

## **Return to School Safety Plan re: Covid-19**

**Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School COVID-19 Safety Plan** outlines the policies, guidelines and procedures the school has put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

In accordance with the order of the Provincial Health Officer, this plan is to be communicated to parents for the return of their child no later than August 26, 2020 and will be updated as new information becomes available.

### **STEP 1: RISK ASSESSMENT**

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads in several ways, including through droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, or from touching a contaminated surface before touching the face.

During normal operation prior to COVID-19:

- Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School is projected to have 448 students, 50 staff and support workers.
- Students and staff congregate and are in close quarters in classrooms, in other learning areas (gym, library, band room), in hallways, in the staffroom and other smaller areas such as the main office and Cultural Room.
- Surfaces that are touched often include doorknobs/handles, desks, washroom doors, toilets, taps, water fountains, light switches, office equipment (photocopier, phones), teacher/student computers, classroom materials including books and supplies, library books, gym equipment, etc.
- Staff, students and other adults sometimes attend school when they are sick or have symptoms of colds, influenza, etc.

### **STEP 2: MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK**

- In accordance with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Restart Plan, beginning on September 8th, 2020, Mount Elizabeth will be resuming with a focus on maximizing in-class instruction within health and safety guidelines. Individual choices made by parents and guardians to send their children back to school for in-class instruction beginning on September 10th/11th, will impact our school's population.
- Compared to other public settings, schools have a relatively consistent set of people accessing the building. By introducing learning groups, we are further reducing the number of interactions between students and staff. Our Grades 7-9 students will be organized in cohorts/learning groups of no more than 60 and our Grades 10-12 students will be organized in cohorts/learning groups of no more than 120.
- The school will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings guidelines. Cleaning practices will be in line with the Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Childcare Settings.
- High touch surfaces (door and cabinet handles, stair railings, washroom areas, shared office spaces, desks, communication devices, keyboards, light switches, etc. ) are to be cleaned and disinfected twice a day (mid-day, after school). Custodian will be on site at noon to address frequently touched surface areas as per ministry guidelines.

- Access and exit to/from the building will be determined by cohort. Grade 10, 11 & 12 cohorts will access through 3 marked doors at student parking lot entrance, Grade 9 cohorts will access through 2 marked doors at Theatre entrance, Grade 8 cohorts will access through 2 marked doors at back entrance by soccer field, and Grade 7 cohorts will access through 2 marked doors at Middle School entrance. Teachers, Educational Assistants, and all other support staff will access the school through the staff doors at main entrance, only. Parents/guardians will only access by appointment.

**Environmental Measures:**

- Students and staff will avoid gathering/congregating in groups in hallways or other common areas. Masks will be required for staff, middle and secondary students in high traffic areas such as buses and in common areas such as hallways, or anytime outside of their learning group when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Students will load bus back to front and unload front to back. The use of masks are mandatory. Masks are to be put on before loading and taken off after offloading.
- Staff members are to wash or sanitize their hands when they arrive as well as frequently throughout the day. The wearing of gloves does not preclude hand washing. Staff will provide instruction and remind students (as needed) to properly wash their hands. Hand washing signs will be posted near all sinks in student designated washrooms.
- Diligent hand washing practices and/or use of hand sanitizer will be encouraged at all times. Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. The school will ensure that adequate hand-washing facilities are on site.
- Students will wash hands/use hand sanitizer when necessary but at least:
  - When they arrive at school through their specific cohort entrance and before going home through their specific cohort exit (Hand sanitization station will be at their set of doors.)
  - Before and after eating and drinking
  - After using the toilet
  - Whenever hands are visibly dirty
  - When transitioning to different areas within their learning space
- Designated spaces within classrooms and/or other areas of the school will be reconfigured to maximize space between desks/tables if necessary, if not in the same cohort.
- Staff will, as much as possible, try to maintain a distance of 2 metres from one another and from students.
- Public Health guidelines for the K-12 school setting recognize that physical distancing can be challenging—especially for students who want to socialize. Students will be reminded daily on how to practice physical distancing at school when they are outside of their learning group. They will also be encouraged to find other means to socialize without using physical contact regardless of their learning group. Students are to keep their hands to themselves. (No hugs/handshakes/high fives, etc.)
- The number of adults interacting with learning groups throughout the day will be minimized as much as possible.
- Traffic flow will be marked in hallways and high traffic areas.

