



BRANDON
SCHOOL DIVISION
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2020 RE-OPENING SCHOOLS PLAN

AUGUST 19, 2020

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Message from Dr. Marc D. Casavant, Superintendent/CEO

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff:

I hope that all of you have had a restful and enjoyable summer. I know that many of you are anxious about the opening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year. As a parent with children in the Brandon School Division, I know how you feel. I understand that you probably have many questions and concerns, especially with the rise of COVID-19 cases in Brandon at the moment. Please be assured that the safety of students and staff is our number one priority.

On July 30, 2020, Minister of Education Kelvin Goertzen and Chief Provincial Public Health Officer Dr. Brent Roussin released the provincial plan, [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#). Immediately following this release, Brandon School Division began work to ensure our reopening plan complies with the guidelines contained in the provincial document.

Schools in the Brandon School Division will look different when students return in September. Some of the strategies that will be employed in each building to address the safety of students and staff are as follows:

- A strict stay-at-home policy for any students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- Screening protocols for students and staff will be implemented.
- Enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfecting procedures, including daily cleaning for all areas of the school. Washrooms and high-touch surfaces will be cleaned several times a day and regularly scheduled deep cleaning will occur when students are not present.
- Non-medical masks will be available for all students and staff.
- Hand hygiene requirements will be in place when entering and exiting the school and classrooms, and before and after eating.
- Physical distancing recommendations will be implemented in our schools.
- In K-8 schools, groups of students will be assigned to cohorts; students will remain in their groups for most of the day. Staff will remain with the same cohort whenever possible.
- Use of shared items or equipment will be avoided where possible.
- Reminders of the importance of respiratory and hygiene etiquette (e.g. cover coughs and sneezes) will be posted and spoken about.
- Band, Choral, Home Economics and Industrial Arts programming will be paused for the start of the school year.
- Drop-off/pick-up and student transportation procedures will be implemented to limit contact among households as much as possible.
- Public access to schools will be limited to essential school business. Schools will carefully document attendance of students, staff and visitors to ensure up-to-date contact information for assisting public health management should a case be identified in the school.

Each school in Brandon School Division will have its own reopening plan that will be shared with school communities prior to school start-up.

We are in unprecedented times, and I thank you for your patience as we work on preparing everyone for the 2020-2021 school year. While this year will look dramatically different compared to previous years, the Brandon School Division is committed to following our mission of enabling each student to achieve maximum intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth. We all have a role to play in working together to keep our community safe, and in doing so we will be supporting our students' education.

Dr. Marc D. Casavant, Superintendent/CEO
Brandon School Division

Re-Opening Plan for the Brandon School Division – September 2020

In preparation of schools reopening on September 8, 2020, and navigating the 2020-2021 school year, the priority of the Brandon School Division remains unchanged – the health, well-being and safety of our students, staff, and community, in doing our part to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Direction from the Chief Provincial Health Officer and Manitoba Education will guide our planning and decisions.

The Brandon School Division, as mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), will plan for a range of scenarios to maximize health and mitigate risks related to the level of COVID-19 infection in our community. Our “new reality” is such that an ongoing assessment of risk and adherence to public health measures must continue until we are at a post-pandemic reality or a vaccination for COVID-19 is available.

Manitoba Education’s framework to resume in-class learning in 2020-2021 identifies three re-opening levels:

Level 1: In-class Learning

- All K-12 student return for In-class learning.
- All Kindergarten to Grade 8 students and students with special needs will return to in-class learning 5 days per week.
- Grades 9 to 12 student will be in-class to the greatest extent possible. Blended learning for high school students may vary from school to school.

Level 2: Blended Learning

- K-8 students and students with special needs are prioritized for in-class learning.
- Grade 9 to 12 will participate in teacher-led remote learning, with limited use of school facilities for specific programming and assessment.

Level 3: Remote Learning

- Remote learning in place.
- Schools are closed to the public with the exception of Kindergarten to Grade 6 student of critical workers.

On July 25, 2020 Manitoba Education determined that we would return under the premise of a Level 1 scenario. In-class learning will resume on September 8, 2020, for all students in public and funded independent schools (FIS) across the province.

- Kindergarten to Grade 8 students will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week.
- Students in Grades 9 to 12 will return for up to five days per week of in-class instruction if high schools can effectively implement physical distancing and the use of cohorts. Student should expect some remote learning, along with in-class instruction.
- Students with special needs in all grades will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week.

Teachers and staff will return to schools on September 2, providing them with an opportunity for orientation to public health requirements and the educational priorities to support students, as well as for professional learning around recovery learning.

The following is the Brandon School Division’s plan for navigating through the 2020-2021 school year. As a school division, we will be taking direction from Manitoba Education and the Chief Medical Officer on a daily basis; therefore, our plan is subject to change as advised. Following, are the health measures we are adhering to at this time.

Public Health Measures

Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and transmission within our communities, guidance may change based on emerging circumstances and information from public health officials. **If the public health situation changes or guidelines are not sufficient, current measures may be paused and other measures may be introduced or reintroduced.**

Understanding Transmission

COVID-19 is most commonly spread from an infected person through respiratory droplets generated through coughing, sneezing, laughing, singing, and talking. It spreads more easily when contact is close (within six feet/two metres) and prolonged (more than 15 minutes). COVID-19 can also be spread by close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands or touching something with the virus on it and then touching one's mouth, nose, or eyes before cleaning one's hands. Some people who have few or no symptoms can spread COVID-19.

Although public health measures can significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering and being transmitted in child care and school settings, the risk is never zero. It is important to remember that while children tend to have less severe illness from the disease, this is not always the case. COVID-19 can also cause more severe illness among people who are 60 years of age and older, and among those who have weakened immune systems or underlying medical conditions. Children under one year of age and those with immune suppression and chronic medical conditions are considered more vulnerable and at higher risk for severe illness. Parents/guardians and staff are encouraged to consult with their health care provider if they have concerns about their own health, their child's health, or the health of other household contacts.

The most effective measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 include separating people by maintaining physical distance and the use of physical barriers. However, these measures are not always practical in child care and school settings. Therefore, it is most effective to use a layered approach, including multiple measures from the areas listed below, and to develop administrative measures that support individuals to consistently follow personal preventive practices (e.g., environmental cleaning, conducting frequent hand hygiene) that decrease the number of interactions while increasing the safety of interactions that occur. Adapted responses and recommendations may be required in situations where health, age, ability, status, or other socio-economic and demographic circumstances may limit the ability of some groups or individuals to follow the recommended measures.

Note: All options should be considered to support the implementation of public health measures, including leveraging volunteers to support staff and administrators where needed. This may include parents, volunteers, and student leaders. The public health measures outlined in these protocols must be followed for all of these individuals, even if not specifically indicated.

Staying Home When Sick

Individuals should self-isolate and not enter schools or education facilities if they:

- are experiencing symptoms suggestive of COVID-19
- have travelled outside Manitoba in the previous 14 days (outside of areas excluded by public health orders, which currently exclude locations in Western Canada, the territories, and Ontario west of Terrace Bay)
- are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
- are awaiting a COVID-19 test result (excluding persons tested as part of voluntary asymptomatic surveillance for COVID-19, as they do not need to isolate).

