



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES  
Division of Occupational Safety and Health

711 Vine St., KELSO, WA 98626



March 08, 2021

Mel Murray, Director of Facilities  
BLACK HILLS HIGH SCHOOL  
621 Linwood Ave Sw  
Tumwater, WA 98512

RE: Consultation Visit #507007078

Consultant on Visit: Christopher Cooke

Company Representatives: Ms. Andrea Cowles, Lead Custodian  
Ms. Melanie Evans, LVN  
Mr. Brian Hinkle, Building/Grounds Supervisor  
Ms. Linda Moffit, School RN  
Mr. Mel Murray, Director of Facilities  
Mr. Dave Myers, Principal  
Mr. Henry Valz, Building/Union Rep.

Dear Mr. Murray:

I appreciated having this opportunity to help you evaluate the safety and health of your workplace. We at the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) are committed to encouraging voluntary compliance with Washington safety laws by offering technical advice and consultation with employers and their employees.

Following is a copy of my consultation report which details my findings and recommendations resulting from a Consultation Visit that provided a safety and /or health hazard assessment of working conditions, equipment, and processes at the work site. The consultation began on 3/4/2021 at 7741 Littlerock Rd Sw, Tumwater, WA 98512.

The Tumwater School District requested a review of it's Covid-19 procedures when they open for hybrid learning next month. This consultation was limited to reviewing/walking through the districts re-opening plans, Covid-19 disinfection techniques, and Covid-19 safety and health program. Thank you Mr. Murray for agreeing to this voluntary health consultation.

#### **Evaluation of your company's safety and health program**

You have a well written and outlined accident prevention program (APP) which your employees have been trained on and are aware of. That being said, there are some areas for improvement for your program and those are outlined below in this report. Please take these notes and update your program to ensure that your program is tailored to the work that your employees specifically perform. Specifically,

you need an individual APP for each school in your district, or you can add an appendices to your current APP which addresses the specific needs of each school.

Additionally, make sure that employees are following your rules in regards to safety and health. Make sure that employees understand that safety and health are priorities while working for the Tumwater School District.

### **Other Findings and Recommendations**

Thank you for having me out to your school district to conduct a safety and health consultation. We discussed the hazards that were observed at your schools, and those are addressed later in this letter, however we also discussed some additional best practices which can be deployed at your schools to further ensure the safety and health of your employees as well as your students. Some of these additional best practices that we discussed are as follows:

1. Covid-19 Regulations - The primary reason for this health consultation was to assess the districts response to opening schools for hybrid learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. I had a chance to review your reopening program and address the particular issues to help you reduce the risk of transmission to both your teachers and students. The items reviewed are as follows:

- Screening for Covid-19 Symptoms: Employee temperatures are measured upon arrival to the school and they are completing a daily checklist for symptoms before beginning class each day. Students temperatures are also checked daily upon arrival to school whether they are dropped off by the bus, driving themselves to school, or by parents. Parents are required to complete a quarterly symptom checklist for the children declaring that they are checking their children for potential Covid-19 symptoms. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.
- Social Distancing: Markers/designations have been placed around the school to make students aware of social distancing requirements. Traffic flow outside of classrooms and in hallways/breezeways has been defined directionally to ensure that students are not running into each other in the halls. In classrooms, rooms have been set-up to ensure a minimum 6 foot distance between desks/tables to promote proper social distancing. A cohort system has been set-up to ensure that there is no cross-contamination of desks/tables between students. A bathroom process has been devised to ensure that there is no breaching of the minimum 6 foot social distancing rule when children use the lavatory. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.
- Drop-off/Pick-up Locations: There are three drop-off locations for students; one for parent drop-off, one for students driving themselves, and one for bus drop to help keep students socially distanced when they arrive at the school. The parental drop-off location is in the front of the school and is limited to a specific number of students being able to be dropped off at once, this entrance also serves as the primary entrance after school has started. The students driving themselves are located on the eastern side of the school, and the bus drop-off location is located in the back of the school; this separation of the parental, self-driving student, and bus drop-off locations helps to ensure proper social distancing between students. Bringing back all grade levels (9-12 grades) doesn't allow you to gradually monitor your check-in policy, so make sure to follow up with your staff to ensure that policy is working effectively. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.
- Disinfection Procedures: A disinfection schedule has been created for routine and daily procedures. Classrooms having structured cleaning schedules where daily cleaning with paper towels are performed on Mondays and Thursdays (the first day of each cohort) and then cleaning with a microfiber cloth on Tuesday and Friday (the last day of each cohort) utilizing a dawn cleaner/water mixture prepared by custodial staff. Since there will be three periods of students in each classroom daily, make sure that