### **STEP 3: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- **No one who is sick or showing symptoms is to come to school. If any student is showing symptoms, parents will be contacted immediately.**
- Students and staff should stay home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved.
- Staff or students who are unsure if they should self-isolate should be directed to use the *BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool*.

#### **Daily Health Assessments:**

- Staff members must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school.
- Parents have the responsibility to assess their children daily before sending them to school. Parents are to ensure their child is free from symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before they are to come to school.
- If a student develops symptoms while at home, parents/guardians MUST keep their child at home until they have been assessed by a health care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and their symptoms have resolved.
- The office will call the parent to arrive as soon as possible when notified their child is ill.
- The office will record illness in First Aid records in the event this information is later needed.
- Staff member is to put on mask and immediately separate the sick student from others and put him/her into a supervised area until the parent/guardian arrives. Apply physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene principles while waiting for pick up. Avoid touching student's body fluids (mucous/saliva). Wash hands thoroughly.
- Day time custodian to clean/disinfect area where child was re-located.
- Self isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness.
- See attached documents:
  1. Summary of School-Based Control Measures
  2. A Daily Health Check example
  3. What to do if a student or staff member develops symptoms.

## Appendix A: Summary of School-Based Control Measures

**1. STAY HOME WHEN SICK**  
*All students and staff with common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other respiratory diseases must stay home and self-isolate.*

**2. HAND HYGIENE**  
*Everyone should clean their hands more often!*  
*Thorough hand washing with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness.*

**3. RESPIRATORY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE**  
*Cover your coughs.*  
*Do not touch your face.*  
*No sharing of food, drinks, or personal items.*

**4. PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND MINIMIZING PHYSICAL CONTACT**  
*Spread students and staff out to different areas when possible.*  
*Take students outside more often.*  
*Stagger break and transition times. Incorporate individual activities.*  
*Remind students to keep their hands to themselves.*

**5. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION**  
*Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least twice every 24 hours (once during the school day).*  
*General cleaning of the school should occur at least once a day.*  
*Use common cleaning and disinfectant products.*



## Appendix B: Daily Health Check Example

The following can be used as an example of a tool that can be used for parents and caregivers to complete prior to their child coming to school. It should be adapted if used for school staff and visitors.

Daily Health Check			
1. Symptoms of illness*	Does your child have any of the following symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
		YES	NO
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Sore throat	YES	NO
	Runny nose / stuffy nose	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Headache	YES	NO
	Fatigue	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Loss of appetite	YES	NO
	Nausea and vomiting	YES	NO
	Muscle aches	YES	NO
	Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	YES	NO
	Dizziness, confusion	YES	NO
	Abdominal pain	YES	NO
Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes	YES	NO	
2. International Travel	Have you or anyone in your household returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you or is anyone in your household a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

\*Check BCCDC's [Symptoms of COVID-19](#) regularly to ensure the list is up to date.

If you answered "YES" to any of the questions and the symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should **NOT** come to school.

If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health-care provider for further assessment. This includes 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner.

If you answered "YES" to questions 2 or 3, use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.



