

Updated: **March 31, 2021**

BC’s Education Restart Plan - School District No. 52 Prince Rupert

School District 52 Prince Rupert resumed school operations on September 8, 2020, with these four BC Ministry of Education guiding principles:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees
2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential service workers
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students

As a part of ensuring continuity of learning and educational outcomes during **Stage 2** of the COVID-19 pandemic, these guidelines are intended to support K-12 employees, students, parents, administrators, and school community members to:

- Be informed about public health measures and to feel safe in district schools.
- Understand each individuals’ role and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting public health and school safety.

BC’s FIVE STAGE FRAMEWORK

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: N/A ▪ Middle: N/A ▪ Secondary: N/A 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 60 ▪ Middle: 60 ▪ Secondary: 120 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 60 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 30 ▪ Middle: 30 ▪ Secondary: 30 	Learning Group Size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 0 ▪ Middle: 0 ▪ Secondary: 0
DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 25% for all schools 	DENSITY TARGETS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 0% for all schools
IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time all students, all grades	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for all students for the maximum instructional time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed learning supplements in-class instruction, if required.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers¹ ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports In-class instruction for all other students for the maximum time possible within cohort limits. Self-directed and remote learning supplements in-class instruction.	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Full-time instruction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children of essential service workers¹ ▪ students with disabilities/diverse abilities ▪ students who require additional supports Remote learning for all other students	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION: Suspend in-class for all students

Note: as Stage 1 is a return to regular operating procedures, and Stage 5 means that all in-class instruction is suspended, the following health and safety guidelines apply to Stages 2 to 4, unless specified otherwise.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

The following Ministry of Education guides have been used in preparing this Restart Plan:

- [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) (Updated March 30/21)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#) (Updated March 30/21)
- [WorkSafeBC](#)
- [K-12 Education Restart Plan](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

In addition to the Ministry of Education's guiding principles for the COVID-19 response, the Ministry along with our education partners and stakeholders articulated the following principles with respect to health and safety:

- All schools will adhere to the standards, guidelines, and direction from the BC Centre for Disease Control, Work Safe BC, and the School District 52 COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan. Unique school plans will also be created and updated as required with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at each worksite.
- Psychological safety measures and trauma-informed practice will be valued and implemented alongside physical health and safety measures.
- Effective communication with all community partners, parents, students, unions and employees is an essential aspect of successfully implementing these guidelines.

LEARNING GROUPS AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Reducing the number of close, prolonged face-to-face interactions an individual has in a day continues to be a key component of BC's strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This can be accomplished in our schools through different but complementary approaches: learning groups (cohorts) and physical distancing.

LEARNING GROUPS (Cohorts)

A learning cohort is a group of students and staff who remain together throughout a school term (e.g. a school quarter, semester or year) and who primarily interact with each other. A learning group could be made up of a single class of students with their teacher, multiple classes that sometimes join for additional learning activities, or a group of secondary school students with the same courses. In Stage 2, members of the same learning group must minimize physical contact.

The composition of learning groups should remain consistent for all activities that occur in schools (i.e. students and staff should not be part of more than one learning group at the same

time). Students and staff from different learning groups can interact with one another while practicing physical distancing.

Learning group composition can be changed at the start of a new term (e.g. trimester, quarter, octa or semester). Outside of these transition points, composition will be changed as minimally as possible except where required to support optimal school functioning.

Examples of what learning groups can look like in elementary, middle and secondary schools are available on the B.C. Government website. Refer to the “Prioritizing Health and Safety – Flow Charts” section for more information. Stage-specific health and safety expectations are subject to change, further to updated public health guidance from the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Maximum learning group sizes (inclusive of students and staff)				
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: no limit Middle: no limit Secondary: no limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 60 Middle: 60 Secondary: 120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 30 Middle: 30 Secondary: 60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 30 Middle: 30 Secondary: 30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 0 Middle: 0 Secondary: 0

Learning groups will be smaller for elementary students recognizing that it’s more challenging for younger children to maintain physical distance from each other, while older students are better able to minimize physical contact, practice hand hygiene and recognize if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Allowing larger learning groups in secondary schools also enables more flexibility in meeting students’ diverse learning needs.

