

**WSÁNEĆ**  
**SCHOOL BOARD**

**2021/2022**

WSÁNEĆ SCHOOL BOARD  
**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE  
PLAN**

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## Introduction

WSÁNEĆ School Board is committed to providing safe and healthy environments for all members of the school community. In alignment with the BC Restart Plan and the following WorkSafeBC requirements, this communicable disease prevention guide outlines the ongoing prevention measures that everyone needs to follow as we transition from COVID-19 safety measures to general communicable disease prevention measures that are guided by public health.

*The WSÁNEĆ School Board Communicable Disease Prevention (CDP) is effective as of August 30th, 2021 and replaces the COVID-19 Return to School Handbook.*

## Scope

The CDP applies to board, staff, students, families, partnership programs, contractors, volunteers, visitors and related on-site administration or educational services.

## Communicable Disease Prevention

The CDP focuses on basic risk reduction principles to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. The fundamental components of communicable disease prevention include both ongoing measures to maintain at all times and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health during periods of elevated risk. W̱SÁNEĆ Emergency Preparedness (WEP) committee will regularly monitor and review communicable disease information from public health authorities, and update the school community of any changes affecting school activities, including updating the communicable disease prevention plan as required.

## Regional Differences

Medical Health Officers continue to be able to place Public Health Orders requiring additional health and safety measures beyond the guidance in this document at their own discretion, based on their authority under provincial legislation.



## Supporting Employees and Students to Stay at Home when Sick

- All employees and students must complete a daily health self-assessment
- If you are ill or have symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g., fever and/or chills, recent onset of coughing, diarrhea): please stay home
- Notify your supervisor or teacher of your absence
- Consult the COVID-19 self-assessment tool to see if you should get tested, and contact 811 if you require medical advice
- Managers should follow the sick leave provisions in the collective agreement to support employees, and contact the Administrator and/or Human Resources if advice is required
- Teachers should follow established protocols to support student absence due to illness, and contact their Manager (Principal/Director) if advice is required
- During the 2021-2022 school year managers can approve a work from home agreement in consultation with the administrator on a case by case basis

## Attendance

- To maximize student attendance, repeated, and consistent messaging/communication is crucial to convey to parents and caregivers that schools are low risk, and that health and safety measures continue to be in place in alignment with public health guidelines

## Personal Protective Equipment

- All staff are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors and on school buses
- All students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear a mask or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) indoors in schools and on school buses
- Parents and caregivers of children who are considered at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider to determine their child's level of risk
- Students in Grade K to 3 are encouraged to wear a mask indoors in the schools and on the school buses, but are not required to do so – mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected.
- Staff should use positive and inclusive approaches to engage students in the use of masks, and should not employ measures that are punitive or stigmatizing in nature
- Visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school

### EXCEPTIONS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS, VISITORS:

The guidance outlines above regarding mask requirements does not apply to staff, students, and visitors in the following circumstances:

- To a person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- To a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- If the mask is removed temporarily for the purpose of identifying the person wearing it;
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing it (e.g., engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- If a person is eating or drinking;
- If a person is behind a barrier; or
- No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask. See the Supportive School Environments section for more information

## Daily Health Check

- The daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious
- Staff, students, and visitors need to complete a daily health check prior to entering the building
- Staff must clearly communicate to parents/caregivers about their responsibility to complete a daily health check with their child, and keep them home from school if they are sick
- Signage will be posted around the organization to remind staff, students, parents/caregivers, and visitors about their responsibility to complete a daily health check
- If a student, staff, or other adult is sick, they must not enter the school

Check your symptoms with the K-12 Health Check. If you have any questions, or the symptoms get worse, contact your healthcare provider, or call 8-1-1. For more information on COVID-19, please go to [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca). If you develop severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breath or speaking in single words) or chest pain, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

## KEY SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

## WHAT TO DO

Fever (above 38° C)  
Chills  
Cough  
Difficulty breathing  
Loss of smell or taste

If yes to 1 or more of these symptoms:  
Stay home and get a health assessment.  
  
Contact a health care provider or 8-1-1 about your symptoms and next steps.

## OTHER SYMPTOMS

## WHAT TO DO

Sore throat  
Loss of appetite  
Headache  
Body aches  
Extreme fatigue or tiredness  
Nausea and vomiting  
Diarrhea

If yes to 1 symptom:  
Stay home until you feel better.  
  
If yes to 2 or more of these symptoms:  
Stay home for 24 hours.  
  
