



# COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY IN SCHOOLS (2021-22)

The following document is intended for OSBCU members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or the Health and Safety Representative (HSR). It has two purposes:

1. To evaluate and improve the measures and procedures in place to protect workers from exposure to COVID-19; and
2. Ensure the School Board complies with their requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the regulations, Ministry of Education Reopening Guides and B-Memos, and Public Health Guidance.

To achieve these purposes, we have provided the following questions (non-exhaustive) to raise if you are meeting with School Board representatives at a JHSC meeting or with a health and safety inspector from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. The questions raised are either new requirements or gaps in last year's reopening plans.

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Assessment</b> – Has the Board reassessed the risks of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace in light of aerosol transmission and increased transmissibility of the virus from the Delta Variant?</p>	<p>Ensure the employer takes every precaution reasonable to eliminate or adequately control a worker's risk of exposure to COVID-19.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE - COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols</a>  <a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19 Risk Re-assessment Checklist</a>  <a href="#">CUPE - Aerosolization Risk Assessment</a>  <a href="#">CUPE - Variants of concern – What are they? And why are they important?</a>  <a href="#">CUPE – General H&amp;S System Checklist for COVID-19</a>  <a href="#">CUPE – Preventing exposure to COVID-19: Education Sector</a></p>

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Risk Assessment</b> – Has the Board reassessed the risks of workplace violence, including a reassessment of the risks from students involved in previous incidents of violence? Have staff received information and instruction (worker safety plans) related to a risk of workplace violence from a student with a history of violent behaviour?</p>	<p>Compliance with <a href="#">sections 32.0.1 – 32.0.5</a> of the OHSA.</p> <p>All staff who work with or are likely to encounter* a student with a history of violence must receive information and instruction contained in the safety plan.</p> <p>*Applies if encountering the student in the course of their work will likely result in bodily injury.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – Violence Prevention Kit</a></p> <p><a href="#">Workplace violence in school boards: A guide to the law</a></p> <p><a href="#">PSHSA – Workplace Violence in Education</a></p>
	<p><b>Masking</b>- Will the Board, in collaboration with the regional public health unit, consider sending out a document to families outlining acceptable masking for students?</p>	<p>Standard/Quality of student masks, e.g. 3-layer masks instead of 1 layer fabric masks.</p>	<p><a href="#">Health Canada – Non-medical Masks</a></p> <p><a href="#">Public Health Ontario - Non-Medical Masks</a></p> <p><a href="#">CUPE - Incorporating Public Health Advice into Workplace Protections</a></p>
	<p><b>Masking</b> – What will the procedure be for students that can wear a mask but decide not to?</p>	<p>All students should wear a mask for source control, except for eating and drinking. Some students may require exemptions. Outside masking and in JK/SK is strongly recommended.</p> <p>Assess for potential risk of workplace violence.</p>	
	<p><b>Masking</b> – In what situations would a worker need to wear a fitted N95 respirator? Do we have workers required to wear N95 respirators, and will they have access to those on the first day of school? Have they been trained and passed fit-testing?</p>	<p>All workers performing an aerosol-generating medical procedure (AGMP) or working in the same room where AGMPs are performed must wear a fitted respirator.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – Respiratory Protection</a></p> <p><a href="#">CUPE COVID-19 and Use of Masks and Respirators</a></p> <p><a href="#">CCOHS - Respiratory Protection Against Airborne Infectious Agents for Health Care Workers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sick Kids - Care of Children with Medical Complexity in the School Setting During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a></p>

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Masking</b> – Has the Board set aside hypoallergenic masks for workers who suffer rashes, breakouts and skin irritation? Have workers received information on how to prevent skin reactions from prolonged masks usage?</p>	<p>Wearing PPE should not cause other hazards, including undue stress, discomfort or heat. PPE should not impair visibility, mobility or dexterity.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_SkinDamagePPEPoster.pdf">http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_SkinDamagePPEPoster.pdf</a></p>
	<p><b>PPE</b> – Have special education staff received PPE that is appropriate for their work with students? Has the Board reassessed the risks of violence from students who remove, attempt to remove, or threaten to remove PPE from a worker?</p>	<p>Wearing PPE should not cause other hazards, including increased risks of workplace violence, undue stress, discomfort or heat. PPE should not impair visibility, mobility or dexterity.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – Violence Prevention Kit</a>  <a href="#">Workplace violence in school boards: A guide to the law</a>  <a href="#">PSHSA – Workplace Violence in Education</a></p>
	<p><b>Ventilation</b> – Will there be detailed reports provided to the Local and the site-based or multisite JHSC about the ventilation units in each building? E.g. mechanical inspections, schedule of filter changes, rate of air changes per hour</p>	<p>Compliance with section <a href="#">25 (2) (h) (l) (m)</a> of the OHSA.</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022)</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19: Prevention through Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation Checklist</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation in Education</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 14: School Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 16: Standardized Ventilation Measures Report</a></p>