Learning cohorts (groups) are a recommended public health measure to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Organizing students and staff into learning groups helps to reduce the number of different interactions and potential exposure to COVID-19 and supports better contact tracing if there is a confirmed case in a school community.

What Learning Groups look like in SD 52:

All **Elementary Schools** are combining 1 to 3 divisions in their schools to create Learning Cohorts 60 or less staff and students.

Recesses may be staggered. As an example, at one Elementary School, Cohorts 1 and 2 will go out for recess together and Cohorts 3 and 4 will go for recess together. Cohorts

will each be assigned an area of the property, i.e. on Monday, Cohort 1 will be on the playground equipment and Cohort 2 will be on the field.

Lunches will be eaten in classrooms: Cohort 1 and 2 will go outside for the first half of lunch break and return to eat lunch in their classroom. Cohort 3 and 4 will eat lunch in their classroom and then go out to the playground for the second half of lunch break. They will be assigned separate play areas as they were at recess.

Prince Rupert Middle School is combining two classes within grade groups to be a Learning Cohort. These learning groups will join together for their exploratory, second language and Physical Education. Each Learning Cohort will have nut break and lunch together and be assigned to a specific area daily for breaks.

Some of the schools have the ability to have learning groups entering and exiting through their own door to help with physical distancing from other learning groups.

Hartley Bay Elementary Secondary School will not need to make any modifications to their school scheduling as they have less than 40 students.

Pacific Coast School has less than the recommended secondary learning cohort size of 120 students, so they will be one learning cohort.

Charles Hays Secondary School (CHSS), has 620 students and has moved to an Octa system which has allowed for cohorts that are much smaller than the recommended 120 students. Please go to the CHSS website for details.

Interacting Learning Groups (Cohorts)

Schools will minimize the number of adults (staff and others) who interact with learning groups they are not a part of, as much as possible while continuing to support learning and a positive, healthy and safe environment. Staff outside of learning groups will practice physical distancing (2m) when interacting with the learning group. For example, an itinerant teacher (e.g. Teacher teaching on call, indigenous support worker, teacher candidate, district specialist) can teach/support multiple learning groups but must practice physical distance from students and other staff and avoid close face-to-face interactions.

Elementary Students:

When interacting with peers **outside of their learning group**, student should:

- Minimize physical contact when outdoors;
- Maintain physical distance (2m) when indoors.

Middle/Secondary Students:

When interacting with students and staff outside of their learning group students should maintain physical distance (2m).

Multi-Learning Group Instruction:

Students from different learning groups may be required to be together to receive beneficial social supports, programs or services (e.g. breakfast and lunch programs, after school activities and clubs). Within these supports or services, it is expected that learning groups are maintained, and physical distancing is practiced between learning groups, as much as is practical.

Staff Interactions

Unless staff members belong to the same learning group, they should maintain physical distance (2m) from one another at all times. Masks are not a replacement for physical distancing between staff from different learning groups.

Information on mask requirements will be explored under Personal Protective Equipment.

Schools released their school plans on Wednesday August 26th once they were approved by the Ministry and will be updating them as required by the BCCDC and the Ministry of Education.

Physical Distancing Strategies

Physical distancing refers to a range of measures aimed at reducing close contact with others. Physical distancing is used as a prevention measure because COVID-19 tends to spread through prolonged, close, face-to-face contact.

Schools use directional arrows to create one-way flow in hallways where needed to minimize congestion and encourage physical distancing.

Physical distance stickers have been placed 2 m apart on the floor wherever line ups may occur in schools (i.e. the school offices, and entrances). This applies to all of our School District Buildings including, Wap Sigatgyet, Learning Services, Maintenance, and the School Board Office.

Plexiglass shields have been installed in high traffic areas to protect workers who will have line ups of students and staff from multiple learning cohorts.

Members of the school community, students and staff received training regarding physical distancing during orientations at the start of the school year.

In School District 52, physical distancing is practiced as follows:

- Avoiding physical contact,
- Minimizing close, prolonged, face-to-face interactions,
- Maintaining physical distance when outside of learning groups,
- Limiting the number of people who can be in smaller spaces,
- Holding meetings virtually whenever possible,
- Posting room limits as reminders where possible,
- Using larger spaces to bring learning groups together,
- Avoiding crowding within and outside of a learning group,
- Staggering breaks to reduce overcrowding in common areas,
- Entering and exiting through assigned doors,
- Implementing seating plans that allow for side by side learning rather than face to face,
- Using directional arrows to maintain distance.

