their household is sick. They cannot go to school if public health has told them not to. This is the same as for other settings like workplaces and public spaces.

Most people who are sick or have symptoms of illness in B.C. are not sick with COVID-19. So, it is very unlikely the person in their household has COVID-19.

If someone has been diagnosed with COVID-19, public health will identify close contacts and ask them to stay home and self-isolate.

The person who is sick or has symptoms should be assessed by 8-1-1 or a health care provider. Testing is recommended for anyone with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, even mild ones.

### What should happen if staff or students become sick while at school?

A student will be separated, provided a non-medical mask or tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes, and cared for if they become sick at school. Their parents or caregiver will be notified and asked to pick them up as soon as possible.

Staff will be separated and asked to go home as soon as possible.

In both cases, the spaces they were in will be cleaned and disinfected.

For more information on the K-12 Restart, please continue to visit [bcschools.cupe.ca](https://bcschools.cupe.ca) as information is regularly updated.

In solidarity and safety,

**Warren Williams**

K-12 Presidents Council President