An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>

Screening

Screening for symptoms is critical to identify any potential cases of COVID-19 as quickly as possible before exposure to others. If someone is unsure whether they or their child should be tested and self-isolate, they should be directed to the COVID-19 Screening Tool at

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.

All screening that identifies suspected cases of COVID-19 should be referred to Health Links – Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257.

Symptom and exposure screening must occur at the start of each day.

- Staff must self-monitor daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Staff who have any symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home, isolate, and be excluded from work. Schools must maintain records of staff absenteeism.
- Schools must communicate that parents and caregivers need to monitor their child daily for symptoms and exposures before sending them to school. Parents and caregivers are responsible for ensuring their children are not displaying symptoms before sending them to school or on the bus. Schools can also support children with self-screening upon arrival at school.

Signage, with exclusion criteria, must be posted at all entrances to the school.

A student or staff member who meets any of the exclusion criteria will not be admitted to the school and will be advised to immediately isolate and consult Health Links – Info Santé or their health care provider. Those with symptoms should be tested. If the test is negative for COVID-19, they can return 24 hours after symptoms resolve. If individuals do not get tested, they should isolate for 14 days from symptom onset, and they may return if symptoms have resolved at that time.

A chronic stable cough, sneeze, runny nose, or nasal congestion that is unchanged and clearly linked to a known medical condition such as asthma or allergies is not an absolute requirement for exclusion. As well, children who are crying can exhibit a runny nose. Changing or worsening of chronic symptoms require isolation and contacting Health Links – Info Santé. Staff should exercise judgment based on the symptoms but, when in doubt, err on the side of caution by excluding the child and advising the parent/caregiver to contact Health Links – Info Santé or their health care provider.

Routine screening or monitoring of temperatures with a thermometer or other device to assess for fever is not recommended. Normal temperatures can be variable throughout the day and can be different between individuals. It is recommended that parents and staff focus on monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19, as outlined in the Screening Tool and poster at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.

Visitor Access

Visitors or volunteers are permitted at schools, but visits should be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Online communication, video, and telephone should be used to interact with families, where possible, rather than in person.

Parents, caregivers, healthcare providers, volunteers, and other non-staff adults (e.g., visitors) entering the school should be prioritized to those supporting implementation of public health measures and activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g., teacher candidates, immunizers, meal program volunteers, etc.). This should also be limited to those who regularly volunteer to minimize the number of possible exposures.

All visitors and volunteers must adhere to self-screening, physical distancing, and recommended hygiene practices. Visitors with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not enter the school. Schools are required to keep a list of all visitors.

Community use of schools will be suspended, with the exception of child care centres operating in schools. Independent schools with shared space rental agreements will need to ensure that public health measures are followed if the owners of the buildings utilized space that is also used for the school's purposes.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing of two metres or six feet between all individuals should occur whenever reasonably possible in a school setting.

The maximum number of individuals congregating (i.e., close interactions among people longer than 15

minutes) in a common space for indoor and outdoor settings must comply with the most up-to-date public health orders at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/soe.html#current> .

- Where possible, arrange spaces to encourage the recommended separation. For example, space children to avoid close contact and assign a designated chair and table for each child.
- Schools must manage the flow of people in common areas, including hallways, to minimize crowding and allow for the ease of people passing through. Young children need easy-to-understand visual prompts. For example, use tape on the floor, hoops, mats, or other items that can mark off personal space. Another idea is to organize play activities with a visual cue about how many children should be in that area (e.g., two chairs next to an activity with markers or numbers taped to the floor).
- Implement the practice of staggered entrance and exit times, or use separate entrances (if feasible).
- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs, handshakes).
- Stagger staff break times and avoid large, in-person staff meetings.
- Assemblies and gatherings are discouraged, and those that exceed public health advice may not be scheduled.
- Physical barriers can be used, where appropriate, when physical distancing cannot be maintained. This includes plexiglass barriers for high-traffic areas such as reception desks and check-out counters. These must be implemented with a plan for frequent cleaning and sanitizing for infection prevention and control.
- Fire drills and lock-down requirements must be considered within the COVID-19 environment, as current procedures are not conducive to physical distancing. Modifications of drills to achieve goals should be considered.
- Be outdoors as much as possible. Promote individual activity to minimize contact.
- Contact sports and games, or the use of shared equipment is strongly discouraged. Guidelines and a risk assessment for sports and recreational activities are available at <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/restoring/sports-guidelines.html>.

Cohorts/Groups

It is recognized that strict physical distancing at all times—particularly with young children—is not practical in the school setting. When physical distancing is not possible, cohorts can be used to limit exposure and facilitate contact tracing if a case is identified. Students will likely be a part of multiple cohorts from within and outside of the school setting. The purpose of cohorts is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that, if a child or employee develops an infection, there are fewer possible exposures and contact tracing can be more easily done.

Cohorts involve keeping groups of students (e.g., classes) together and avoiding interactions with other groups.

- Physical distancing within the cohort is required to the greatest extent possible, including a minimum of one-metre separation between students in the cohort when seated at desks or tables.
- Maximum cohort size is to be no more than 75 students. There is no limit on the number of cohorts in a school, as long as distinct cohorts of 75 can be separated to prevent contact with other groups. Each cohort must be able to arrive, depart, and participate in school activities without co-mingling with members from other cohorts as much as possible.
- Whenever possible, keep children and staff together with the same cohort throughout the day, including lunch breaks and recesses. Locations of classrooms, use of additional space, and timetabling by cohorts can all be considered to reduce mixing.
- Stagger schedules and movement of cohorts to avoid being in shared spaces (e.g., foyers, hallways) at the same time.

- Different cohorts/groups should not be in shared spaces at the same time. Where this is not possible, physical distancing between groups is required. It is important to maintain at least four metres between groups or cohorts of children (i.e., two groups of children can be in the same area provided the groups do not intermingle and provided four metres of space is maintained between the two groups).
- Avoid the movement of classes of students where possible. It is preferable that teachers move between classrooms instead of students.
- Keep daily records that include the names of students, staff, and volunteers of cohorts.

Ventilation

There is less likelihood of transmission in well ventilated environments. Consider the following strategies:

- Avoid recirculation of air to the greatest extent possible, and ensure clean filters.
- In general, ventilating indoor environments with fresh air—whether by increasing the outdoor air ratio of the HVAC system settings as much as possible or by opening windows and avoiding or reducing recirculation—will dilute the air exhaled by the occupants, including any infectious particles. Even if this is not feasible for the whole facility, consider this for higher risk areas (e.g., where crowding may be an issue).
- Minimize the use of fans and limit them to the lowest settings if they are needed. Direct air flow away from people and surfaces. Ensure that these surfaces are cleaned along with other high-touch surfaces.
- Assess the risk of opening windows and doors (i.e., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms). Do not prop open fire doors to increase ventilation or to reduce exposure to frequently touched door handles

Transportation to Schools

Physical distancing and/or cohorts are also required in school transportation. For more information, refer to the Guidelines for Transportation to Schools at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/transportation.html>.

To support physical distancing on buses, to the greatest extent possible, parents are encouraged to transport their own children if they are able. Active transportation, such as walking and biking, should also be encouraged. For advice on carpooling, please visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/transportation.html>.