Staff Only Spaces

Experience to date underscores the importance of COVID-19 prevention among adults, as well as students, in the school setting. Schools and School Districts must ensure physical distancing is practiced within staff only spaces, including during break times, **in addition to mask use.** See Protective Equipment section for more information.

Students with Diverse Abilities/Disabilities

Students with diverse abilities/disabilities will have access to all of their educational supports and programs. They will continue to be included in regular classrooms, and in a learning group.

Itinerant Staff will ensure they are physically distancing, using plexiglass barriers, and wearing non-medical masks when working with students especially since they are not a member of a single learning group. When working with students where seeing facial expressions and/or lip movement is important, and physical distancing cannot be maintained, the strategies outlined in the *Itinerant Staff and Specialists* section should be explored. As masks are required, options include having the staff member wear a mask with a transparent section to enable visualization of the mouth.

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 or not the student should also be wearing any PPE when receiving services in close physical proximity.

Each of our students on Individual Education Plans (IEP) are connected to a Learning Services Teacher, the District Learning Services staff, and a counsellor. Schools put together school-based teams that work with the families along with the Principal or Vice Principal. These teams are comprised of classroom teachers, learning services teachers, counsellors, aboriginal resource workers, principals, outside agencies such as CYMH or MCFD, and the parents and guardians.

The Learning Services Department will contact families to discuss how programming and delivery may be different due to COVID-19.

School Gatherings and Events

School Gatherings will be kept to a minimum and where possible schools will seek virtual alternatives to larger gatherings and assemblies. When gatherings are occurring, they should:

- Occur within a learning group,
- Not exceed the maximum learning group size in the setting,
- Prevent crowding by ensuring there is adequate space.
- If barriers between participants are not present, participants are required to wear masks.

Staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, and other staff-only gatherings should be held virtually wherever possible.

Personal Items

Staff and students can continue to bring personal items to school, but they should be encouraged to only bring items that are necessary (e.g. backpacks, clothing, school supplies, water bottles, reusable food containers). Items brought regularly to and from school should be limited to those that can be easily cleaned (e.g. reusable food containers) and/or are considered to be low risk (e.g. clothing, paper, etc.).

Food and beverages:

- Schools will continue to emphasize that individual food and beverages are not to be shared.

- Schools will not allow homemade food items to be made available to other students at this time (e.g. birthday treats, bake sale items).

Student Transportation on Buses

Students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear non-medical masks, or face-coverings on school buses. Grades K – 3 students are encouraged to wear a non-medical mask or face-coverings 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.

Bus Drivers will be wearing non-medical masks and trained regarding processes of loading students from back to front and offloading from front to back (where possible). Students will sit in the same seat each day and, if possible, sit beside the windows. Students in the same household can sit together.

The Learning Services bus picks up students from around the community and delivers them to a variety of schools. These bus drivers will also be abiding by strict protocols.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Our schools are cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings Guidelines.

Classrooms and offices are provided with wipes and food grade disinfecting spray to use throughout the day as required in classrooms. The District has implemented cleaning protocols for all common areas and surfaces, including washrooms, equipment, tools, common tables, desks, light switches, hand railings and door handles. Those engaged in cleaning will have adequate training and materials. The school district has invested in Electrostatic Disinfectors which are extremely effective in sanitizing high touch surfaces.

Frequently touched surfaces in public spaces and washrooms will be cleaned at least twice per 24 hours period by custodial staff.

Frequently Touched Surfaces:

Frequently touched surfaces include:

- Items used by multiple students and staff including doorknobs, light switches, hand railings, water fountains, faucet and toilet handles, tables, desks, chairs, manipulatives and toys.

- Students and staff are encouraged to bring individual refillable water-bottles for personal use.
- Refilling stations can be used to re-fill personal containers.
- Water fountains where a person drinks directly from the spout will be used minimally and only if no other means of water access are available. Hand hygiene should be practiced before and after use.
- Shared equipment such as computer keyboards, and tablets, glassware and testing equipment for Science labs, kitchen equipment for Culinary programs, sewing machines, PE/Sports equipment.
- Appliances staff and students can share such as microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, photocopiers, or laminators.
- Service Counters in offices and libraries.

