



2021-22 COVID-19 Communicable Disease Plan

In accordance with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Restart Plan, revised on December 29, 2021, St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School (STA) will be continuing with Grades 8-12 in-class instruction each day. The 2021/22 school year continues in Stage 2 of the K-12 Restart Plan with the goal of maximizing in-class instruction for all students within the revised public health guidelines. Key changes from the April version of our Safety Plan are highlighted in yellow.

Key Principles

We will continue to adhere to the standards, guidelines and protocols from the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC.

We will continue to adhere to the protocols set out in the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings (updated December 29, 2021).

Whenever possible, feasible and practical control measures in accordance with the order of the Provincial Health Officer, have been selected to provide the best/widest protection to all staff and students within the school community.

This communicable disease plan is posted on the STA school website for parents and students. This information is based on the best evidence currently available and will be updated as new information becomes available.

This plan is subject to changes to local, regional and provincial orders.

Physical Building

- Signage to reinforce self-screening, hand hygiene, distancing and directional use of hallways, signage in bathrooms and availability of hand sanitizer will remain in place for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Washrooms are no longer restricted to specific cohorts; however maximum occupancy of five students at any time will be maintained.
- Air flow will be increased when climate allows (ie. opening windows and doors).

Record Keeping

Classroom Teachers

- Teachers will continue to maintain regular seating plans for students in each class.
- These may be referred to or shared with public health officials who are engaged in

- We will continue to stagger the Junior and Senior lunch hours to reduce crowding.
- Students may be taken outside more often, where and when possible.
- Floor markings will remain in place to manage the flow of people.
- Students may return to normal seating arrangements, but teachers will maintain seating plans to assist public health with case management and contact tracing.

Exposure Control Measures

Exposure control measures help create safe environments by reducing the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19. Multiple protections strategies, informed by public health advice, will be implemented to ensure that STA is a safe environment and will include:

Staff

- Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the school. Should symptoms be present, staff must not report for work.
- Staff members are to sign in at the office each day and complete a form provided by CISVA to indicate they are healthy and have not been exposed to COVID-19.
- If a staff member observes that a student at school is ill, they will refer the student to the administration for assessment.

Students/Parents/Families

- Parents/caregivers will be expected to check their children daily for signs and symptoms of illness prior to school arrival.
- Parents will be required to complete the green “Letter of Expectation for Parents and Students”, sign, and return the document before their child starts school.
- Children who appear to be ill will NOT be allowed in the school building.

Case Finding, Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

Note: Case management and contact tracing procedures are currently under review by the PHO.

At the School Level

- The office will call the parent to arrive as soon as possible when notified their child is ill. Parent will need to have a plan in place.
- The office will contact 811 or Vancouver Coastal Health to notify them of a potential case and seek further input.
- The office will record illness in First Aid records in the event this information is later needed.
- Staff member is to put on a mask and immediately separate the sick child from others and direct them to the office. Office staff will direct him/her into the Nurse’s Room 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.
- Staff member to clean/disinfect area where child was re-located.

At the Public Health Level

- If a staff or student in a school is confirmed by public health as positive for COVID-19, public health will work with school administration to determine what actions should be taken, including if any staff or students who have been in contact with that person need to self-isolate, and if other staff and students' families should be notified.
- Schools should NOT provide notification to staff or students' families if a staff member or student becomes ill at home or at school, including if they display symptoms of COVID-19, unless directed to by public health.

At the Home Level

- Children with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 like symptoms must stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19.
- 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
- If concerned, parents can be advised to contact 8-1-1, or the local public health unit to seek further input. They can also be advised to contact a family physician or nurse practitioner to be assessed for COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases.

Infection Prevention

Handwashing and Hygiene

- Students will be asked to wash their hands frequently, including before coming to school. They will have access to hand sanitizer when hand washing is not available.
- Washroom areas will be monitored. Maximum capacity in the washroom is five.
- Hand sanitizers will be available on each floor and other areas including the entries to the school, washrooms, etc.

Food and Personal Items

- Parents will be asked to label ALL personal items, including water bottles and masks.
- Students will be issued lockers in which to keep their belongings during the day.
- The homeroom teacher will give more specifics but, in general, students are to bring:
 - Water bottle
 - Snack/lunch in a container. There can be no sharing of food or utensils.
 - School supplies and personal device (laptop) as specified by the teacher. There is no communal sharing of supplies.
 - Personal size hand sanitizer-labeled with student's name (optional).
- Staff room amenities, staff coffee urns, kettles, fridge, microwave, etc. may be continued to be used.
- The Public Health Guidance says that " there is no need to limit the distribution or sharing of books or paper based educational resources." Library books no longer need to be cleaned after use.
- Avoid sharing communal equipment/supplies as much as possible.