teachers are giving students optimal time at the end of their class period to properly disinfect their desk area so that the next group of students are exposed to less transmission risk. Custodial staff perform deep cleaning, using an electrostatic sprayer, on Wednesdays and Friday nights. There are procedures in place for specific staff to perform deep cleans if a Covid-19 exposure is suspected or confirmed. General disinfection has also been addressed with teachers being assigned sanitary wipes if needed for items in the classroom. Additionally, tags have been implemented to be hung on door knobs to notify custodial staff if/when disinfection of rooms needs to be conducted. High touch surfaces such as light switches, door handles, hand rails, counters, etc. disinfection schedules have also been outlined. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): All employees are required to, and have been provided, PPE to protect themselves. Teachers are provided facial coverings to protect themselves and students are required to wear facial coverings while in school. Custodial staff, and those responsible for decontamination, have been provided additional PPE such as nitrile gloves, Tyvek covers, and half face respirators. If staff want to wear N-95 respirators on a voluntary basis, make sure that you provide them with Table 2 from our respiratory protection code. Employees have been trained on the proper donning/doffing of body PPE and respirator wearing employees have been given medical evaluations and fit testing. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.

- Increased Ventilation: Speaking with the Director of Facilities and the Building/Grounds Supervisor, they ensured me that all ventilation systems at the schools have been increased to ensure as much airflow as possible. We look for 3-4 air exchange rates per hour (meaning all of the air in a room is emptied and replaced 3-4 times per hour), Building/Grounds stated that air exchange rates are now in the vicinity of 6 air exchange rates per hour. Additionally, MERV-13 (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) air filters have been installed in schools to help capture additional particles, this is a best practice recommended by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.

- Sign/Symptom of Covid-19 Procedures: The school has established illness rooms for students who develop symptoms of Covid-19 while at school. Designated spaces have been established and employees who work in these rooms have received additional training to minimize risk of exposure to Covid-19. Custodial staff has also received additional training and equipment in order to properly disinfect these illness rooms after students have been in them. Procedures have been devised to contact parents to pick up their children and to minimize contact of a potentially infected child to other individuals. Outlines are also in place for employees/children who have conducted Covid-19 or have come into close contact with someone who has Covid-19. You are in compliance with "Safe Start" opening guidelines.

2. Social Distancing As It Pertains to Performing Arts - Make sure that you are following the guidelines from the Department of Health (DOH) K-12 Schools 2020-2021 Guidance (DOH 820-105). One of the questions that arose during the consultation was a concern over the 9 foot social distancing guideline for performing arts, specifically the band/orchestra/instrumental definition. I have reached out to our Technical Services group and they have agreed with my interpretation on-site that playing percussion instruments, such as xylophones, would still need to adhere to this 9 ft. social distancing rule. Technical services has also informed me that they will speak to their contact at DOH for their interpretation, and when I get an answer I will let you know.

3. Bringing Outside Chemicals/Items Onto School Grounds - During the time of Covid-19, teachers and staff may feel inclined to bring non-school administered items onto the school grounds for disinfection purposes. When employees bring items such as chemicals or disinfectant wipes onto school grounds, you must ensure that you are collecting the associated safety data sheet (SDS) of that particular item. Better yet, I would conduct a safety meeting with all of your teachers to ensure that there are no non approved chemicals or items brought to school by staff, and that only district provided items/chemicals

Consultation Visit # 507007078

are used by staff.

