

TIPS FOR HOSTING CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL AND CEREMONIAL EVENTS IN SCHOOL

There are benefits to different types of cultural, spiritual and ceremonial events (such as smudging ceremonies) that celebrate culture and connection that are important to overall health and wellbeing.

This information is intended to support school leaders and teachers in continuing school-based cultural, spiritual and ceremonial events, while still following public health orders and guidance to minimize risks related to COVID-19.

Screen for Symptoms

- Before leaving home, staff, children/students, visitors and volunteers who will access the school for work or education must self-screen for symptoms each day that they enter the school using the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#).
- Those who are sick or symptomatic should not enter the school or participate in any in-person school events. Individuals who are displaying certain symptoms are required to isolate under [CMOH Order 05-2020](#).

Gathering Sizes and Supporting Safety

- Cultural, spiritual and ceremonial events offered in schools are subject to public health gathering sizes.
- Since outdoor events pose a lower risk of transmission than those held indoors, schools should consider holding cultural, ceremonial or spiritual events outside when possible.
- Schools may wish to consider options to limit in-person attendance to facilitate physical distancing such as:
 - Offering multiple, smaller services or events instead of a single service or event attended by the entire school population, or subset of the school population.
 - Offering options for remote participation in cultural, spiritual or ceremonial events including video conferencing or other on-line options.
- Entry into the event area should be controlled and staggered, with a single point of entry and a separate point of exit into the area, if possible.
- The set up for events, including student line-ups, seating or standing area should be arranged or marked to ensure physical distancing of 2 metres can be maintained.
 - Verbal reminders to observe physical distancing, hand hygiene, and respiratory

etiquette (e.g., covering coughs, sneezes, etc.), should be given by school staff.

- Where possible, students should remain in their class cohorts and maintain physical distancing within a cohort to minimize risk of disease transmission.
 - Student cohorts should not mix with students from other classes, and time spent in close proximity should be limited.
- Use of shared items is to be avoided where possible. Items that must be shared should be cleaned and disinfected after each use, if possible. Students and staff are required to perform hand hygiene before and after using shared items.
- Cultural, spiritual and ceremonial events where students/staff are to share food or drinks or are close together would pose a risk of spread of COVID-19 and should be avoided.
- Teachers and staff in all school settings, and students in grades 4-12 are required to wear non-medical masks while in shared areas of school and outside the classroom, and where they may not be able to maintain the recommended physical distancing requirements.
- When singing is a part of a cultural, spiritual or ceremonial event practice, students/staff should follow the [COVID-19 Guidance for Singing and Vocal Performance](#).
- If an Elder or other individual is responsible for leading or involved in helping with the event, the teacher or staff member should work with them to help maintain the necessary health measures.