Hygiene Practices

Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the recommended hand hygiene practice. Students and staff must engage in frequent hand hygiene, including but not limited to the following times:

- at the start of the day and before going home
- before and after recess
- after going to the washroom and helping children with washroom routines
- after a diaper change (both children and staff)
- before and after preparing food
- before eating/drinking
- after getting hands dirty or if they have become contaminated
- after wiping nose or handling dirty tissues
- after coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose

- after soothing a crying child
- before and after putting on and taking off a mask
- before and after being on a bus
- after cleaning tasks (staff)

School staff should help young children to ensure handwashing is done correctly.

Where possible, encourage and supervise hand hygiene and make alcohol-based hand sanitizer available at all building access points and throughout the facility. Young children require supervision when using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Good hygiene practices can be taught in an age-appropriate and playful manner. One idea is to have timers to help ensure students wash for an adequate time. See how many 20-second songs the children can identify. Be creative—engage the children in coming up with games and other ways to encourage everyone to wash their hands for 20 seconds.

Respiratory etiquette should be modelled, taught, and reinforced regularly. This includes coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, as well as properly and promptly disposing of any used tissues and exercising proper hand hygiene.

Personal items (e.g., hats, hair accessories, lip balm, food/drinks) should not be shared.

Avoid touching one's mouth, nose, or eyes, and encourage children to do the same.

As part of these routine measures, signage should be posted and highly visible, and it should include visual cues that remind staff and children to perform hand hygiene (e.g., sneezing or coughing into their elbow, putting used tissues in a waste receptacle, and performing hand hygiene immediately after using tissues). Several printable resources, including posters and factsheets, are available online at the following websites:

- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.html>
- <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/posters/>

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Non-medical masks can play a role in reducing the transmission of COVID-19. Wearing non-medical masks is an **additional** personal practice that can help to prevent the infectious respiratory droplets of an unknowingly infected person (the wearer) from coming into contact with other people. Non-medical masks have not been tested to meet any standards. Although encouraged, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing and handwashing. Those wearing masks should be reminded, in age-appropriate language, not to touch their mask and to comply with other personal preventive practices, such as frequent hand hygiene and physical distancing as much as possible.

Non-medical masks are recommended in situations where a person cannot maintain a two-metre physical distance for extended periods of time and is in close proximity to a person outside of their regular contacts. This includes hallways and when riding the bus to school, and it may include classroom settings.

- Non-masks are mandatory for students (Grade 4 and up), teachers, staff, visitors and volunteers in areas where physical distancing of two metres is not possible.
- Students under Grade 4 can also use non-medical masks.
- All school bus passengers in Grade 4 and older, and the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading if removal is appropriate for the setting. Students under Grade 4 can also use non-medical masks.

Masks will be provided to students and staff who need them. Inventory will be monitored to ensure adequate supply.

Non-medical masks should not be worn by anyone who:

- is unable to remove the mask without assistance (e.g., due to age, ability or developmental status)
- has breathing difficulties
- is under two years of age

When a non-medical mask is used, your hands should be cleaned before and after putting it on and taking it off. Follow the recommendations listed above for the use of non-medical masks, including for their removal. Removed masks are considered contaminated and should be placed in a container or bag for appropriate cleaning and disinfection at a later time. Non-medical masks should be laundered daily.

A medical mask (surgical or procedural mask) is required when unable to maintain a distance of two metres or six feet from a child who is exhibiting signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.

To put on a mask safely, perform hand hygiene by handwashing with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Place the mask on your face carefully so it covers your mouth and nose, handling it with the strings or elastic ear loops as much as possible, and mould the nose bridge to ensure it does not move while it is on. Avoid touching the mask once you have put it on. If the mask needs to be adjusted, hands should be cleaned before and after adjusting the mask. Never pull the mask down below the nose, mouth, or chin. Never dangle the mask from one ear or both ears.

To remove the mask safely, remove it from behind using the strings or elastic ear loops. Do not touch the front of the mask. Discard the mask immediately, ideally in a no-touch receptacle. Perform hand hygiene by handwashing with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html> for the latest guidance on the use and care of masks.

Consideration can be given to teachers and staff to wear face shields or coverings and eye protection, in addition to a mask (not in place of a mask).

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Increased frequency of cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing—particularly on high-touch surfaces and in common/shared areas—will be required. Schools must

- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, electronic devices including photocopiers, printers, laptops, keyboards, mice monitors and touchscreens, chairs, desks, art supplies, toys, games, gym equipment, tools, and equipment) frequently—at least twice daily, or more often as needed.
- Increase monitoring of hand-cleaning supplies to ensure an ample supply at all sinks in washroom and kitchen area.
- Ensure washrooms and lunchrooms are cleaned/disinfected frequently (at least twice daily, and more often as needed) and stagger use.
- Turn off water fountains that are not touchless or cannot be cleaned between users.
- Ensure there is enhanced cleaning of bus seats and other high-touch surfaces (e.g., windows, railings) before each new group of students attends the bus.

Health Canada has posted a list of disinfectants shown to be effective against COVID-19 at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>.

School administrators are encouraged to review existing activities and practices within their settings to help determine where enhancements or increased cleaning frequencies may be beneficial. This includes limiting the use of high-touch objects and surfaces by multiple individuals (e.g., providing children with their own containers of arts and crafts materials that are not shared with others).

Waste should be disposed of regularly. Hand hygiene should be performed after waste removal. No-

touch waste receptacles are preferred.

This concludes all the health measures to date that we have been asked to follow. The next section of the plan addresses workplace safety and health.

Workplace Safety and Health

The safety and health of students and staff is our number one priority as we develop the plans for in-class learning in our schools. Manitoba Public Health advises the best defense against the spread of COVID-19 is:

- self screening;
- frequent handwashing;
- physical distancing;
- wearing a mask when physical distancing is not possible; and
- staying home when sick.

Personal Risk Factors

Arrangements will be needed for students, teachers, administrators and school staff who may be at higher risk of COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions or other risk factors.

Division-level remote learning will be in place for students who are medically advised not to return to in-class learning due to COVID-19 related risk factors. These situations should be rare and limited to children with compromised immune systems or other medical conditions that increase their risk. Parents and caregivers must consult with physicians on the need for an accommodation.

Screening Protocols

Screening protocols are in place for all persons entering schools (i.e. students, staff, visitors).

- Screening information will be posted at all authorized points of entry.
 - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html#posters>
- The Division will minimize visitors and volunteers at school facilities.
- The Division shall suspend community use of schools with the exception of childcare centres operating in schools.

School Staff Preparedness

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), the Division shall ensure staff preparedness and compliance with public health measures and guidelines in all our schools and workplaces by:

- Providing orientation to all staff regarding new public health protocols that must be followed in the school, before resuming in-class learning.
- Providing orientation to all on-site volunteers.
- Orientating staff with the online [Manitoba Health COVID-19 Screening Tool](#) .
- Presenting information on self-monitoring, managing a suspected case of COVID-19, managing shared spaces, etc.