4. Retired Safety Data Sheets (SDS) - When you no longer need a specific chemical on your job-site, make sure that you are disposing of the material but keeping and "retiring" the SDS of the product. Employers are required to keep retired SDSs for at least 30 years. You can keep these retired SDSs in a binder, or save them digitally on a computer or server. As a best practice, mark the date you took the material out of service on the SDS itself.

### **Notice of Obligation**

You are required to share this letter and enclosed report with your employees and/or their collective bargaining representatives as soon as possible, but no more than 30 days from receiving it (RCW 49.17.250(3)).

Your consultation report is confidential. Although you must share the report with your employees and/or their collective bargaining representatives, we do not make this document public or share it with DOSH compliance inspectors (except under very limited circumstances, such as when the department is required under subpoena, or if you refuse to correct a serious hazard).

If, in the future, your workplace is inspected by DOSH compliance, you will not be required to tell the inspector about this consultation or share the report. However, if, during the consultation, we perform any tests for workplace exposures (such as noise levels or air quality) DOSH standards require you to show these monitoring results to the inspector, if requested.

If I give you specific guidance that you follow, you would not be cited if a DOSH inspector later finds my guidance did not address (or adequately address) a hazard. You would still have to fix the hazard by the correction date assigned by the inspector. However, it is possible for an inspector to cite you for a hazard not identified during my consultation. This could be because work conditions changed, we had a misunderstanding, or I may have overlooked the hazard. In such cases the inspector would consider any good faith effort by you in determining the penalty.

Your request for this consultation demonstrates that you are committed to the safety and health of your employees. Make sure you routinely conduct self-inspections of your workplace for hazards. The findings shown in this report were hazards identified on the day of the consult and are not necessarily all of the hazards that may be present now or in the future at your work site. Situations and conditions can be different from day to day.

If you have any questions about this report, or need further assistance, please contact me. For on-line access to our safety and health rules, go to [www.lni.wa.gov/safety](http://www.lni.wa.gov/safety).

Sincerely,

*Christopher Cooke*

Christopher Cooke  
Industrial Hygiene Consultant  
Phone: (360) 575-6930  
Fax: (360) 575-6946  
[Christopher.Cooke@lni.wa.gov](mailto:Christopher.Cooke@lni.wa.gov)

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**Labor & Industries**  
*Division of Occupational Safety and Health*

**Consultation Visit #**  
**507007078**

Attachments:



## Hazards Identified

In this section, I have listed the hazards identified during my work site visit and my recommendation for correcting the problem. For your convenience, the language of each related Washington Administrative Code (WAC) is included at the end of this report. You must post this document a minimum of 3 days, keeping it posted until all hazards identified are corrected.

- **Serious hazards:** Washington law defines a hazard as serious when there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result to your employees.
- **General hazards:** A hazard is general when we determine that there is a probability that an employee could be injured or become ill as a result, but there is no reasonable probability that it could cause death or serious physical harm.

If serious hazards have been identified, you will find attached forms entitled "Certification of Hazards Corrected". Complete the form as you make your corrections, and submit it back to me by the correction due date(s).

**No Serious Hazards were found.**

## General Hazards Identified

(See Applicable Washington Administrative Code Section for WAC Language)

**You must correct all general hazards.**

### 1. WAC 296-800-15035

#### **Hazard Description:**

The emergency eyewashes and safety showers on-site, located throughout the school, are not being activated weekly as required by this standard.

In the event of an emergency, emergency eyewashes and safety showers that have not be tested weekly may not function properly.

#### **Recommended action:**

Activate the emergency eyewashes and safety showers weekly; keep a log of this activity as a best practice.

### 2. WAC 296-800-28030(1)



**Hazard Description:**

There was one instances where flexible cords were not being maintained in good condition as required by this standard. The instances were as follows:

1. A flexible cord was observed, in the custodial office, to have a missing grounding pin.

Damaged flexible cords could expose employees to live parts and lead to potential shocks.