Teachers will be limiting frequently-touched items that are not easily cleaned and in many classrooms each student has a bin, bag, box or basket with their own personal supplies. Hand hygiene is practiced before and after use for those manipulatives that are more difficult to clean.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or paper-based products. Laminated or glossy-paper products and items with plastic covers can be contaminated if handled by someone with COVID-19; however, the risk is low. There is no need for these items to be cleaned and disinfected or quarantined for any period of time, of for hand hygiene to be practiced before or after use.

VISITOR ACCESS/COMMUNITY USE

Visitor access during school hours is limited to those supporting activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g. teacher candidates, public health nurses, meal program volunteers, etc.)

- Parents/Caregivers and other visitors should maintain physical distance and avoid crowding while on school grounds. Exceptions will be made for visitors who cannot wear masks for health or behavioural reasons.
- Schools must ensure that visitors are aware of health and safety protocols and requirements prior to entering the school (e.g., maintaining physical distance, requirement to wear a non-medical mask inside the school).
- Visitors who are entering the school for any reason must ensure they are wearing a mask and practicing physical distancing.

- Some of our schools have doorbells because they cannot see their front doors from the office and wish to manage who is entering the school.
- Visitors will be required to follow protocols: sign in and indicate that they have done the Daily Health Check.
- At this time, we are not renting our facilities for after school and evening use.

Illness and Self-Assessment Policies and Protocols

Parents/Caregivers are responsible to assess the health of their children before school each day, and keep them home if they are sick. All SD 52 Employees are also responsible to assess their health before coming to work. A daily health checklist (COVID-19 Assessment form) will be available on the school district website and printed copies will be available at each school office.

If a student becomes sick at school, the school will have a space where they can wait until their parent/caregiver is able to pick them up.

Daily Health Check:

A daily health check is a tool to reduce the likelihood of a person with COVID-19 coming to school when they are infectious.

- Parents/caregivers and students can utilize the new provincial **K-12 Health Check app** at <https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1> for daily assessment of symptoms.
- SD 52 staff and other adults are required to complete an active daily health check, in line with the Provincial Health Officer's Order on Workplace Safety, prior to entering the school
- If a student, staff or adult is sick, they must not enter the school.

Staying Home, Self-Isolation and Symptoms

The following students, staff or other adults **must stay home and self-isolate**:

- A person confirmed by Northern Health as testing positive for COVID-19;
- A person confirmed by Northern Health as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19;
- A person who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days.

A person who has been tested for COVID-19 **must stay home** while they are waiting for the test result.

Students and staff who experience 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. They do not require re-assessment by a health-care provider and

should not be required to provide a health-care provider note. If they experience any new or unexplained symptoms, they should seek assessment by a healthcare provider.

The Principals/Vice Principals will wait on contact and direction from Northern Health regarding COVID-19 cases in their schools. Northern Health will conduct contact tracing, not the schools. Principals and Vice Principals will advise the Board Office of any confirmations.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand-washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness (antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19).

The following guidelines will be followed in our schools:

- Diligent hand hygiene which means washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (water temperature does not change the effectiveness)
- Facilitation of regular opportunities to practice hand hygiene:
 - portable hand-washing or sanitization stations where sinks are not available
 - hand-sanitization is encouraged upon entry to the school, before/after breaks, using the washroom and using gym/playground equipment.
- Handwashing posters are displayed at handwashing and sanitization sites.
- Staff and students have received training about effective handwashing as well as to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- The School District has added sinks in all of the classrooms that did not have a sink to encourage hand hygiene.

Personal Protective Equipment for Students and Staff (PPE)

Although personal protective equipment (including masks) is the lowest level on the hierarchy of infection prevention and exposure control measures, it can provide an additional layer of protection when more effective measures are not feasible. Non-medical masks and face coverings have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. They provide protection to the wearer and to those around them.

Those wearing masks must still maintain physical distancing whenever possible. There must be no crowding or congregating of people, even if masks are worn.