If symptoms don't get better or get worse, get a health assessment; contact a health care provider or 8-1-1 about your symptoms and next steps.

## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

## WHAT TO DO

Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?

**If yes:**  
All students and staff who have travelled outside of Canada are required to follow current provincial and federal orders.

## CLOSE CONTACT

## WHAT TO DO

Have you been contacted by public health and notified that you are a close contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?


**If yes:**  
Please follow the instructions provided by Public Health.  
  
You can call 8-1-1 anytime to get advice about how you are feeling and what to do next. Pay attention to how you are feeling. If it becomes harder to breathe, you can't drink anything or feel much worse, seek urgent medical care at an urgent care clinic or emergency department.

## Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms

- Students and staff or other adults should stay home when sick, as this is one of the most important ways to reduce the introduction to and the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The following resources provide guidance regarding specific symptoms of illness:
- Parents/caregivers and students can use the WSÁNEĆ School Board Daily Health Check Form. A copy will also be on the website
- Staff and other adults can refer to BCCDC's "When to get tested for COVID-19"
- Staff, students, and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool, call 8-1-1 or their health care provider
- Staff, students or other adults must stay home if they are required to self-isolate. Additional information on self-isolation requirements and support is available for BCCDC
- When staff, students or other adults can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced as indicated by BCCDC. Please see Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School
- Students or Staff who are experiencing symptoms consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition (e.g., seasonal allergies) can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.
- Students or staff may still attend school if a member of their household develops new symptoms of illness, provided the student/staff has no symptoms themselves. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19, public health will advise the asymptomatic student/staff on self-isolation and when they can return to school



## Illness Protocols

- Students and staff who become sick while at school or work will be sent home as soon as possible
  - Students and staff who are not able to be picked up immediately will be directed to a space where they can wait comfortably and is separated from others (at least 2M), and be provided with a non-medical mask if they don't have one (unless they are experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms and are at risk of vomiting)
  - Younger students must be supervised. Supervising staff must wear a non-medical mask and face shield if they are unable to maintain physical distance. Staff should avoid touching bodily fluids as much as possible and practice diligent hand hygiene
  - Custodians should clean and disinfect the surfaces/equipment which the person's bodily fluids may have been in contact with while they were ill (e.g., their desk, a bathroom stall they used etc.) prior to the surfaces/equipment being used by others. Cleaning the entire room, the person was in is not required in these circumstances
  - Staff and students should refer to the Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms section for guidance on when they can return to work or school
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## Promoting Hand Washing and Hygiene Practices

- Washing your hands regularly, or using hand sanitizers if a washroom or sink is not readily available, is one of the most simple and effective ways to minimize the spread of communicable diseases
- Practice hand hygiene by washing hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds (temperature does not change the effectiveness of washing hands with plain soap and water)
- Regular opportunities for staff and students to practice hand hygiene need to be provided
- Staff should assist younger students with hand hygiene as required
- The WSÁNEĆ School Board will also continue to supply hand sanitizer stations at all main entrances to buildings, and additional locations in buildings to promote hand hygiene
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand sanitizer may not be effective at eliminating microbes. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty. If soap is not available, use an alcohol-based hand wipe followed by an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Supplies will be kept well stocked including soap, paper towels and where appropriate, alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol
- For outdoor education activities, teachers should ensure that hand sanitizer is supplied if washing facilities are not available (e.g., outdoor events, vehicles, field locations, etc.).
- The WSÁNEĆ School Board will have signage throughout campus to remind everyone of these important practice

# Hand Hygiene Chart

## Hand Hygiene for Students

When they arrive at school

Before and after recess and lunch

Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at student's desk)

Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple classes with shared equipment.

After using the toilet

After sneezing and coughing into hands

Whenever hands are visibly dirty

## Hand Hygiene for Staff

When they arrive at school

Before and after recess and lunch

Before and after eating and drinking

Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating

Before and after giving medication to a student or self

After using the toilet

After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit vomit, blood)

