

From: [Karen Matthews](#)
To: [Karen Matthews](#)
Subject: An Open Letter Questioning SD68's Covid-19 Testing Policy
Date: February 25, 2022 12:02:31 PM

From: Nick Charrette <>
Sent: February 25, 2022 1:54 AM
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Subject: An Open Letter Questioning SD68's Covid-19 Testing Policy

CAUTION: External Message

It has come to my attention that from March 28, 2022, any teachers in School District 68 (Nanaimo Ladysmith) who are unvaccinated (or who do not disclose their vaccination status) will be required to submit to rapid antigen tests twice a week in order to continue working. I found this policy to be peculiar, to say the least.

It is my understanding that teachers have been instructed not to attend school if they have any symptoms listed in the [daily health check](#); therefore the imposed testing would only be relevant for teachers that are *asymptomatic*. This is puzzling, since the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control has explicitly stated that "[If you do not have symptoms of COVID-19, You do not need a test.](#)" (screenshot attached)

I would like to know what information has incentivized School District 68 Decision-Makers to implement policies that contradict recommendations made by the BC CDC.

It is my understanding that the teachers will be required to undergo these tests off-site and on their own time, while the tests themselves will be paid for by the employer. Not only does this seem to be an unnecessary burden on the teachers, but it seems to be a gross misallocation of public funds.

Further, it is well-known that our province is currently experiencing significant staffing shortages in its schools, and it is reasonable to suppose that the ultimatum being presented to the teachers of School District 68 may very well result in some (and perhaps many) teachers leaving altogether, exacerbating an already untenable problem.

One would expect that a policy with such costs would not be pursued unless it could be expected to produce disproportionate benefits. But it is known that Covid-19 can be contracted and transmitted by individuals, whether or not they are vaccinated, and [BC's Public Health Officer has openly considered the possibility of allowing nurses testing positive for Covid-19 to attend work in hospitals.](#)

If covid-19 positive nurses could potentially work with the public, and the BC CDC recommends against testing asymptomatic individuals, and Covid-19 can be contracted and transmitted whether or not a person has been vaccinated, **then why are asymptomatic teachers being required to undergo rapid antigen tests twice a week?** And why is this requirement contingent on their *vaccination status*? If there is cause for concern, then should we not test *all individuals* capable of contracting and transmitting the disease?

This policy is discriminatory and expensive, but there is no indication from existing research that it would result in any positive health outcomes in your community. Why, then, would decision makers pursue a policy with excessive costs but no benefits?

I believe that decision-makers must be held accountable for their choices, *especially when those choices result in great cost to the public*. They must be transparent in their reasoning, and they must be prepared to defend their policies against rational scrutiny. I therefore look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Citizen

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