Staff Screening and Self-Assessment

Staff members must be in good health to attend work. Before leaving for the worksite all staff are to use the [Manitoba Health COVID-19 Screening Tool](#), using the following guidelines:

- If a person in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, is in close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if anyone in the household has travelled outside Manitoba (outside of

areas excluded by public health orders, which currently exclude locations in Western Canada, the territories, and Ontario west of Terrace Bay), they are required to consult with Health Links and they may be required to self-isolate prior to attending school.

What Happens if a Staff Member Exhibits Symptoms?

If a staff member or volunteer in a school becomes symptomatic, they should immediately isolate themselves from other staff and children, notify their supervisor, and go home to isolate. They should then contact Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888-315- 9257) or their health care provider for direction. Additional environmental cleaning should occur. Focus should be on high-touch areas and areas where the staff or volunteer spent time.

Staff members who are away sick or who are self-isolating must follow the Division's human resources policy and collective agreement provisions. Medical notes are not required for staff who have COVID-19 or flu-related symptoms, or for those who are caring for individuals in this situation.

A sick staff member can return to work once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health. If that staff member has a positive test, further direction will be provided by public health.

Outbreak Management

In the event of the confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with a school, public health will lead the response and ensure appropriate supports are in place to coordinate the response. Contact tracing involves identifying the contacts of a positive case and contacting those individuals who may have been exposed. Public health may:

- request records that identify cohorts/groups of students, staff, volunteers, and visitors in the school for a specified timeframe
- contact students, staff, and families if they have been in close contact with a confirmed/probable case, and confirm whether they need to self-isolate or self-monitor and when they can return to school
- recommend testing following established guidelines to students, staff, volunteers, and visitors who may have been exposed to a positive case
- assess the need for the school to be closed for a period of time

Schools will clean and disinfect areas where exposures took place; these areas will not be used until they are determined to be safe. School closure would be a last resort and only upon evidence of transmission among multiple cohorts.

Form letters/standard messages for school administrators will be available to share with their parents, staff, and students when a case is confirmed in a school. If there is an outbreak at a school, this will be announced through Manitoba media bulletins and public health will provide instructions to those who have been in close contact.

It will be important for schools to work closely with their local public health team, and they should reach out if a situation arises where they require clarification or information. Manitoba Education and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) will be working with local public health teams and regional health authorities to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information.

Reporting and Contact Tracing

To facilitate contact tracing, staff attendance will be tracked through Atrieve.

Upon entry to each work site, visitors to schools and itinerant Divisional employees will sign-in on the Visitor Sign in Register with the date, name, and entry time, and the location(s) being accessed in the building. Staff will need to sign-out their departure time on the Visitor Sign in Register.

Upon request by public health officials, schools will provide contact information for staff who would be considered "close contacts" of any individual who receives a positive test result. Public health officials are responsible for communicating with "close contacts" and for advising the wider school community.

Schools will not communicate such information without specific direction from their Assistant Superintendent and public health officials.

Personal Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

It is especially important to clean your hands:

- after coughing or sneezing;
- when caring for a sick person;
- before, during and after you prepare food;
- before eating;
- after toilet use; and
- when hands are visibly dirty.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the garbage and immediately wash your hands, or use an alcohol-based hand cleanser.

- Training videos on how to effectively wash your hands available to both student, staff, & public
 - For children: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing-heroes-dv.html>
 - Others: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing.html>
- Signage is posted regarding proper hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
 - For children: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/resources/pubs/posters.pdf>
 - Others: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/precautions-to-follow-letter.pdf>
- Video for kids on reducing the spread of COVID-19: Hygiene for kids.
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-kids-hygiene.html>

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing measures to reduce your risk of infection:

- Minimize prolonged (more than 15 minutes), close (less than two meters/ six feet) contact between your co-workers and other individuals in public.
- Where possible, meet with colleagues online or via telephone instead of in person.
- Avoid greetings that involve touching, such as handshakes.
- Avoid travel, crowded places, and events, especially if you are at higher risk (e.g., seniors and those with underlying medical conditions).
- One metre physical distancing should be maintained to the greatest extent possible in classrooms where cohorts are being utilized.
- Two metre distancing is used to the greatest extent possible when not in a cohort.
- Signage to remind people to maintain at least 2 metres distance are posted in common areas such as entrances, classrooms, restrooms, life skills area etc.
 - https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/socialdistancinginfographic.pdf
- Visual cues to indicate 2 metres distance is be used (e.g. decals, signs on floors).
- Stagger schedules and movement of cohorts to avoid being in shared spaces (e.g. hallways, bus pick-up & drop off etc.) at the same time.
- All schools will try to avoid or limit the movement of students between classrooms; instead we shall have teachers move between classrooms.

- Each school site/facility shall manage and keep records of persons in cohorts – school buildings, buses etc.
- Physical barriers and/ or partitions shall be erected at the front desk – plexiglass screens / shields. The Division may also install plexiglass in other areas where they deem it necessary.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Appropriate PPE shall be provided for the job tasks/work area as required. Some examples of PPE include:
 - Face covering, gloves, gown, eye protection
- Workers shall be trained on proper donning / doffing of PPE.
 - Donning PPE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5ew8020fwc&feature=youtu.be>
 - Doffing PPE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lly8DiGcvDM&feature=youtu.be>
- Social stories for children <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgaKLpSxQag>
- PPE - wearing it right posters shall be made available to students and staff.
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-ppe-wearing-it-right.pdf>
- Provision of additional PPEs for staff working with students who need extra supports – based on point of care risk assessment.
- Instructions on proper means of storage for extended use – using paper bag.

Training and Education

- WHMIS training provided and also available to staff needing training on the safe use of products.
- Mental Health and wellness
 - Virtual Therapy <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/bewell/virtualtherapy.html>
- Other mental health resources:
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/mental-health-resources/>
 - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/mh/crisis.html>
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) support available to BSD employees.
- COVID-19 awareness resources:
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/awareness-resources.html>
 - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>
- Welcome Back to School - COVID-19 Return to School Animation
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGNi0mEmwpl>

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

- Manitoba Workplaces
 - https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/coronavirus/workplaces-faq.pdf
- Restoring Safe Schools Questions
 - https://engagemb.ca/welcoming-our-students-back-restoring-safe-schools?tool=qanda#tool_tab

Students and Families

Student and Family Preparedness

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), the Division shall promote student and family preparedness:

- Actively engage in supporting learners and parents/guardians by sharing information with families to introduce them to the protocols and safety routines specific to their school. This may include a virtual tour, open house, on-line video meeting/teleconference, telephone call, etc.
- Ensure ongoing communication and engagement by way of continued relationships with teachers and school leaders.
- Identify students with disabilities or those who are vulnerable to disengage from school.
- Appoint caring adults to build relationships with students known to be vulnerable.
- Identify a key point of contact or case manager for every student/family.
- Use a Student-Specific Plan to develop and implement strategies for learning and/or re-engagement and prioritize these students for five days a week in-class learning, where possible.
- Engage the support of clinicians who will liaise with external agencies to conduct wellness checks when school intervention teams have been unsuccessful in establishing contact with families.
- Ensure students and families understand and adhere to public health measures.

