

#RESTARTMB RESTORING SAFE SCHOOLS



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We understand that families across the province may have questions or concerns about the return to classes during the pandemic. This year is going to be different and there will be new practices in place to keep the school community safe. All of the practices that you and your child will follow have been designed based on the current and best public health advice.

In August, the Manitoba government introduced the **#RestartMB Pandemic Response System** to share information about the current level of risk and to provide clear public health guidance.

The **#RestartMB Pandemic Response System** is the main tool that the schools will use to communicate with you about the current response level and the public health practices in place at your school. There are four response levels – Limited Risk (green), Caution (yellow), Restricted (orange) and Critical (red). These may change throughout the school year, and they can be applied differently in individual schools or regions across the province, depending on the situation. The response level is set by public health officials.

Four Levels:

Students, parents and caregivers, and school staff will follow these public health fundamentals at all times:

- Screen for symptoms every morning.
- Keep your child home when sick, even if mildly ill.
- Enhanced personal hygiene, including:
 - o regular and thorough handwashing;
 - o covering your nose and mouth with tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing;
 - o avoid sharing food or drinks; and,
 - o avoid touching your face.

The Pandemic Response System sets out specific and focused public health responses on a provincial, regional, community, and business sector basis. These levels can scale up or down depending on the risk of the virus at that time.



LIMITED RISK

The spread of COVID-19 is broadly contained and a vaccine and/or effective treatment for COVID-19 is available.

What this means for education:

- In class learning resumes for all Kindergarten - 12 students. School-based child care centres will continue with regular operations.
- School buses may operate at normal capacity, with enhanced sanitization and other measures as advised by public health officials.
- Directives from Manitoba Education and guidelines approved by public health officials will provide any additional guidance.



CAUTION

Community transmission of COVID-19 is at low levels.

What this means for education:

- Schools will be open for in-class learning.
 - Kindergarten to Grade 8 students and students with special learning needs will participate in in-class learning five days per week.
 - Students in Grades 9 to 12 will receive blended learning (mix of face to face, teacher led work and independent student work).
- Schools have physical distancing, cohorts and additional public health practices in place. This includes:
 - controlling the way students enter and exit the building at designated entrances, and how they move through hallways and shared spaces, including bathrooms.
 - leaving space between desks and tables.
 - staggering start and end times for recess and lunch-time.
 - non-medical masks are required in schools for students in Grades 4 to 12 as well as staff and visitors, when physical distancing of two metres is not possible.
 - increased cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day, especially high-touch surfaces.
- Based on current public health advice and out of an abundance of caution, masks are required for Grade 4 to 12 students as well as teachers, school staff and visitors when physical distancing isn't possible.
- School buses will continue to operate with reduced capacity, with additional cleaning and other measures as advised by public health officials
- Masks are required on busses for students and buss drivers. Boarding and exiting the bus will be done with physical distancing and assigned seats. Parents and caregivers are strongly encouraged to transport students if they can.
- Child care centres located within schools will continue to operate as outlined in the Public Health Guidance for Child Care.



RESTRICTED

Community transmission of COVID-19 is occurring. However, the virus is being transmitted at levels that public health and the health system can manage.

What this means for education:

- K-12 schools may be more restricted by occupancy limits.
- Students in Grades K-8 and students with special needs will be prioritized for in-class learning.
- Students in Grades 9 - 12 will participate in teacher-led remote learning, with limited use of school facilities for specific programs and assessment.
- Priority will be given to core curriculum and required courses.
- Schools will assess their ability to operate school buses with reduced capacity (one child per seat unless from same household).
- Teachers will be in regular contact with students. Teachers may schedule high school student appointments and small groups for assessment, planning, and special programming as needed, following strict health measures.
- Child care centres located within schools will operate at reduced capacity, as outlined in the Public Health Guidance for Child Care.
- Public health recommendations for masks may be adjusted for this response level and should be monitored.



CRITICAL

Community spread of COVID-19 is not contained and/or there are significant strains on our health care system.

What this means for education:

- Schools will be closed to the public with the exception of Kindergarten to Grade 6 students of critical workers.
- Early Learning and Child Care guidelines will be followed with reduced class sizes and strict prevention and controls in place.
- Virtual classrooms and teacher-led remote learning will be in place. The key focus is literacy, numeracy, and other curricular areas, as time and resources permit.
- Teachers will be in contact with all students to keep them engaged in remote learning.
- School buses will not be operating.
- Child care in schools will operate at reduced capacity and will be limited to students of critical services workers, as outlined in the Public Health Guidance for Child Care Centres.

For additional details about the **#RestartMB Pandemic Response System**, visit manitoba.ca/restartmb.