Personal Protection Equipment and Cleaning

- Staff will have access to personal protection equipment.
- Students will be trained on appropriate hand hygiene.
- Staff and/or students will no longer be required to clean desks and chairs after use.

- The school will continue to receive enhanced cleaning each evening by the custodians, including electrostatic sanitization (fogging) of desks and chairs in classrooms and occasional ZeroBlast™ treatment of touched surfaces, as these have proven to be very effective in keeping bacteria and cellular formation to a minimum.

Use of Personal Protective Equipment

- Masks must be worn by staff and students indoors in school and on school buses.
- Masks must be worn by visitors when they are inside the school.
- Cloth masks can be labeled with the students' name.
- This mask requirement does not apply 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 assistance
 - 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 which cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g. playing a wind or brass instrument, engaging in high-intensity physical activity, etc.)
 - if a person is eating or drinking
 - if a person is behind a barrier, or working alone in an office, or
 - while providing a service to a person with a disability where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading/movements is important.

Environmental Measures: Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

Environmental Measures Cleaning and Disinfection Regular cleaning and disinfection are essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated objects and surfaces. Schools should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document. This includes:

- General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises at least once a day.
- In addition, contact surfaces in all rooms will receive an electrostatic sanitization each evening.
- Using common, commercial grade detergents and disinfectant products and closely following the instructions on the label.
- Emptying garbage containers daily.
- Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g. runny nose, vomit, stool, urine).
- Washing hands before wearing and after removing gloves.
- Shared items (e.g. shared school supplies, devices, coffee and water stations, plates, etc.) should not be used. Staff should bring their own items.
- There is no evidence that COVID-10 virus is transmitted via textbooks, paper or other paper-based products. As such, there is no need to limit the distribution of books or paper based educational resources to students.
- The custodian will ensure that hand washing supplies are available at all times (i.e. soap and minimum 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.)
- The custodian has trained the evening janitors as to supplies and cleaning protocols to be used in the school under these new requirements.

Staff Meetings

- Staff meetings will be virtual from January 4, 2022 until further notice.
- Update staff in the latest facts and basic information about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), including how to prevent transmission (scheduled for January 7, 2022).

Additional Information

- Extracurricular activities will operate in alignment with provincial K-12 health and safety guidelines, including activities held off campus.
- Practices and games are suspended for the week of January 4-7, 2022.
- In person inter-school events are suspended until further notice. Games against single schools may resume on January 10, 2022. No spectators until further notice.
- Parent Participation – Cafeteria parents can continue to prepare and distribute lunch items provided they are symptom free, are gloved, masked and wearing visors.

Additional Changes

- Student Assemblies and Masses will be held virtually until further notice.
- Field trips may resume. Overnight trips (e.g. retreats, athletics, music) should consider guidance provided for overnight camps from the BCCDC.
- Meet the Teacher Night & Parent/Teacher Interviews – The format for these evenings will be announced closer to the dates. Open House on February 16 will be held virtually.

Communication Strategies and Training

- Everyone in the school community (staff, students and parents) will know the policies around staying home when they are sick. This information will be communicated in writing.
- All staff will be trained and informed as to how to keep themselves safe while at school. A formal staff training and information session was held on August 31 and included:
 - i. a comprehensive update on COVID-19 from Vancouver Coastal Health
 - ii. the risks of exposure to COVID-19
 - iii. how to report an exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19
 - iv. safe procedures and instructions regarding proper hand washing, cough/sneezing etiquette, etc.
 - v. review of changes to the Provincial K-12 Communicable Disease Plan, and this Communicable Disease Plan
- Staff will be informed of changes made to work policies, practices, and procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the daily check-in, updates will be provided when available.
- The health and safety measures in place prior to the pandemic are still in place.
- The administration will keep records of training meetings. Covid-19 related meetings are documented and minutes available in the staff room and the Principal's office.

- Signage will be posted around the school including wayfinding and effective hand washing practices. Signage will also be posted at the main entrance indicating who is restricted from entering the school including anyone with symptoms.

Monitor the Workplace and Update Plans

- As new information is provided, some of these protocols and guidelines may change and revisions will be posted.
- Steps will be taken to update policies and procedures and involve the staff in this process.
- All staff are asked to raise any safety concerns with the Principal.

Appendix A

Music teachers will be provided with the Health & Safety Guidelines for Music Classes prepared by the BC Music Educators' Association, which are to be followed during Band and Choir classes.

Students may remove their masks temporarily for the purpose of playing a wind or brass instrument.

Theatre productions at the school cannot have spectators until further notice.

Appendix B

Physical Health Education teachers and athletic coaches will be provided with the relevant pages from the Provincial K-12 Communicable Disease Plan Revised **August 24, 2021** for PHE classes and sports teams.

For athletics, multiple team tournaments are on hold until further notice, as are spectators at games.