Student Screening and Self-Assessment

Students must be in good health to attend school. Before leaving for school parents/guardians are to use the [Manitoba Health COVID-19 Screening Tool](#) using the following guidelines:

- If a student shows any COVID-19 symptoms they should remain at home.
- If a person in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, is in close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if anyone in the household has travelled outside Manitoba in the previous 14 days (outside of areas excluded by public health orders, which currently exclude locations in Western Canada, the territories, and Ontario west of Terrace Bay).
- regions outside of the province, they are required to consult with Health Links and may be required to self-isolate prior to attending school.
- **NO** COVID-19 related screening (including physical examination, temperature taking, etc.) is to be conducted by employees of the School Division on students, staff, or visitors entering a public school facility.
- Staff may be required to assist a student with self-screening if the child requests it or discloses that the parent/guardian was not able to conduct a screening that day. Otherwise, staff are not to screen any students.

What Happens if a Child Exhibits Symptoms?

If a child develops symptoms while at school, the child should be isolated in a separate room. If a separate room is not immediately available, the child needs to be kept at least two metres or six feet away from other children and staff. A medical mask will be provided to be worn by the sick child (over two years of age only), unless there are safety issues that prevent the student from wearing a mask.

The parent should be notified to come and pick up the child immediately. Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill.

Ask the parent or guardian to contact Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888- 315-9257) or the child's health care provider for direction, if required.

If the child is young and requires close contact and care while isolated, caregivers can continue to care for the child until the parent is able to pick up the child. Caregivers should be mindful of hand hygiene

and avoid contact with the respiratory secretions of the child. A medical mask should be worn by the staff person caring for the child.

If a parent/caregiver is unreachable to pick up a sick child, school staff should keep the child isolated in a separate room until the parent or caregiver arrives. If the medical condition requires urgent assessment, or if the parent cannot be located, they should follow standard procedures. Anyone in close contact with the child while waiting should wear personal protective equipment, including a medical mask. Once the student is picked up, the staff member should practice diligent hand hygiene.

Additional environmental cleaning will be required. Focus should be on high-touch areas and areas where the child spent time. All items (e.g., bedding and toys) used by the child while isolated should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child has been picked up.

A sick child can return to the school once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health. If that child has a positive test, further direction will be provided by public health. Public health typically follows up with contacts of cases within 24 to 48 hours of receipt of the laboratory report.

Mental Health and Well-being of Students

Many students will have experienced mental health challenges that will require various interventions and supports. During the first weeks of school, school teams will connect with students and families in order to promote and support our students' health, well-being and well-becoming.

- BSD is taking a multi-disciplinary approach and working with community support agencies (Mental Health, Law Enforcement, Child Protection) to share information and match resources to minimize the overall impact of returning to schools.
- [The North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response Guidelines for Re-entry](#) into the School Setting document includes the following resources:
 - Family Dynamics chart pg. 27 Guidelines to Re-entry. Consult with counsellor, social worker, or psychologist beforehand;
 - Refer to [Assessing the Social-Emotional and Traumatic Impact of the Pandemic on the Community](#) Page 16 and 17 and review with the school's team;
 - [Listen, Protect, Connect, Model and Teach](#) .
- All staff members will complete Respect in School training.
- VTRA protocols already exists in BSD schools.
- Universal social-emotional learning curriculum will continue to be offered via classroom instruction, online classroom presentations, pre-recorded sessions.
- Student Services teams are available for consultation with staff members about their student concerns and referral to external community supports if required.
- Transition planning protocols exist in BSD and the processes have been completed (grade to grade and student specific) to ease school re-entry and help maintain a flow to education that has been disrupted by the pandemic.
- Teachers will utilize Social Emotional Learning and Behaviour Intervention Plans.
- Schools will communicate with parents about plans for safety and health measurements that the school will be implementing so that they can talk with their children about what to expect. Staff and parents will educate students about COVID, maintaining social distancing, proper handwashing, etc.
- Staff recognize that children and youth may have mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression, or substance abuse, which may have been exacerbated by social distancing, including school closure, and may experience symptom escalation on return to school.

- The staff will monitor every student to ensure they are feeling comfortable in school and check for behaviours that are outside the normal baseline. Schools will provide mental health and social emotional support to any student requiring assistance through the following:
 - make referrals to school counsellors or social workers, if needed;
 - understand that stressed brains cannot learn, therefore, flexibility may be needed for students to utilize the support of the school counsellor or social worker during class time;
 - identify the best way to provide services, including in-person or online, to delay services, or to connect with community services.
 - Access mental health support services adapted for diverse groups and at-risk populations, if needed.
- Address known sources of distress and extend flexibility when making decisions regarding special education programming, school registrations, or other specific educational programming in the absence to the usual sources of information, including school visits and meetings.
- Provide opportunities for early identification of learning needs and academic support to ensure that children neither become overwhelmed nor bored in the school setting, as these are frequent antecedents to school refusal and mental health problems.
- Refer to <https://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>
- Flexibility in program and/or school enrollment should be provided for children and youth who have transitioned to a new program or school for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Strategies to support the mental health and well-being of students should be documented using a student specific plan in clevr.

Additional Contacts/Resources:

- [Kids Help Phone](https://www.kidshelp.org/) 1-800-668-6868 or text Connect To 686868.
- Health Links at 1-888-315-9257
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Helpline 1-855-242-3310
- Social Story - <https://www.flipsnack.com/KeshetChicago/coronavirus-social-story/full-view.html>
- A comprehensive list of suggested mental health resources for students, educators, and families can be found in the [Well-Being and Mental Health Resources](#) document. Also available is contact information for the [Youth Quaranteen Support Line](#)
- Shared Health Manitoba has posted a COVID-19 bulletin, providing information on child and adolescent mental health services and youth addiction services through the [Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre \(MATC\)](#). In Brandon, refer to [Children's Adolescent Treatment Centre](#)
- AbilitiCBT is a new virtual therapy program that is now available to Manitobans aged 16 and older. This digital program provides mental health support to those struggling with mild to moderate anxiety due to COVID-19. The program is accessible from home and can be found the [Mental Health Virtual Therapy Program](#)

Expectations for In-class Attendance and/or Participation in Remote Learning

- Unless an underlying health condition prevents a student from being at school, regular attendance is required.
- If remote learning is included as part of their learning plan, students will be expected to participate.
- Students who are unable to return to school due to personal or family health risks factors related to COVID-19 will be supported in remote learning.

- Ensure the understanding that students may not attend school when sick or displaying symptoms of illness.
- Signal that in-class learning may be increased or suspended on short notice in response to changing public health advice.
- Similarly, barring exceptional circumstances, students are expected to engage fully in remote learning.

Students Refusing to Return to School

- Daily attendance will be recorded and follow up calls will be made to students who are absent.
- Psychological First Aid will be provided for students and parents, if needed.
- Appropriate interventions and adaptations may be implemented using a Student Specific Plan on clevr.
- Data will be collected to identify students at-risk due to the pandemic or family circumstances.

Technology

- MIST will assist and provide technical support for Assistive Technology/Augmentative Alternative Communication to ensure accessible learning technology is successful in engaging students and promoting achievement success.

Student Achievement and Learning

Blended Learning

- Students will be asked to stay home if they display any symptoms and as a result, we are confident there will be higher student absenteeism. Therefore, the need for remote learning remains for students who cannot attend in-class.
- Staff are to design units and lessons to provide the rich learning experience for in-class learning while designing activities for the critical outcomes in such a way that they can be deliver either in-class or remotely.
- Families without internet access, can sign out a handheld portable router with restrictions on non-educational sites and applications.
- Families with limited technology can sign out laptops.