After cleaning tasks

After removing gloves

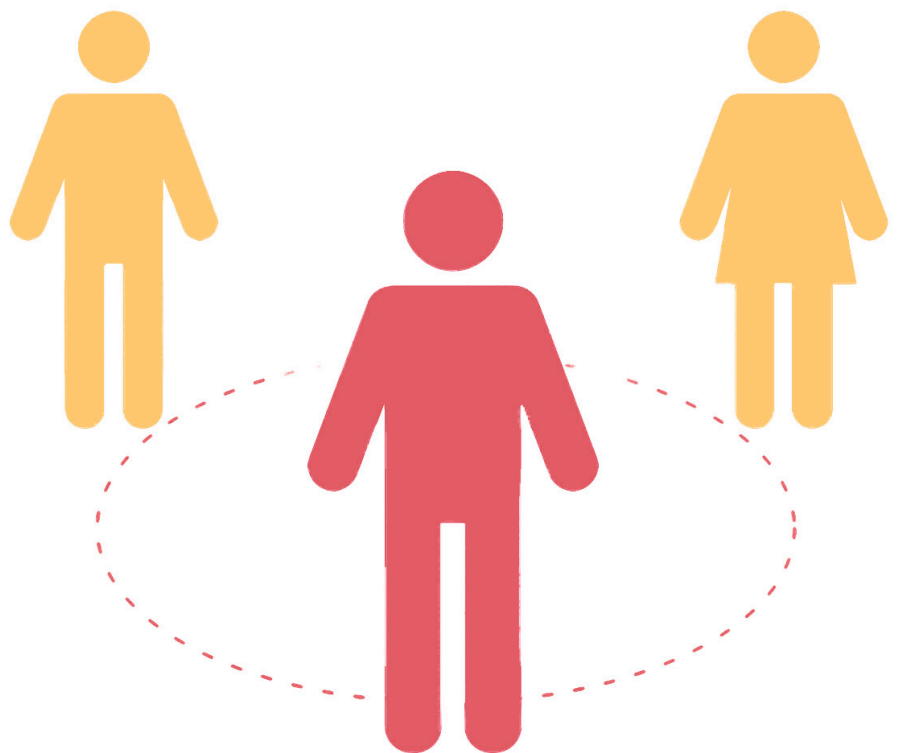
After handling garbage

Whenever hands are visibly dirty



## Physical Distancing and Space Arrangements

- Public health no longer requires physical distancing of 2M for communicable disease measures
- Staff can remind students about respecting others personal space
- Staff and students should follow floor markings to address traffic flow



## Respiratory Etiquette

- Cough or sneeze into your bent elbow, not your hands. Avoid touching your face with your hands or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and put your used tissue in the garbage
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board is committed to maintaining a clean environment through routine cleaning practices, and implementing enhanced cleaning practices if directed by public health during any periods of elevated risk
- The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board will only use commercial disinfecting products listed on Health Canada's hard-surface disinfectants for use against COVID-19
- Staff will follow the procedures outlines in the BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfects for Public School Settings
- Always wash hands before and after handling shared objects
- Items and surfaces that children have placed in their mouths or that have been in contact with bodily fluids should be cleaned as soon as possible and between uses by different children
- Dishwasher-safe items can be cleaned and disinfected in a dishwasher with a hot rinse
- General cleaning of the premises, and cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces, at least once in a 24-hour period
- All surfaces that are visibly dirty will be cleaned and disinfected
- Garbage will be emptied daily
- Staff are required to use the sign on their office or classroom door to indicate if a space was used and requires cleaning
- All staff will be required to complete daily spot cleaning in their classroom or office space daily

## Frequently Touched Surfaces

- Frequently touched surfaces include doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, facet handle and toilet handles, shared equipment (e.g. sports equipment, tablet, keyboards etc.), appliances (coffee pots, photocopiers, refrigerators etc.), and service counters
- Limiting access to water fountains is no longer required but hand hygiene should be practiced before and after use
- This communicable disease plan does not include restrictions on access to water, washrooms or other spaces that support student learning and well-being.
- Frequently touched items like toys or manipulatives that may not be able to be cleaned often (e.g., fabric) or at all (e.g., sand, foam, playdough etc.) can be used, if hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting Bodily Fluids

- Follow these procedures, in conjunction with WSÁNEĆ School Board policies, when cleaning and disinfecting bodily fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine):
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves
- Follow regular health and safety procedures and regularly use PPE (e.g., gloves, Kevlar sleeves) for blood and bodily fluids (e.g., toileting, spitting, biting)

## Laundry

- Follow these procedures when doing laundry:
- Laundry should be placed in a laundry basket with a plastic liner
- Do not shake dirty items
- Wearing gloves is optional. If choosing to wear gloves, ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after use. No other PPE is required
- Wash with regular laundry soap and hot water (60- 90 degrees Celsius)

