

### **RATIONALE**

The Catholic Independent Schools of Nelson Diocese (CISND) Board of Directors recognizes that student health and safety is a concern shared by all parties in the K-12 education system. This policy provides minimum requirements for testing lead content in drinking water of school facilities, reporting the results, and mitigation strategies to eliminate or reduce any risks to students and staff.

### **POLICY**

Independent Schools are expected to test for lead content in drinking water in their school facilities to ensure they meet provincial requirements established by the Ministry of Health.

Schools should take reasonable and prompt steps to resolve elevated lead levels that are outside established guidelines on any drinking water quality test results.

The Ministry of Education expects that Independent School Authorities will work with appropriate health authorities to address other issues that affect the quality of water as prescribed under applicable provincial and federal legislation.

### **REGULATIONS**

#### 1. Water Testing Requirement

It is the Ministry of Education's expectation that Independent School Authorities will complete lead content testing on all school facilities once every 3 years. As a best practice, annual testing is recommended.

Schools are to work with Interior Health Authority to determine a testing program for their facilities. The testing procedure, and number of samples taken at each facility, shall be determined in consultation with the Health Authority. **All test results must be shared with the Health Authority.**

#### 2. Mitigation Strategies

If sample results reveal lead levels that exceed the Maximum Allowable Concentration of Lead, as set out by Health Canada in the [Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality](#), the school, in consultation with the Health Authority, should undertake mitigation strategies which may include:

- Flushing regimes

- Deactivation of water sources and supplemental signage
- Installation of filtration systems
- Plumbing upgrades
- Or other steps that result in reducing exposure to lead to acceptable levels

### 3. Communication and Reporting Requirements

In the event that testing finds drinking water concentrations of lead at or above the maximum acceptable level, the Independent School Authority must:

- Immediately inform the Independent Schools Branch of the issue. Ongoing compliance with this policy will be confirmed during monitoring visits and external evaluations.
- Work collaboratively with the Interior Health Authority to communicate the results of testing lead content in drinking water to parents, students, and staff by describing the following:
  - Rationale for testing lead in drinking water,
  - Identify partnership with Interior Health to work toward a solution,
  - State results of sampling,
  - Identify mitigation strategies implemented or being considered by the school, and
  - Provide contact information for the authority and the Regional Health Authority for parents, students, and staff to request further information.

Ongoing monitoring visits and external evaluations will confirm compliance with this policy.

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<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	<b>May 2017</b>
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