Appendix C: What to Do if a Student or Staff Member Develops Symptoms

<p><i>If a Student Develops Any Symptoms of Illness</i></p>	<p><i>If a Staff Member Develops Any Symptoms of Illness</i></p>
<p><b>Parents or caregivers must keep the student at home</b></p> <p><b>IF STUDENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT SCHOOL:</b></p> <p><b>Staff must take the following steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediately separate the symptomatic student from others in a supervised area.</li> <li>2. Contact the student's parent or caregiver to pick them up as soon as possible.</li> <li>3. Where possible, maintain a 2-metre distance from the ill student. If not possible, staff should wear a non-medical mask or face covering if available and tolerated, or use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth.</li> <li>4. Provide the student with a non-medical mask or tissues to cover their coughs or sneezes. Throw away used tissues as soon as possible and perform hand hygiene.</li> <li>5. Avoid touching the student's body fluids (e.g., mucous, saliva). If you do, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li> <li>6. Once the student is picked up, practice diligent hand hygiene.</li> <li>7. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the student was separated and any areas recently used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li> </ol> <p>Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.</p>	<p><b>Staff must stay home</b></p> <p><b>IF STAFF DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS AT WORK:</b></p> <p><b>Staff should go home as soon as possible.</b></p> <p>If unable to leave immediately:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Symptomatic staff should separate themselves into an area away from others.</li> <li>2. Maintain a distance of 2 metres from others.</li> <li>3. Use a tissue or mask to cover their nose and mouth while they wait to be picked up.</li> <li>4. Staff responsible for facility cleaning must clean and disinfect the space where the staff member was separated and any areas used by them (e.g., classroom, bathroom, common areas).</li> </ol>
<p>The threshold for reporting student and/or staff illness to public health should be determined in consultation with the school medical health officer</p>	
<p><b>Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases AND their symptoms have resolved</b></p>	



## Appendix D: When to Perform Hand Hygiene at School

When Students Should Perform Hand Hygiene:	When Staff Should Perform Hand Hygiene:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When they arrive at school.</li> <li>• Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).</li> <li>• Before and after eating and drinking (excluding drinks kept at a student's desk or locker).</li> <li>• Before and after using an indoor learning space used by multiple cohorts (e.g. the gym, music room, science lab, etc.).</li> <li>• After using the toilet.</li> <li>• After sneezing or coughing into hands.</li> <li>• Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When they arrive at school.</li> <li>• Before and after any breaks (e.g. recess, lunch).</li> <li>• Before and after eating and drinking.</li> <li>• Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.</li> <li>• Before and after giving medication to a student or self.</li> <li>• After using the toilet.</li> <li>• After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood).</li> <li>• After cleaning tasks.</li> <li>• After removing gloves.</li> <li>• After handling garbage.</li> <li>• Whenever hands are visibly dirty.</li> </ul>



Ministry of Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

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



MOUNT ELIZABETH MIDDLE SECONDARY SCHOOL COHORT LEARNING GROUPS

Cohort/Learning Group Name	Total Number of Students within Cohort/Learning Group	Total Number of Adults and Students within Cohort/Learning Group
<b>COHORT 1:</b>	<b>MIDDLE</b>	
French Immersion Class 7/8	14	
Grade 7 Class	24	
		<60
<b>COHORT 2:</b>		
Grade 7 Class	24	
Grade 7 Class	24	
		<60
<b>COHORT 3:</b>		
Grade 8 Cohort Last Name A-M	38	<60
<b>COHORT 4:</b>		
Grade 8 Class Last Name N-Z	31	<60
<b>COHORT 5:</b>		
Grade 9 Cohort Last Name A-K	46	<60
<b>COHORT 6:</b>		
Grade 9 Cohort Last Name L-Z	47	<60
	<b>SECONDARY</b>	
<b>COHORT 7:</b>		
Grade 10 Cohort	89	<120
<b>COHORT 8:</b>		
Grade 11 Cohort	76	<120
<b>COHORT 9:</b>		
Grade 12 Cohort	52	<120

Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School located in Kitimat is a unique school in that it serves **both** middle and secondary school-aged students, as well as French Immersions students. Some of our staff at Mount Elizabeth teach in both middle and secondary programs which does not allow for a flexible bell schedule or staggered start times.