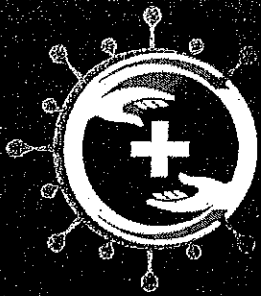
Students may remove their masks temporarily for the purpose of engaging in high-intensity physical activity.

Note: All staff were provided with a refresher on the Communicable Disease Plan at the general staff meeting on **January 7, 2022**.

New References for Assessment and Protocols:

BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>

Reporting and Isolation protocols: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>



Addendum - Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings

December 29, 2021



This document is an addendum to the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings. It outlines focused actions and additional prevention measures B.C. public and independent K-12 schools must implement in response to the recent rise of cases of COVID-19 due to the emergence of the more transmissible Omicron variant. It builds on the Addendum – Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools developed by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to ensure schools have effective measures in place to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. This addendum is in place until rescinded.

Reinforce In-Place Prevention Measures

Variants of COVID-19 spread the same way as the original COVID-19. That means the prevention measures already in place in schools continue to be effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading. These include everyone eligible getting fully vaccinated, doing a daily health check and staying home when sick, wearing masks, and cleaning hands regularly. Schools should ensure the prevention measures already in place are consistently implemented.

Implement Additional Prevention Measures

Schools **must** implement the additional prevention measures outlined in the table below before January 10th, 2022.

Take Action

Update Communicable Disease Plans

All schools must update their communicable disease plans to incorporate the additional measures included in this addendum, use the attached checklist to support implementation, and review ongoing prevention measures to identify areas where measures may be inconsistently implemented and to identify mitigation efforts. Measures should be communicated to the school community (e.g., newsletters, posters, etc.) to support awareness and compliance.

Reinforce Personal Prevention Practices

All schools should support the implementation of personal prevention practices through:

- Providing regular reminders to students, families, and staff about the importance of completing a daily health check, staying home when sick, and following public health recommendations.
- Having staff demonstrate and model how to practice personal prevention measures at school (e.g., wearing a mask, hand hygiene, etc.).
- Sharing trusted information from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Supportive School Environments

Schools must continue to support personal prevention practices (including mask use) through positive and inclusive approaches, aligned with existing professional practices to address non-compliant

behaviour. Approaches should not exclude students from participating in school or potentially result in stigma.

Schools should continue to utilize a trauma-informed lens when planning school activities (e.g., gatherings and events), including considerations around respecting others personal space.

| Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement | | |
|---|---|---|
| Prevention Measures | | Implementation and Examples |
| Space Arrangement | Maximize space between people. | Different common space, classroom, and learning environment configurations (e.g., different desk and table formations). Limit and, whenever possible, avoid face-to-face seating arrangements. |
| | Implement strategies that prevent crowding during class transition and break times. | Stagger start/stop times, or recess/snack, lunch and class transition times. Regular learning activities that bring together multiple classes (e.g., examinations, physical education) should be spread out across multiple locations/spaces whenever possible, but do not need to be reduced in size. |
| Staff Only Spaces | Hold staff-only gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities) virtually. | |
| School Gatherings And Events (including Extracurricular) | Hold school gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) virtually. If gatherings and events must be in-person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), minimize the number of people in attendance as much as possible, do not exceed 50% operating capacity, and do not allow spectators. | For indoor spaces without a defined operating capacity, schools should determine a capacity limit that is at most half the number of individuals that would be within the space for that activity or event if prevention measures weren't in place. |
| Visitor Access | Limit visitors to those that are supporting activities that are of direct benefit to student learning and wellbeing | E.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.. |

Additional Prevention Measures Schools Must Implement

| Prevention Measures | Implementation and Examples |
|---------------------|---|
| Sports | <p>Extracurricular sports tournaments should be paused.</p> <p>Sports tournaments are a single or multi-day gathering of three or more sports teams, who come together outside regular league play for the purpose of teams playing against multiple other teams, but does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gathering where team members compete on an individual basis against members of other teams, or • A gathering where the result will decide if a team will advance to play in a national or international competition. |
| Masks | <p>The <u>PHO Order – Face Coverings</u> requires all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask indoors at school.</p> <p>Everyone who is able to (i.e., does not have a mask exemption) must wear a mask.</p> <p>Reminders communicated to students (and their parents/caregivers) and staff that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing masks at school is required under a public health order. • <u>Proper fit</u> is a key factor in mask effectiveness. Masks worn at school should fit well. • Masks are most effective when everyone who is able to is wearing one. • Those with mask exemptions continue to follow any strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Those not able to wear a mask all day continue to be encouraged to wear one as much as they're able to. <p>Administrators and staff use positive and inclusive approaches, aligned with existing professional practices to address non-compliant behaviour for those able to wear masks. For those with mask exemptions, administrators and staff support other strategies identified to reinforce and enhance other safety measures (as outlined in the <u>Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions</u>).</p> <p>For those with mask exemptions, alternative strategies identified are adjusted if needed, based on the additional prevention measures.</p> |

COVID-19 School Communicable Disease Checklist – January 2022

Complete this checklist with your school's health and safety committee to assess your school's safety plan with the Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings and this Addendum.