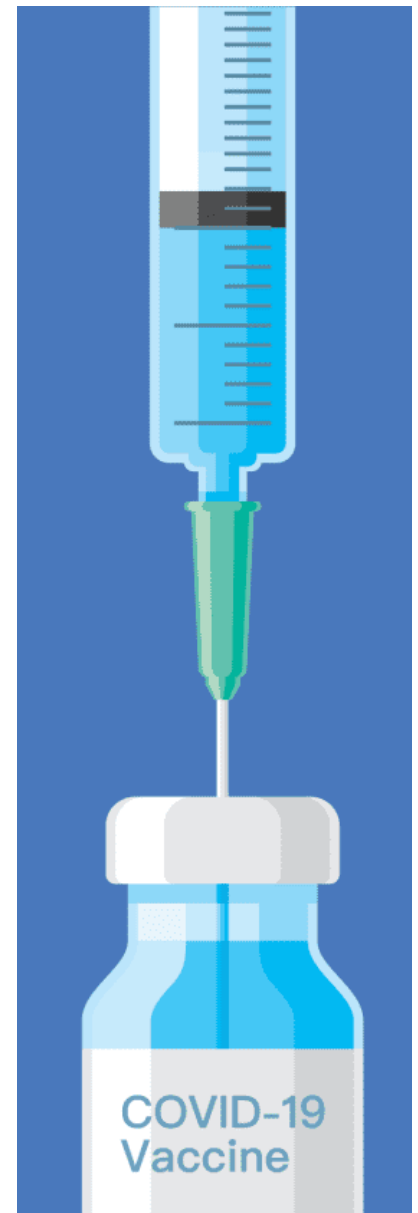


## Building Ventilation

- Good indoor air ventilation alone cannot protect people from exposure to COVID-19; however, it may reduce risk when used in addition to other preventive measures
- Air handling units in LTS and WLSS are operating and maintained in accordance with WorkSafeBC requirements
- The Administration / Daycare / SAEC building and portables will have air purifiers stationed throughout
- Air purifiers can be made available for classroom or office spaces as requested
- To enhance school ventilation, staff should consider moving activities outdoors when possible as weather permits
- When using fans and air conditioners in ventilated spaces, air should be moved from high places to lower places instead of blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to another's
- As the weather permits, windows may be opened to also improve air circulation

## Supporting Vaccination

- Getting vaccinated is the most important tool supporting the BC Restart Plan
- Public health strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect themselves and those around them - including those who are not eligible to be vaccinated
- According to the BC Centre for Disease Control, children under 12 who are not currently eligible to be vaccinated continue to be less likely to get and spread COVID-19 and have a low risk of serious outcomes if they do get COVID-19
- Students/Families can reach out to their principal or director for more information on the benefits and safety of the vaccine or to get help in booking a vaccine appointment



## School Gatherings and Events

- School gatherings and events can be held in line with those permitted by public health. Organizers should consider:
- Respecting students and staff comfort levels regarding personal space;
- Using available space to spread out as much as possible and respecting occupancy limits, and ensuring enough space is available to prevent involuntarily physical contact between attendees
- Gradual transitions to larger gathering (e.g., school-wide assemblies), including starting with virtual or smaller in-person options, shorter in-person options, etc.



## **Personal Items**

- Staff and students can bring personal items to school, but are encouraged not to share items that come in contact with the mouth (e.g., food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, vaping devices)
- Students are encouraged to store personal items in a locker if applicable

## **Supporting Students with Disabilities/Diverse Abilities**

- Supporting students with disabilities/diverse abilities may require staff providing support services to be in close physical proximity or in physical contact with a student
- When staff are working with a student indoors, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, staff are required to wear a mask and a face shield
- When staff are working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movements is important, and the service cannot be provided from behind a barrier, the staff member can wear a mask with a transparent section to enable visualization
- Students in Grades 4 to 12 are also required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering when receiving services indoors and a barrier is not present
- For students in Grades K to 3, the student or parent/caregiver should determine whether the student should also be wearing any PPE when receiving services in close proximity
- The WSÁNEĆ School Board will have non-medical masks and face shields available for staff and students
- For more information, including exemptions to mask requirements for staff and students, see the Personal Protective Equipment section

## Student Transportation

- Buses should be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document
- Bus drivers should clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips. Drivers are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips
- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask
- Students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings when they are on the bus. Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a non-medical mask on school buses but are not required to do so – mask wearing remains a personal or family/caregiver choice for these students, and their choices must be respected
- Non-medical masks should be put on before loading
- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19 or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school (see the Daily Health Check section for more information). If a child is sick, they must not take the bus or go to school
- Spread passengers out if empty seats are available
- Open windows when the weather permits
- Bus drivers and students should be encouraged to practice respiratory etiquette while on the bus
- See the Field Trip section for more guidance about safety measures for field trips



