



ST. THOMAS MORE COLLEGIATE

HOME OF THE KNIGHTS SINCE 1960

UPDATED STMC COVID-19 School Safety – Communicable Disease Plan (January 2022)

Through careful evidence-based planning by public health experts and in accordance with BC's Education Restart Plan, our staff and our St. Thomas More Collegiate students prepared for the return of In-School Learning on January 10, 2022. With effective public health measures in place, we have collectively done a good job of preventing the community spread of COVID-19 here at the school.

Our UPDATED STMC COVID-19 School Safety – Communicable Disease Plan builds on our previous plans. These plans have been centered on good hand-hygiene, use of face masks and other PPE, as well as our reliance on vaccinations. With the emergence of the Omicron variant in early December 2021, a far more enhanced and involved COVID-19 School Safety – Communicable Disease Plan is required.

The [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) and [WorkSafeBC](#) regulations provides strong guidance and measures for us at STMC in order to maintain the health and safety of our staff and our students while at school. As outlined in the guidance documents, our school's administrators, our staff, our students and our parents can contribute to the ongoing health and safety of the school environment through important measures, including:

1. Being fully vaccinated (Doses 1 & 2, and the Booster when eligible)
2. FULL Compliance with Communicated Health & Safety Protocols
3. Staying Home When Sick
4. Performing Diligent Hand Hygiene
5. Practicing Respiratory and Personal Hygiene (i.e. effective use of all available and recommended PPE – particularly face masks)
6. Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact
7. Cleaning and Disinfecting

Our Education Re-opening Plan in January 2022 adheres to the following measures:

Public Health Measures

- ➔ Completion of Daily Health Check before coming into the school each day.
 - Parent must submit the online Daily Health Check for their daughter/son before 8AM each school day. If they are unable to complete the daily health check online for any reason, they will be asked to call the school at 604-521-1801 x1196 (before 8:00 AM) and leave a message as to the student's health status.
 - Staff are required to indicate their fitness to assume their duties utilizing the Daily Health-Check sign-in in the Staff Room.
- ➔ Students or staff, who display flu-like, Covid-19 symptoms must stay at home, self-isolate and get tested by a health-care provider. No notification to staff or the community of these incidents will be made unless advised by Public Health.



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Environmental Measures

- ➔ Extensive and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces is done every 24 hours. This includes a more thorough professional cleaning of each classroom at least once weekly, and a deeper cleaning each month.
- ➔ Cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces are done twice daily, including switches, doorknobs, and washrooms. Electronic devices & desks are assigned to the same students as much as possible, and staff will supervise students to clean these before another individual will next use them. PHE change rooms & lockers are cleaned throughout the day.
- ➔ Interior doors are left open as much as possible.
- ➔ Plexiglas barriers have been installed in all classrooms/learning spaces, as well as in the front office, student services (academic and personal counselling offices), the learning centre, learning commons, band & choral classrooms, and the cafeteria. These barriers are cleaned daily. Additional barriers are available to be used between student learning groups when necessary.
- ➔ Hand-sanitizing stations are located at entrances, in each classroom, and in common spaces used by students and staff.
- ➔ Toe-Pulls have been installed on the inside door for all washrooms and change areas accessible by our staff and our students. This eliminates the need to open the doors from the inside using your hands.
- ➔ Given the number of participating students and the activities that are taking place in Band & Choir, medical grade Air Purification units with HEPA Filters have been placed in the Band and Choir rooms (2 units in each area) to help filter the air.
- ➔ Modifications and upgrades have been made to our HVAC system.

Administrative Measures

- ➔ Students and families are required to complete a daily health check (see below) prior to entering the school each day. An email is sent to each student/family at 4AM and must be filled in electronically anytime they are to be at school.
- ➔ An abridged Bell Schedule that includes staggered lunches for Grade 8s/9s and Grade 10-12s is being implemented for the month of January 2022. We will review this change on February 1, 2022 to determine if we need to maintain it any further than January 31, 2022.
- ➔ All classes have teacher-desk shielding, and congregating in hallways is discouraged.
- ➔ Gatherings (for academic assemblies, masses, etc.) will be minimized and limited to the K-12 gathering capacities of the respective space.
- ➔ Classroom activities that reduce face-to-face interactions and an increase in either the spacing/desk configurations of rooms have been encouraged.
- ➔ Apart from when eating/drinking in designated areas, ALL students and staff are required to wear face masks when in the school.
- ➔ School visitors (parents, volunteers, contractors, vendors, etc.) must wear a mask, sanitize their hands, and report to the Main Office to sign-in/sign-out.
- ➔ Only fully-vaccinated individuals may volunteer at the school
- ➔ Biking, walking, or private transport is encouraged, and masks are required for public transportation.
- ➔ Signage is located throughout the school to promote hygienic practices.
- ➔ All garbage and recycling containers are emptied daily.