Masks should not be used in place of other safety measures. For example, masks are not a replacement for the need for physical distancing for in-class instruction delivered to students from more than one learning group.

K – 12 Staff

All K – 12 staff are required to wear a mask or face shield (with a mask) **indoors in schools and on school buses** – both within and outside of their learning group, except when:

- a person cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- a person is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- a person is eating or drinking;
- if a person is behind a barrier; or
- while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

K – 12 STUDENTS

All students in Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear a mask or a face shield (with a non-medical mask) indoors in schools and on buses – both within and outside of their learning group – except when:

- a person cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons;
- a person is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person;
- the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it;
- the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.);
- a person is eating or drinking;
- if a person is behind a barrier; or
- while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (including but not limited to a hearing impairment) where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

It is expected students in Grades 4 to 12 will continue to wear non-medical masks in high traffic areas and in common areas such as hallways, and within or outside of their learning group.

Students in Grades K to 3 are encouraged to wear a mask in schools or on school buses, but are not required to do so. Grades K to 3 students' mask use should be based on their personal or family/caregiver choice, and their choices must be respected.

The use of masks should not reduce or replace other more effective infection prevention and exposure control measures in schools, such as:

- Ensuring students and staff stay home when they are sick or required to self-isolate, including everyone entering schools performs a daily health check.
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensuring physical distance can be maintained between learning groups; and
- Frequent hand hygiene.

These measures provide multiple layers of protection that reduce the risk of transmission.

All visitors must wear a non-medical mask when they are inside the school.

Schools must not require a health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor's note) to confirm if staff, students or visitors cannot wear a mask.

No student should be prevented from attending or fully participating at school if they do not wear a mask.

Improvements to School Ventilation Systems

At this time, there is no evidence that a building's ventilation system, in good operating condition, would contribute to the spread of the virus. However, improvements have been made to SD 52 facilities to increase fresh air flow and exchange.

Emergency and Evacuation Drills

Schools will continue to practice emergency and evacuation drills, including the six required annual fire drills per year. Schools will modify current drill procedures to adhere to health and safety guidelines.

Health and Safety Orientation and Training for Staff

School District staff received Health & Safety Training and Orientation on September 8 and 9 at all district schools and work sites. Our SD 52 COVID-19 Exposure Plan reflects the health and safety protocols and procedures for the work place. Our school O, H and S Committees and the District Joint O, H and S Committee work to ensure staff are up to date on health and safety protocols.

International Students

International Students returning to Canada will be required to self-isolate for 14 days before attending school. This information is communicated to the Ministry of Education.

CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

All curriculum, programs and activities will operate in alignment with the Provincial K – 12 Health and Safety Guidelines, including school-led activities held off campus (e.g. sports academies, community-based programs/courses). Electives are important to student health and well-being and staff in these programs:

- Will continue throughout each stage; and
- Be supported in finding creative ways to redesign/deliver courses, if needed.

Field Trips – Stage 2

Field trips follow both the existing policy and procedures and the COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

Currently, only field trips that are taking place outdoors, and on Kaien Island are being approved by the Superintendent. As much as possible, students will be walking to field trip locations.

Music Programs

All classes, programs and activities will continue to occur where;

- K – 12 staff and Grade 4 to 12 students wear masks when indoors. Masks can be temporarily removed while engaging in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind instrument), but must be worn while singing.
- Physical contact is minimized for those within the same learning group and students and staff are spaced as far apart as possible.
- Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for K-12 staff and for middle and secondary students when interacting outside of their learning groups.
- Physical distance (2m) can be maintained for Elementary students when interacting outside of their learning groups when indoors.

No in-person inter-school competitions/performances should occur at this time.

Physical and Health Education/Outdoor Programs

- Space will be created between students and staff and outdoor activities and programs are encouraged as much as possible.

