



Fact Sheet

COVID-19 Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette



Revised August 16, 2021

The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is a top priority as schools are reopened. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette play a key role in the “layered” approach to safety in schools and school board buildings. **In fact, they are one of the most important protective strategies that are in place.**

Hand hygiene refers to hand washing or hand sanitizing to remove or kill the virus.

Respiratory etiquette aims to reduce the risk of transmitting droplets that may contain the virus directly onto other surfaces where they may be picked up by others.

Hand Hygiene Routines

- ✓ Staff and students will be provided with education in proper hand hygiene (refer to <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en> for further information on how to wash hands and use hand sanitizer).
- ✓ Posters and visual reminders for hand hygiene have been placed throughout the school and board buildings.
- ✓ Hand hygiene will be conducted by anyone entering the school or school board buildings.
- ✓ Hand hygiene will be incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals throughout the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended. Staff will determine “hand hygiene breaks”
 - Upon arrival at school,
 - Before and after eating,
 - Before and after recess breaks,
 - Before visiting any other locations (limited) in the school such as the gym, and



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- Before and after using the restroom.
- ✓ Alcohol based hand rub/sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol concentration will be available throughout the school and board buildings, particularly at entrances to the buildings and classrooms. Hand rub/sanitizer will be located where it can be used under supervision. Sanitizer should not be used when hands are soiled (e.g. from playing in the sand box).
- ✓ Plain liquid soap will be located in dispensers at sinks. Liquid soap and water are the most effective method for removing the virus from hands.
- ✓ For any dirt, blood, body fluids, it is preferred that hands be washed with soap and water.
- ✓ Student with special needs will receive support in hand hygiene routines.

Respiratory Etiquette

- ✓ Staff and students will be provided with education in proper respiratory etiquette (e.g. covering mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing, disposing of tissues immediately after use, etc.).
- ✓ Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets will be provided in schools and board buildings.
- ✓ Hand hygiene will be practiced after blowing/wiping the nose.

This Fact Sheet has been designed to provide information for school communities considering the changes required by COVID-19. For any questions, concerns, or accommodations, please contact your child's school principal.

*** Adapted from the Ministry of Education "COVID-19: Health, Safety and Operational Guidance for Schools (2021-2022) Version 2"*