Recovery Learning

- School Leaders and classroom teachers have access to the following reports for their 2020-2021 classroom students:
 - school level transition/recovery reports for the areas of literacy, numeracy, and active participation in learning;
 - classroom level transition/recovery reports for the areas of literacy, numeracy, and active participation in learning;
 - student-specific reports for the areas of literacy, numeracy, and active participation in learning; and
 - Foundational outcome achievement data in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and social/academic behaviours.
- Students new to the Division will be screened for gaps in literacy and numeracy.
- Classroom transition meetings will identify students requiring further support.

- School Intervention Teams will be using the above information to identify Tier 2 and 3 interventions for targeted students.
- Collaborative Teacher Teams will be focused on recovery learning, outcome prioritization, and program delivery.

Teacher Focus and Timetabling for High School

- Teachers will adjust the scope and sequence of topics to prioritize the hands-on practical activities early in case there is a change in public health measures during the school year.
- Teachers will create 2-day lesson plans that have two days of programming. The lesson plans would follow this general format:

Day 1	Day 2
A-K (in-class)	A-K (remote)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st part of class formatively assess students independent work • 2nd part of class – introduce new topic/information with opportunity for students to practice and receive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students work independently on theory or activities that reinforce previous days material
L-Z (remote)	L-Z (in-class)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students work independently on theory or activities that reinforce previous days material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st part of class formatively assess students independent work • 2nd part of class – introduce new topic/information with opportunity for students to practice and receive feedback

- Choir and band electives for all grades are currently paused.
- When electives are paused, graduation checks will be completed to ensure that the credit is not required for graduation requirements and alternate classes can be scheduled.

Supports for Students with Special Needs

There are unique challenges experienced by students with special learning needs during this time and additional supports may be required. This includes

- considering changes in the school environment and/or remote learning needs when reviewing and updating Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- creating congregated classrooms as a temporary COVID-19 response measure for students’ special learning needs in order to offer regular, everyday timetabling
- considering additional planning for students with special learning needs to support a smoother transition to school
- safely supporting the return of medically fragile students by consulting with local public health authorities on any new risk factors for the student, implementing staff training, and potentially continuing remote learning where return is not possible
- accommodating the needs of students who require significant personal support, including considering options for personal protective equipment for both staff and students (please refer to [Guidelines on Supporting Students Who Require Interventions or Supports that Cannot be Delivered from a Distance](#))

- considering alternate attendance options for students, depending on their needs

Manitoba Education continues to work with the Department of Families and education stakeholders to further develop guidance and support for students with special needs and students at risk. For more information, please visit: <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/rsssn.html>

Technology Learning

- Computer equipment may be lent to support students “Remote Learning”. In some situations, internet access may also be provided to families currently without access.
- Staff and students will continue to use tools such as Office 365 and TEAMS for supporting class communications and assignments to support remote learning.
- MIST will continue to provide training and technical support when and where necessary.
- The application SEESAW has been introduced for elementary schools as a supported platform for student and Parent communication.
- MIST will create reports as required to inform recovery learning.
- MIST will assist or provide training on learning recovery tools.

Extra-Curricular and Off-Site Activities

- Extra curricular activities and off-site activities have an increased level of risk. Therefore, each activity will be assessed on an individual basis ensuring they follow Manitoba’s Restoring Safe Schools guidelines.

Physical Education and Sports

Activities that involve movement should be held outside, including those for physical health and education. Indoor or outdoor non-contact sports (e.g., tennis, soccer) are permitted, as long as physical distancing can be maintained during the play, except for brief exchanges of close contact. Choose outdoor settings as much as possible, as they are a lower risk for transmission of COVID-19. A more detailed document has been developed to provide guidance on how sports and other activities could be modified/adapted to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. It is available at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/sports-guidelines.html>.

Field Trips

Field trips or outings are permitted. However, the participation of children must be voluntary and accompanied by appropriate parental permission. Enhanced planning for field trips will be necessary to ensure the health guidelines are met. When planning outings or field trips, consider the following:

- Outdoor settings are lower risk for transmission of COVID-19.
- Avoid crowded venues where physical distancing of six feet (two metres) cannot be maintained.
- Ensure there is access to handwashing and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizer during the outing. Handwashing will be required if the activity involves getting hands soiled.
- For group transportation, physical distancing needs to be maintained.
- Avoid using public water fountains. Children should bring their own prefilled water bottle to these activities

Institutional Operations

Board Meetings

The Brandon School Board will continue to meet regularly throughout 2020-2021. Should a public health order restrict physical gatherings, meetings will occur via electronic means. Public participation is

welcome, with advance registration required and will be dependent on health guidelines and room capacity.

Planning for a Successful School Start-Up

The success of the school re-opening plan and student achievement will depend in part on parents, caregivers, and students being informed about new protocols. This communication will be needed throughout the year. Communication strategies will include:

- Fact sheets explaining new protocols and links to helpful information, as well as detailed instructions regarding screening and pick-up/drop-off procedures and protocols if a child or staff person becomes ill
- Each building will create a site-specific plan and communicate to students, parents and staff.
- Use divisional and school websites, social media, and e-mail communication strategies (print based for families without internet access).
- Orientation activities for new students to a school.
- Open house for current students and parents to provide an opportunity for parents to familiarize themselves with the plan and to ask questions.
- Alternative delivery models for activities such as parent-teacher conferences and school assemblies
- Guidelines and procedures for drop-off and pick-up
- Information for students related to school hours, physical distancing, hand hygiene, remote learning, and resources to support learning and well-being at home

Schools should engage their local parent councils. School administrators are also encouraged to work with local associations and employee representatives, including Workplace Safety and Health committees.

School Structures

- **Learning Plans Kindergarten – Grade 6**

100% attendance – Students are required to be in attendance unless they are medically advised not to attend.

- The use of cohorts for all subject areas will meet all physical distancing requirements up to 1 metre.
- Utilize assigned entrances and staggered times for each cohort.
- Unnecessary furniture removed to maximize open floor space.
- 7m x 7m open floor space provides 1m of personal space and 2m of physical distancing space for 16 students (see Diagram 1).
- If a Level 2 response (Blended Learning) is required, we would use an odd/even 50% in-class/50% remote schedule within our 6-day cycle. Attendance would be decided by legal last name.
- At-risk students could be scheduled 100% if physical distancing allows for it.
- Entry and exits will be managed to avoid congestion.
- Where possible, teachers should move across classrooms instead of students.
- There will be screening protocols for all people entering the building and limitations regarding visitors.
- Students will be reminded of the importance of physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- Risk Response drills (ex. fire drills) will be practiced on an individual class basis to reduce congestion.

- Students without lockers will be provided bags to reduce congestion at coat racks.
- Classes will utilize the following strategies for recess:
 - separate containers of equipment for each class and cleaned between recess periods;
 - marked zones;
 - manage group sizes;
 - minimize contact.
- **Learning Plans Grade 7 and Grade 8**

100% attendance - Students are required to be in attendance unless they are medically advised not to attend.