## Field Trips

- When planning field trips staff should follow existing policies and procedures as well as the guidance in this document. Additional measures specific to field trips should be taken, including:
- For transportation follow all guidance in the student transportation section in this document
- Field trips must align with local, regional, provincial, and federal public health recommendations and orders
- Volunteers must be trained in and strictly adhere to required health and safety guidelines
- Overnight trips need to be approved by the administrator and consider guidance from the BCCDC and the BC Camps Association when planning overnight trips that include group accommodations

## Food / Culinary Programs

- Staff can continue to include food preparation as part of learning programs for students. The following guidelines should be applied:
- Continue to follow normal food safety measures and requirements
- Implement clean and disinfecting measures as outlined in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section of this document
- FOODSAFE Level 1 covers important food safety and workers safety information including food-borne illness, receiving, and storing food, preparing food, serving food, and cleaning and sanitizing. It is a helpful resource for those seeking education and training on food safety
- Diligent hand hygiene must be practiced by washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

## Food Services

- Food services can continue
- Food Safety Legislation can continue to apply as relevant
- For food contact surfaces, staff should ensure any sanitizers or disinfectants used are approved for use in food service application and are appropriate for use against COVID-19. Additional information is available on the BCCDC website
- Food donations can continue to be accepted to support learning and delivery of meal programs, breakfast programs and other food access initiatives
- Staff should continue to emphasize that food and beverages should not be shared
- Meal programs should follow regular operating practices

## Outdoor Programs/Physical Education

- Staff should spread out students in the available space, and encourage outdoor activities and programs, as much as possible
- Students are not required to wear a mask during high-intensity physical activities
- For low intensity activities (e.g., yoga) students are required to wear masks when they are indoors, and barriers are not present
- Students are required to practice proper hand hygiene before and after using frequently touched pieces of equipment (e.g., before and after a sports game using a shared ball), as well as proper respiratory etiquette.

- Shared equipment can be used, provided it is cleaned and disinfected as per the guidelines in the Cleaning and Disinfecting section

## Playgrounds

- There is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments. Playgrounds are a safe environment. The following measures should be taken when using playgrounds:
  - Ensure appropriate hand hygiene practices before and after outdoor play
  - Attempt to minimize unintentional physical contact between students

## Library

- At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper, or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing/returning of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19.

## Carpooling

- For carpooling related to school activities, students, staff, and other adults must follow the mask requirements outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment section. For personal carpooling, as per public health recommendations, people 9 and older are encouraged to wear masks while carpooling (masks are not suggested if carpooling with members of the same household)
- Spread out vehicle occupants as much as possible
- Set the vehicle's ventilation to bring in fresh outside air, and do not recirculate the air
- Open windows when the weather allows
- Clean hands before and after trips
- Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly

## Visitor Access

- Front doors can be left unlocked for visitor access
- Visitors are encouraged to make appointments
- Visitors must be aware of communicable disease protocols and requirements, and have completed a daily health check, prior to entering the school
- Each secretary station must maintain a sign in/sign out process for all visitors and staff who are not typically on-site (e.g., TOC's, IT personnel)
- Each secretary station must keep a list of the date, names and contact information for all visitors and staff who are not typically on-site who entered the school over the past 45 days
- Visitor's access should be limited to only the areas required
- Parents/Caregivers should be encouraged to drop-off/pick-up students outside of the school
- Visitors should respect others' personal space while on school grounds, including outside