- Activities where students are involved in prolonged physical contact such as wrestling or partner dancing will be avoided. Low risk activities such as tag or touch football will occur.
- Teachers will adapt activities wherever possible to reduce physical contact.
- K- 12 staff are required to wear masks during PHE/Outdoor program classes when they are indoors, and a barrier is not present.
- For Grades K to 3, PHE and outdoor programs can proceed in alignment with the guidelines.
- In Grades 4 to 12, PHE and outdoor programs can proceed in alignment with the guidance above and the following additional requirements:

HIGH INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

- For high intensity stationary physical activities (e.g. exercise bike, weightlifting), people and equipment need to be spaced 2 metres apart if indoors, including for those within the same learning group. If 2 metre spacing is not available, and the activity cannot be moved outdoors, then the activity must not take place and a different activity should be selected.
- Masks cannot replace the need for 2 metres between students and/or fitness equipment during high intensity stationary activities indoors.
- For high intensity physical activities that involve movement (e.g. basketball, soccer), indoors or outdoors:
 - Students within the same learning group are not required to maintain physical distancing, but the activity must be delivered in a way that reduces the likelihood of physical contact beyond a brief moment.
 - Students from different learning groups are required to maintain physical distancing (2M).

If the above restrictions cannot be met, the activity will be replaced with a low intensity activity or the activity will be moved outdoors.

LOW INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

For low intensity exercise activities, Grades 4 to 12 are required to wear masks when they are indoors, unable to maintain physical distancing (2m), and a barrier is not present.

- When students share equipment, it will be cleaned and disinfected as per the health and safety guidelines.

Why are masks not required during high intensity physical activity in middle & secondary schools? During high intensity physical activity, respiration rates are increased (resulting in a wet mask) and the wearer is more likely to touch their face and adjust the mask frequently. These factors lessen the protective value a mask may offer. In addition, a wet mask is more

difficult to breathe through; those wearing masks during high intensity activities should change them as soon as they become wet.

School Libraries/Learning Commons

School libraries/learning commons will remain open and book exchange can continue to occur during Stages 1 to 4.

At this time, there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, the distribution or sharing/return of books or paper-based educational resources to students because of COVID-19 will not be limited.

- Students and staff will practice diligent hand hygiene before and after handling shared equipment and resources
- Laminated or glossy paper-based products and items with plastic covers are **low risk items**. Regular book browsing and circulation processes can occur as normal. **There is no need to clean, disinfect or quarantine these items for any period of time.**
- When visiting the library/learning commons, students and staff will remain in their learning groups and students will bring their own personal school supplies.

School Sports

Programs, activities (intramurals, sports team practices and games) and sports academies will continue when:

- Schools adapt activities/sports to reduce prolonged physical contact
- No spectators are in attendance
- Masks are worn by K-12 staff and other adults when indoors, unable to maintain 2m distance, and a barrier is not present.

Staff (K-12) and students will follow the same guidelines that are in place for Physical Health and Outdoor Programs.

No in-person inter-school competitions are occurring at this time.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

SD52 will provide all communications through regular channels (Synervice, website, email, school social media) for parents and partner groups.

All schools will post their site-specific plans for:

- Site access and risk mitigation;
- Cleaning and hand hygiene;
- Physical distancing;
- Learning Cohorts;

- Personal Protective Equipment; and
- Scheduled return of students as per Ministry expectations.

Engagement with Indigenous Rights Holders

The District has engaged in conversations with the Gitga'at Nation regarding Hartley Bay School and in concert with our Local Education Services Agreement. They have 38 students K-12 and at this time the village remains closed to visitors.

We also have a Local Education Agreement with the Metlakatla Band and are in weekly contact with the Education Coordinator regarding the Metlakatla students. At the time of this update, Metlakatla is locked down and their students are participating in the Connect Program.

We work closely with the Aboriginal Education Council through our Indigenous Education Department and regular meetings.

Unions (PRDTU and IUOE)

Meetings with the Prince Rupert District Teachers Union (PRDTU) and the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) occur on a weekly basis.

Parents/Guardians, and Care-Givers

The District Parents Advisory Council meets frequently throughout the school year and represents parents in support of student achievement.

Principals meet regularly with their respective school Parent Advisory Councils to ensure open and transparent communication. At this time, these meetings are occurring virtually.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Students will continue to receive service from school-based counsellors. Referrals to community-based services may also be offered.

The Mental Health Literacy Specialist will continue to create District Mental Wellness Challenges each week as well as in-class/online Mental Health Wellness presentations.

Counselling teams will continue to promote District Wellness.

Please refer to the SD52 (Prince Rupert) Exposure Control Plan (Effective March 31, 2021) for COVID-19 for more details and work safe specificity.