**Recommended action:**

Replace or repair the cords and remind employees to inspect cords and plugs on a daily basis before work begins. Electrical tape is not an acceptable means for repairing damaged flexible cords; use heat shrink tape if you elect to repair the damaged cord.

**3. WAC 296-800-31050**

**Hazard Description:**

An exit door located in one of the classrooms, leading to the outside of the building, was not marked as an emergency exit as required by this standard.

In the event of an emergency, the lack of adequately marked exits may hinder evacuation.

**Recommended action:**

Ensure all exits are adequately marked. Make sure that exit signs meet the following requirements:

- Mark each exit with a clearly visible, distinctive sign reading "EXIT."
- Make sure the letters in the word "EXIT" are at least six inches high and ¾ inch wide.
- Mark any doorway or passage that might be mistaken for an exit with "NOT AN EXIT" or with an indication of its actual use.
- Make sure exit signs are a distinctive color.
- Make sure signs are posted and arranged along exit routes to adequately show how to get to the nearest exit and clearly indicate the direction of travel.
- Not obstruct or conceal exit signs in any way.
- Keep exit doors free of signs or decorations that obscure their visibility.

## **Applicable Washington Administrative Codes**

**1. WAC 296-800-15035**

WAC 296-800-15035 Inspect and activate your emergency washing facilities.

- (1) You must make sure all plumbed emergency washing facilities are inspected once a year to make sure they function correctly.



Washington State Department of  
**Labor & Industries**  
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**Consultation Visit #**  
**507007078**

Note:

Inspections should include:

- Examination of the piping
- Making sure that water is available at the appropriate temperature and quality
- Activation to check that the valves and other hardware work properly
- Checking the water flow rate.

(2) You must make sure plumbed emergency eyewashes and hand-held drench hoses are activated weekly to check the proper functioning of the valves, hardware, and availability of water.

(3) You must make sure all self-contained eyewash equipment and personal eyewash units are inspected and maintained according to manufacturer instructions.

(a) Inspections to check proper operation must be done once a year.

(b) Sealed personal eyewashes must be replaced after the manufacturer's expiration date.

Note:

Most manufacturers recommend replacing fluid in open self-contained eyewashes every six months. The period for sealed containers is typically two years.

**2. WAC 296-800-28030(1)**

WAC 296-800-28030 Maintain all flexible cords and cables in good condition and use safely.

Exemption:

These rules do not apply to cords and cables that are an internal part of factory assembled appliances and equipment, like the windings on motors or wiring inside electrical panels.

Note:

Flexible cords and cables are typically used to connect electrical equipment to a power source. These cords can have an electrical plug to connect to a power source or can be permanently wired into the power source. The terms flexible cords, extension cord, cables and electrical cords all refer to a type of flexible cord.





(1) You must perform visual inspections.

On portable cord- and plug-connected equipment and extension cords before use on each work shift. Defects and damage to look for include:

- (a) Loose parts.
- (b) Deformed or missing pins.
- (c) External defects and damage.
- (d) Damage to the outer covering or insulation.
- (e) Pinched or crushed covering or insulation that might indicate internal damage.

Exemption:

You do not need to visually inspect portable cord- and plug-connected equipment and extension cords that stay connected once in place and are not exposed to damage until they are moved.

**3. WAC 296-800-31050**

WAC 296-800-31050 Mark exits adequately.

- (1) You must mark each exit with a clearly visible, distinctive sign reading "exit."
- (2) You must make sure the letters in the word "exit" are at least six inches high and 3/4 inch wide.
- (3) You must mark any doorway or passage that might be mistaken for an exit with "not an exit" or with an indication of its actual use.
- (4) You must make sure exit signs are a distinctive color.
- (5) You must make sure signs are posted and arranged along exit routes to adequately show how to get to the nearest exit and clearly indicate the direction of travel.
- (6) You must not obstruct or conceal exit signs in any way.
- (7) You must keep exit doors free of signs or decorations that obscure their visibility.