## Responding to Elevated Risk

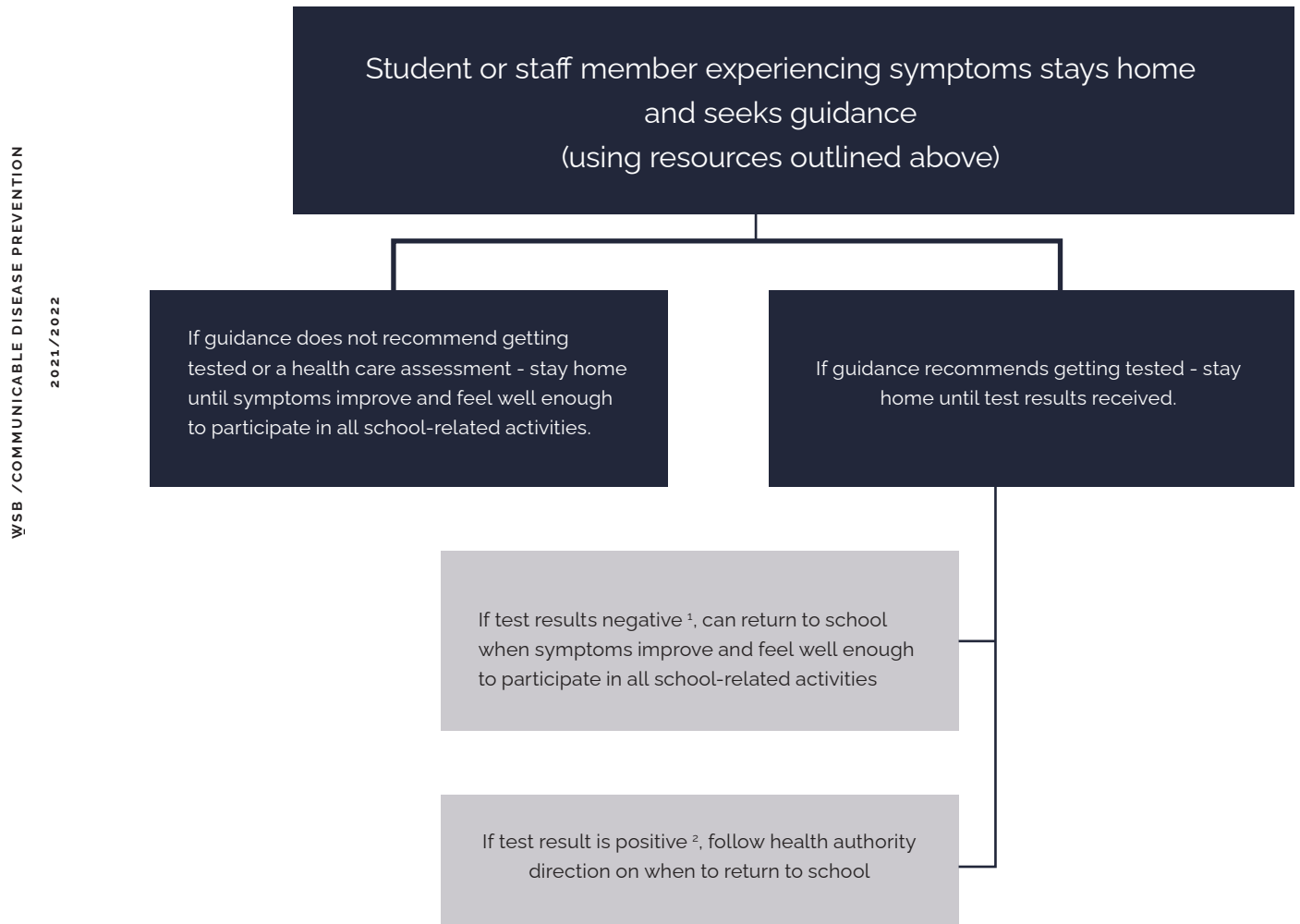
- The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may elevate from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level or within a workplace
- In addition to maintaining the ongoing prevention measures, WEP will monitor public health information and be responsive to any further directives from the provincial health officer which could include, for example, implementing enhanced cleaning measures, distancing requirements or masking guidance
- Any changes to prevention measures during periods of elevated risk will be communicated to those affected in our school community

## Communication and Monitoring

- This CDP will be available on the WSÁNEĆ School Board website and shared widely with our school community
- Managers should ensure that their staff, new hires, parents/caregivers, students and other adults in the school (e.g., practicum students, volunteers) are well informed on their responsibilities and have reviewed the communicable disease plan and understand and follow the measures in place
- The prevention measures will be reinforced through school signage, website, social media pages and other communication tools on a regular basis
- The ongoing review and evaluation of the will involve the WEP Committee
- Individuals should report any health and safety concerns to their supervisor, who is responsible to follow-up and address any concerns
- Individuals may also contact their union representative, union OHSE, WEP Committee for assistance with a safety concern or question

## Appendix A: COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing & Return to School

When a student, staff or other adult can return to school depends on the type of symptoms they experienced and if a COVID-19 test is recommended. See the K-12 Health Check app and the BCCDC “When to get tested for COVID-19” resource for specific guidance. Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online Self-Assessment Tool or call 8-1-1 or their health care provider.



1. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless the person develops a new illness. BCCDC has information on receiving negative test results.

2. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test. Visit the BCCDC website for more information on positive test results.