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Personal Measures

- Any person who has Covid-19 related symptoms must stay home and follow the required guidelines set-down by the [BC Center for Disease Control](#). Self-Monitoring and Self-Isolation requirements will differ for those who are either vaccinated OR unvaccinated. [IMPORTANT: It is the responsibility of each staff member and parents/students to familiarize themselves with the specific requirements for each of these groups of individuals.]
- Staff (self-declaration) and students (by way of parents) need to be checked daily to confirm that they are not exhibiting any Covid-19 related symptoms using a Daily Health Check. The student Daily Health Check is submitted electronically. In accordance with ministry requirements, Staff are asked to initial that they have completed their Daily Health Check using a sheet located in the Staff Room.
- Any staff or student who falls ill while at school are isolated in one of two designated sick rooms near the Main Office, and sent home as soon as possible.
- Staff and students are asked to perform regular and frequent hand hygiene, and at a minimum: when arriving and leaving school, before eating, after using the washroom, after sneezing or coughing, whenever hands are physically dirty, and when moving between different learning environments.
- Staff/students are to cough or sneeze into their elbows, avoid touching their faces, and avoid sharing personal items.

Personal Protective Equipment

Students:

- Apart from when eating/drinking in designated areas, ALL students are required to wear a face mask BEFORE they enter the school.
- Students who – for whatever reason – do not bring a facemask to school will be provided a disposable mask for use while they are in the building.
- Students are issued Reusable Full Face-Shields for use in their ADST Labs (Robotics & Design Technology/Engineering), as well as for use during their Science Labs.
- Toe-Pulls were installed on the inside door for ALL washrooms and change areas accessible by our students. This eliminates the need to open the doors from the inside using your hands.

Staff:

- All staff will be issued N-95 masks, as well as all necessary PPE to fulfill their duties safely. They are required for use in ALL teaching and learning areas and in ALL situations where a 2m minimum safe distance cannot be assured.
- Teachers/EAs working in labs have been have access to Reusable Full Face-Shields - ADST Labs (Robotics & Design Technology/Engineering), as well as for use during all Science Labs.
- Because of the nature of the secondary block schedule it is necessary for our staff (teachers and EAs) to physically distance themselves even within a classroom/teaching area when they are teaching &/or supporting student learning. Teacher Desk Units are a minimum of 2m away from student desks and will be equipped with a Plexiglas Desk Shield that enable them to continue to support students when they need assistance with individual work, have a question, etc.
- A Larger full-counter Plexiglas Shield has been installed in the Main Office. An identical unit has been installed at the Circulation Desk in the Library-Learning Commons. Large Plexiglas units were also installed in both the Band & Choir classrooms.



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- ➔ Toe-Pulls were installed on the inside door for ALL washrooms and change areas accessible by our staff. This eliminates the need to open the doors from the inside using your hands.

UPDATES TO STMC's COVID-19 SCHOOL SAFETY – COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PLAN [January 5, 2022]

The Ministry of Education requested all schools to review and update their respective COVID-19 Health & Safety – Communicable Disease Plans to ensure that they reflect new measures that were mandated in late December 2021. While we are constantly making modifications to our STMC COVID-19 School Safety – Communicable Disease Plan we know we cannot be complacent and we have, and will continue, to tweak it. While our COVID-19 protocols in the above areas exceed the minimum requirements, the release of the updated guidelines for schools by the Ministry of Education on December 30, 2021 provided us with the opportunity to both review and enhance our existing internal protocols.

Highlighted updates to our posted STMC COVID-19 School Safety – Communicable Disease Plan

- Targeted upgrades to our ventilation system are now complete: Planned upgrades to improve the quality of the airflow in the Library-Learning Commons and the classrooms directly above our Cafeteria were made possible by a Federal COVID-19 grant last year. The work was started in January 2021 and was completed in early February 2021.
- Modifications to our lunch periods: Until either improved weather enables us to utilize the courtyard (as we were able to do through until the end of October)... OR... this fifth-wave is declared over, we have temporarily created different lunch periods for the Gr. 8-9s and the Grade 10-12s in order to reduce congestion. Doing so has also resulted in a slight modification to the time of our daily dismissal for ALL students (2:25pm). **PLEASE NOTE**: This modification *has not* resulted in the loss of *any* instructional time.
- Eliminating crowding at the Main Entrance: The only time of the day, where we experience larger numbers of students congregating outside the main entrance is at the end of the school day. This is a natural behaviour that we need to modify. We will work with our students to ensure that when they exit the school that they disperse as quickly as possible. *We ask for the assistance of our parents to reiterate this same messaging.*
- Afterschool Y-Block Classes & Co-curricular Athletic & Servant Leadership Activities: Only those students who have scheduled classes/tutorial, practices/games, or are actively involved in scheduled servant leadership activities (e.g. BERT or Green Team) will be invited to remain at the school after 2:25pm each day. Classrooms will be closed to allow for enhanced cleaning. Only the Library-Learning Commons and the Cafeteria-Student Commons will remain open for limited student use. The gymnasium will be limited to scheduled team use and will be closed to ALL spectators.

If someone displays symptoms of COVID-19 or is concerned in any way, they can call 8-1-1 or use the online self-assessment tool, bc.thrive.health. **If a student or a school staff member tests positive for COVID-19, we ask they isolate at home AND that they inform the school immediately.** The current Omicron variant has overwhelmed each of the respective Provincial Public Health Authority's ability to adequately conduct timely contact tracing. Public Health staff are doing their absolute utmost to manage any clusters or outbreaks. Sadly, if you do not inform us... we may not be notified of ANY confirmed positive cases until long after an individual is cleared to return to the school.