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Ventilation</b> – Will the employer monitor or conduct air quality testing to determine if classrooms meet ASHRAE 62.1 Standards? Will the Board consult with the JHSC/HSR before testing and allow a worker member of the JHSC/HSR to be present for any air quality testing?</p>	<p>Compliance with sections <a href="#">8 (11) (a) (b)</a>, <a href="#">9 (18) (e) (f)</a> and <a href="#">25 (2) (h)</a> of the OHSA.</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022)</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19: Prevention through Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation Checklist</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation in Education</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 14: School Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 16: Standardized Ventilation Measures Report</a>  <a href="#">ASHRAE – Reopening Schools and Universities</a></p>
	<p><b>Ventilation-</b> Are all ventilation systems programmed to run at least two hours before the start and end of the school day?</p>	<p>Compliance with section <a href="#">25 (2) (h)</a> of the OHSA</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022).</p>	
	<p><b>Ventilation</b> – In areas with no mechanical ventilation, will there be a stand-alone HEPA air purifying unit? Is the unit appropriately sized for the room? Have operating noise levels been considered? Have staff received training on the functioning of the unit and its placement in the room?</p>	<p>Compliance with section <a href="#">25 (2) (h)</a> of the OHSA.</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022).</p>	<p><a href="#">PHO - Use of Portable Air Cleaners and Transmission of COVID-19</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation in Education</a></p>

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Ventilation</b> - How will testing be done to assure that HEPA air purifier units are functioning correctly and meeting their objectives? Who will conduct the test? Will the Board consult with the JHSC/HSR and allow a worker member of the JHSC or the HSR to be present for any air quality testing?</p>	<p>Compliance with sections <a href="#">8 (11) (a) (b)</a>, <a href="#">9 (18) (e) (f)</a> and <a href="#">25 (2) (h)</a> of the OHSA.</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022).</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19: Prevention through Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation in Education</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 14: School Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 16: Standardized Ventilation Measures Report</a></p>
	<p><b>Ventilation</b> – What other measures are being introduced to increase ventilation efficiency?</p>	<p>Compliance with section <a href="#">25 (2) (h)</a> of the Occupational Health and Safety Act</p> <p>Compliance with Ministry of Education’s B-memos 14 &amp; 16 and COVID-19 Health, safety and operational guidance for schools (2021-2022)</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19: Prevention through Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">OHCOW – Ventilation in Education</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 14: School Ventilation</a>  <a href="#">EDU – B-Memo 16: Standardized Ventilation Measures Report</a></p>
	<p><b>Physical Distancing</b>– Will the Board ensure staff have only essential furniture and personal items in the classrooms to promote physical distancing?</p>	<p>Improve physical distancing measures and procedures based on last year’s experiences.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE - COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols</a>  <a href="#">CUPE – General H&amp;S System Checklist for COVID-19</a>  <a href="#">CUPE – Preventing exposure to COVID-19: Education Sector</a></p>
	<p><b>Physical Distancing</b> –Are new measures in place to prevent overcrowding in hallways and washrooms? E.g. staggered schedules for learning periods, washroom breaks, arrival/departure, recess.</p>	<p>Improve physical distancing measures and procedures based on last year’s experiences.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19 Risk Re-assessment Checklist</a>  <a href="#">CUPE - Aerosolization Risk Assessment</a></p>

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Physical Distancing</b> – Are capacity limits displayed in shared/common rooms to reduce crowding? E.g. staff room, main office, photocopy area, supply rooms.</p>	<p>Improve physical distancing measures and procedures based on last year’s experiences.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE – COVID-19 Risk Re-assessment Checklist</a>  <a href="#">CUPE - Aerosolization Risk Assessment</a></p>
	<p><b>Cleaning/Disinfecting</b> – Have there been any changes to the cleaning and disinfecting procedures? E.g., high touch points, classroom with a positive case, isolation room? Have custodians received a detailed list of high-touch points in their schools?</p>	<p>Ensure cleaning and disinfecting targets are meeting their objectives.</p>	<p><a href="#">CUPE - COVID-19: Cleaning vs Disinfecting</a>  <a href="#">CUPE - Safety concerns for the spraying of chemicals to disinfect for COVID-19</a></p>
	<p><b>Isolation Rooms</b> – Will isolation rooms be used for suspected cases? Are the rooms mechanically ventilated or have a HEPA air purifier? Are the rooms stocked with hand sanitizer, tissues, masks, eye protection and cleaning products?</p>	<p>Improve measures and procedures based on last year’s experiences.</p>	
	<p><b>Training</b> – How does the Board ensure all staff have received training on COVID-19 Reopening Plans for 2021-2022? Will all staff receive training by the first day of student instruction or their first day back to work? Does the School Board maintain training records?</p>	<p>Compliance with section 25 (2) (a) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act</p>	

Done?	Questions	Goals	Resources
	<p><b>Screening</b> – How will the Board determine if staff and students have a passed daily screening? Is there a process to actively screen visitors before entering the building?</p>		<p><a href="#">Ontario – COVID-19 Screening</a></p>
	<p><b>JHSC/HSR – Regulation 420-21</b> Will the Board provide accident and occupational illness notices, <u>with the prescribed detail</u>, to the Union(s), and the JHSC or HSR per sections 51 and 52 of the OHSA? Are there any outstanding reports from July 1, 2021?</p>	<p>The regulation came into effect July 01, 2021. Occupational illness reports. Review the reports that you have traditionally received to highlight what is still needed.</p>	<p><a href="#">Ontario Regulation 420/21</a></p>
Done?	Additional questions	Goals	Resources