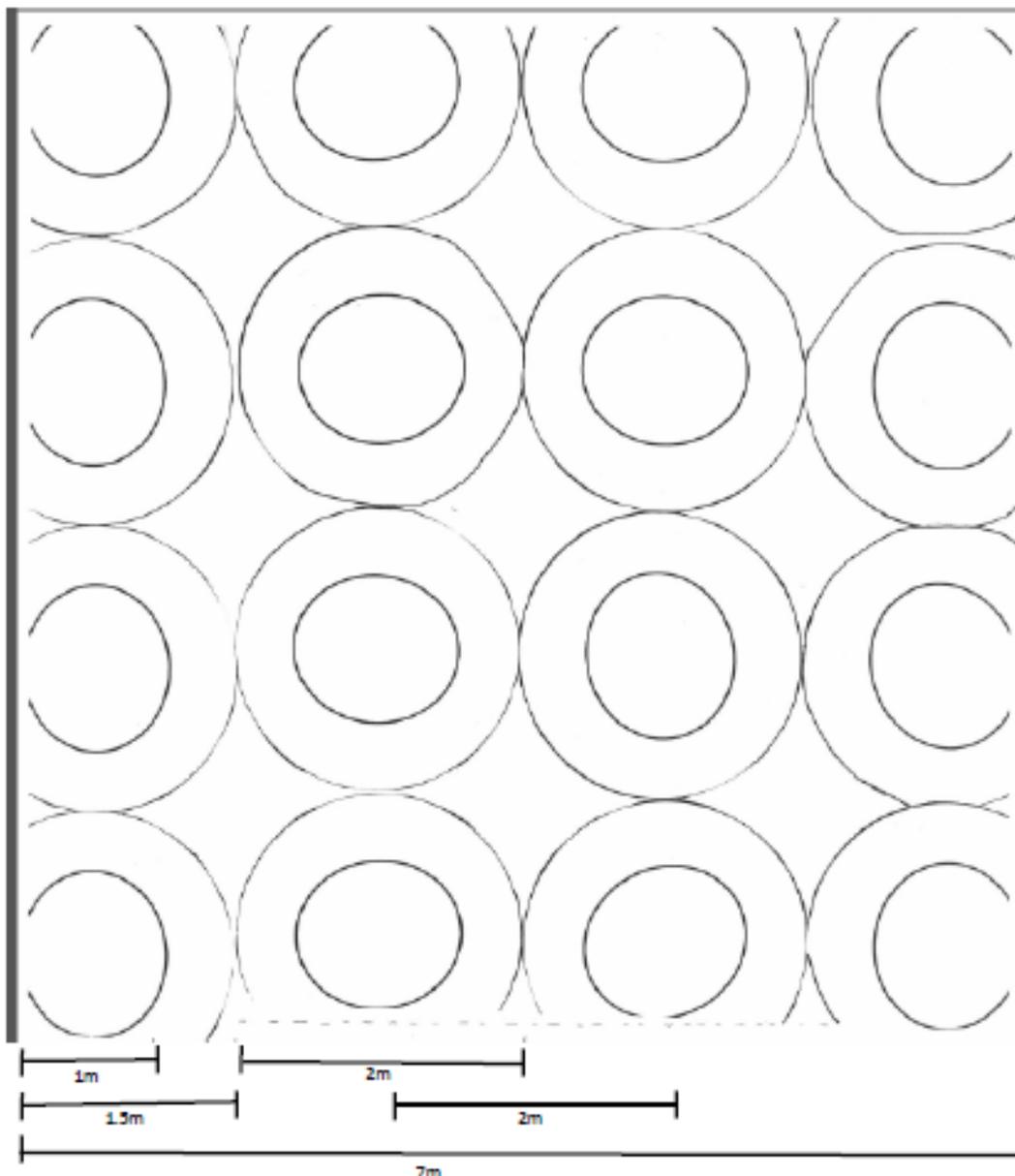
 - The use of cohorts for all subject areas will meet all physical distancing requirements up to 1 metre.
 - Utilize assigned entrances and staggered times for each cohort.
 - Division delivered courses (Industrial Arts, Home Economics, Band) will be paused while cohorts are required.
 - Unnecessary furniture removed to maximize open floor space.
 - 7m x 7m open floor space provides 1m of personal space and 2m of physical distancing space for 16 students (see Diagram 1).
 - If a Level 2 response (Blended Learning) is required, we would use an odd/even 50% in-class/50% remote schedule within our 6-day cycle. Attendance would be decided by legal last name (A-K odd, L-Z even) which divides the class by half and aligns schedules where children are in multiple buildings (i.e. older siblings who can provide supervision for younger siblings).
 - At-risk students could be scheduled 100% if physical distancing allows for it.
 - Entry and exits will be managed to avoid congestion.
 - Where possible, teachers should move across classrooms instead of students.
 - There will be screening protocols for all people entering the building and limitations regarding visitors.
 - Students will be reminded of the importance of physical distancing and hand hygiene.
 - Risk Response drills (ex. fire drills) will be practiced on an individual class basis to reduce congestion.
- **Learning Plans Grade 9 – Grade 12**

50% in-class/50% remote – Students are expected to be in attendance unless they are medically advised not to attend.

 - Cohorts are not practical in three of the largest high schools. 2m physical distancing is required to the greatest extent possible.
 - Cohorts can be established at Prairie Hope High School.
 - Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School, École secondaire Neelin High School, Vincent Massey High School would use an odd-even 50% in-class/50% remote schedule within our 6-day cycle. Attendance would be decided by legal last name (A-K odd, L-Z even) which divides the class by half and aligns schedules where children are in multiple buildings (i.e. older siblings who can provide supervision for younger siblings).
 - If public health measures don't allow for some options to be offered, teachers will be reassigned while the course is paused.
 - Unnecessary furniture removed to maximize open floor space.

- 7m x 7m open floor space provides 1m of personal space and 2m of physical distancing space for 16 students (see Diagram 1).
- Entry and exits will be managed to avoid congestion.
- There will be screening protocols for all people entering the building and limitations regarding visitors.
- Risk Response drills (ex. fire drills) will be practiced on an individual class basis to reduce congestion.
- Students will be reminded of the importance of physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- Students will be allowed to carry backpacks between classes to reduce congestion at lockers.
- Lanes will be created in hallways to facilitate movement and reduce congestion.

Diagram 1



A 7m x 7m (23' x 23') open space can accommodate 16 students with 2m physical distancing and 1m personal space.

A 3m x 3m (16.4' x 16.4') open space can accommodate 9 students with 2m physical distancing and 1m personal space.

Recess/Breaks

Public health advises that playgrounds and play structures are low risk for transmission. There are no specific requirements for cleaning play structures. Schools must also

- schedule outdoor play to maintain cohorts of children and staff;
- maintain separate containers of equipment for each class or cohort, and clean between recess periods;
- mark zones, manage group sizes, and avoid contact among groups;
- ensure handwashing or hand hygiene is performed before and after recess; and
- ensure crossing guards receive additional information about how to physically distance while performing their duties.

Non-medical masks can be removed during outdoor play to provide a mask-free break.

Students must bring their own lunches, or provided lunches must be individually wrapped in disposable containers. If weather permits, lunch breaks may be held outside. Schools can continue to offer breakfast and lunch programs with necessary adjustments to ensure health guidelines are in place. No family-style, buffet, or potluck meal service is permitted at this time.