Measures below should always be in place.

SCHOOL: ST. THOMAS AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL DATE: 7 JANUARY 2022

| Administrative Measures | | |
|--|--|---|
| Entrance and Exits | Strategies are in place to prevent crowding during class transition times (e.g., staggered start/stop times, or recess/snack, lunch and class transition times). | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included STAGGERED LUNCH OTHER TIMES NOT AS MUCH A CONCERN |
| Space Arrangement | In indoor spaces, people have enough room to carry out intended activities without involuntary physical contact. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Spaces are configured to maximize space between people. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included |
| Staff-Only Gatherings | Staff gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, in-service and professional development activities, etc.) occur virtually. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included STAFF MTGS, DEPT. MTGS. |
| Itinerant Staff, Temporary Teachers on Call and Other Visitors | Process in place to ensure itinerant staff, Teachers On-Call and visitors are aware of the school's health and safety measures and their responsibility to follow them at all times. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes MTG. JAN. 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Gatherings & Events | School gatherings and events (e.g., assemblies, etc.) are held virtually, whenever possible. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included ASSEMBLIES, LITURGIES |
| | If gatherings and events must be in-person (e.g., inter-school sports game, theatre productions), the number of people in attendance is minimized as much as possible, does not exceed 50% operating capacity, and spectators are not present. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included |
| Extracurricular Activities | Sports tournaments are paused. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included PRACTICES & GAMES MAY RESUME JAN. 10 |
| Hand Hygiene | Hand cleaning facilities are available and accessible throughout the school and are well maintained. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Bus Transportation | Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

Administrative Measures

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>APPLIES TO FIELD TRIPS (NO DAILY BUSSING TO/FROM SCHOOL)</p> | Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Everyone on the bus (without exemptions), wear masks in accordance with the <u>PHO Order on Face Coverings</u> . | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Practices are in place to encourage bus drivers and passengers to practice hand hygiene before and after trips. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Passengers are spread out if empty seats are available. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Windows are opened when the weather allows. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

Environmental Measures

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Learning Space Configuration | Learning spaces are arranged to maximize the space available and to avoid people directly facing one another (where possible). | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included |
| Increased Cleaning and Disinfecting | Frequently touched surfaces (those touched by larger numbers of people) are cleaned and disinfected at least 1x/day. Surfaces touched by fewer people are cleaned 1x/day. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Practices are in place to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces when they are dirty. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Other general cleaning occurs in line with regular practices. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Practices are in place to clean and disinfect any surfaces a person's body fluids have contacted after they have displayed symptoms of illness. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Ventilation and Air Exchange | All HVAC systems are operated and maintained as per standards and specifications, and are working properly. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

| Environmental Measures | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| | Schools with recycled/recirculated air systems have upgraded their current filters to MERV 13 where possible or have identified mitigation efforts. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes N/A |
| | If using portable fans or air conditioning units, ensure they are set up to move air downward and not blowing air directly from one person's breathing zone to other occupants of a room. Avoid horizontal cross breezes. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Risk mitigation strategies are identified for excessive heat events or times of poor air quality. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

| Personal Measures | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Daily Health Checks | Parents and students are reminded of their responsibilities to complete a Daily Health Check and are provided with resources on how to complete one (e.g., the K-12 Health Check app). | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included (JAN. 7) |
| Stay Home When Sick | Staff and students are reminded to stay home when they are sick. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Symptoms Develop at School | Practices are in place to appropriately respond when a staff member, student, or other person develops symptoms of illness while at school. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

| Personal Protective Equipment | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Masks | Everyone at school (without exemptions), wear masks in accordance with the <u>PHO Order on Face Coverings</u> . | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Schools work with those with mask exemptions to explore potential strategies to reinforce and enhance other safety measures, as described in the <u>COVID-19 Planning Resource: Mask Exemptions</u> . | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| | Masks are available for those who have forgotten theirs. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |

Supportive School Environments

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Personal Prevention Practices | Strategies are in place to routinely support students to practice personal prevention measures like wearing a mask and hand hygiene (e.g., signage, including in morning announcements, etc.). | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Personal Space | Strategies are in place to encourage staff and students to consider and respect others personal space. Personal space is the distance from which a person feels comfortable being next to another person. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| Positive and Inclusive Approaches | Positive and Inclusive approaches aligned with existing school/sector practices to address behaviour/personal practices are used. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included |