Food Handling

The best practice is that parents/guardians provide their own food for their child. If this is not possible, the following guidance applies:

- Staff should serve all food items.
- Utensils (not fingers) should be used to serve food items by staff.
- Remove shared food containers from eating areas (e.g., snack bowls, pitchers of water or milk, salt and pepper shakers.)
- If using single service packets of condiments, provide the packet directly to each child, rather than self-serving from a bulk container.
- For snack programs, dispense snacks directly to children and use prepackaged snacks only.
- Close kitchen and nourishment areas that could be accessed by children or visitors.
- Implement other measures as necessary or appropriate, or if directed by local public health.
- Ensure that food handling staff practice meticulous hand hygiene.
- Cease activities involving student participation in food preparation.

Finance

- **School fees – reduce handling of cash and cheques**
 - The Division will implement an online payment system for school fees to reduce handling of cash and cheques at schools by students and staff.
 - Parents/guardians will need to register an account and add their student(s) to their account to view and pay school fees online.

Technology

- All equipment should be sanitized by school staff between each new user. This includes laptops, computer screens, keyboards, mice, printers, photocopiers, smart boards, remotes.
- Use the same sanitizing solution that is applied to all other surfaces, however, it should be sprayed on a soft cloth which is then used to wipe down the equipment. Sanitizing solution should NEVER be sprayed directly on the surface of any equipment.

- Wash or sanitize hands before and after use of equipment (beginning and end of each class).
- Review computer lab configurations and rearrange to allow for proper social distancing based on provincial recommendations.
- Retired laptops will be retained to ensure additional laptop availability should learning from home be mandated.
- Technician presence will be minimized in schools from 9:00am to 3:30pm when possible.

Transportation

On August 13, 2020, the Province of Manitoba provided a revised guideline for transportation to school divisions. Under these guidelines our school buses cannot operate at 100 % capacity due to physical distancing requirements.

Due to these guidelines we are prioritizing the following students for transportation.

- All students living outside the City of Brandon boundaries (rural) will continue to receive school bus transportation.
- All students with special needs within the City of Brandon boundaries will continue to receive school bus transportation.
- All students that attend Alexander School and O’Kelly School will continue to receive school bus transportation.
- The Division is suspending school bus transportation within the City of Brandon for grades 9-12 students.
- Currently, the Division is continuing to determine school bus capacity for Kindergarten-Grade 8 students within the City of Brandon. Part of this review process will include the addition of five buses. Once details are finalized they will be communicated to the community.
- The Division is suspending curricular and co-curricular transportation provided to Grade 7-8 students; this includes Band, Home Economics and Industrial Arts.

We appreciate all parents/guardians that took the time to respond to our transportation survey. As recommended by the Province, we continue to encourage parents/guardians to provide transportation to their children where possible.

For the safety of those students being transported we have implemented the following measures:

- All school bus passengers in Grade 4 and over, as well as the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These should be put on before getting on the bus and taken off after exiting the bus, if removal is appropriate for the setting. Students in lower grades may also wear non-medical masks.
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of “high-touch” areas in buses after each route is completed as directed by the provincial guidelines for restoring safe schools.
- Provide all drivers with training and information for proper cleaning protocols. Online WHMIS training will be provided by the Transportation Department in September 2020.
- As weather permits, windows and roof vents will be opened for additional ventilation.
- Seating plans will be in place for each bus route and seats will be labeled. Students will be seated in the same seats every day for regular bus routes.
- Students will be seated one per seat on the school bus. When possible students from the same household will be assigned seats together. Students requiring additional supports in the form of a companion to ride the bus will be treated as if they are from the same household.
- A daily record of attendance for each bus will be maintained by the Transportation Department.
- All buses will be loaded from back to front and unloaded from front to back when possible.

- The unloading of buses at schools and transfer points will be limited to one at a time when possible to assist with the staggering of students entering the schools.
- The Transportation Department will communicate to parents/guardian and schools any revisions to scheduling for bus routes related to bus drop off and pick up schedules.

Facilities/Maintenance

- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of “high-touch” areas at a minimum of 2 times per day as directed by the provincial guidelines for restoring safe schools.
- Installation of plexiglass guards at all main office reception desks in all Brandon School Division facilities.
- Staff are responsible for cleaning and sanitizing their own workspaces and equipment.
- Provide all staff with training and information for proper cleaning protocols. Online chemical safety training (WHMIS) will be provided to all staff that will be in contact with chemicals. WHMIS training will be provided to staff through the Health & Safety Officer in September 2020.
- Ensuring adequate soap, paper towel and hand sanitizer are always available near entrances, classrooms and washrooms. Providing all necessary cleaning and sanitizing products.
- Closing all drinking fountains, only bottle filler water stations will be available.
- Should schools need to adjust schedules adjusted to accommodate changes in the school day, the bell times will be changed as required.
- The Facilities Department will create work/project schedules in advance of work commencing and communicate with school administration.
- One staff member per vehicle is permitted to maintain social distancing, when this is not practical PPE is required.
- Disinfecting supplies will be provided for each fleet vehicle.
- Providing high touch Disinfecting Check Lists and updated Duty Lists in all buildings.
- Adjusting custodial schedules to ensure adequate coverage for cleaning and disinfecting. Utilizing other staff as needed to assist with the cleaning and disinfecting.
- No rentals of school buildings are permitted at this time.
- Where possible adding increased ventilation in all buildings will be implemented by mechanical means and/or opening windows.

School Staff

Mental Health and Well-being of Staff

School leaders will continue to promote staff well-being and to develop a positive sense of community among staff before students return, using the following resources/strategies:

- BSD has participated in training from the North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response Guidelines for Re-entry into the School Setting. The training provided the in-depth practical understanding to help prepare school personnel for re-entry into the school community, emphasizing the social and emotional well-being for students and staff.
- From the [Guidelines for Re-entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic](#) refer to pages 11 and 12 Stage 2, 3, & 4 and the Coronavirus Impact Scale on Page 19.
- Provide opportunity for collaboration and storytelling from the adults as this helps to make decisions around the social-emotional and traumatic impact on students and adults.
- Revisit the [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) for Schools, Teachers, and Students](#) document.

- Provide staff with information about trauma-informed learning with the support of the school social worker or psychologist.
- Kevin Cameron’s webinar with Division staff will be available for viewing from August 31 to September 7, 2020.
- September 2, 2020 Q&A with Kevin Cameron for school leaders, clinicians and student services.

School leaders will make staff aware of resources/supports/PD available:

- [Care for Your Mental Health](#)
- [AbilitiCBT](#)
- [Mental Health Virtual Therapy Program](#)
- [LifeSpeak](#) app
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)
- [The Working Mind COVID-19 Self-care & Resilience Guide](#)
- [National Association of Social Workers – Self-Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- Staff will be supported through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This service provides support to employees in multiple areas of life.
- Staff will be supported to participate in online PD opportunities to be arranged in collaboration with the school principal. Suggested PD opportunities include the following:
 - Jody Carrington’s online course [How to Connect with Kids These Days](#).
 - Psychological First Aid (PFA) – Canadian Mental Health Association [Online Course](#)