



BACK to SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2022



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Message from the Minister



This year, after two and a half years of public health restrictions and changes to the school experience, I am pleased to welcome all students and staff back to full-time, in-person learning. All students can benefit from what Manitoba's great schools have to offer and participate in all of their learning and well-being opportunities, as well as the full range of curricular and extracurricular activities.

The 2022/23 school year will be different from what students and staff have experienced over the past two years, and I know everyone is looking forward to rebuilding relationships and school routines. Students are in good hands as teachers and school leaders continuously learn new approaches and share new and innovative ideas. Classrooms are exciting places to develop literacy and numeracy skills, engage in science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and land-based learning experiences, and so much more.

Manitoba is investing significantly in education supports, building new schools and renovating and upgrading existing facilities to make sure students have access to the highest quality learning environment. This includes \$22 million in funding for strengthening student learning and supports this fall, which will help improve students' well-being and engagement. This investment brings the total new funding for this school year to \$460 million, the largest investment ever for the education sector.

Together, with Manitoba's K to 12 Education Action Plan, we are building a strong education system. We are confident staff and students will return to school with the supports they need to succeed. We know the school environment is the best place for students to learn and thrive. I am pleased to share our plan on strengthening student learning and supports, and I want to wish everyone a successful school year.

Wayne Ewasko
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning



Welcome Back!

Manitoba schools are excited to welcome students and school staff back to full-time, in-person learning this fall. After more than two years of public health restrictions and periods of disrupted learning, students across Manitoba will be able to experience the full range of what school has to offer. Schools will offer the full K to 12 curriculum and all the extracurricular activities that bring the school experience to life. A variety of electives, sports, recreation, tournaments, band, and choir are just a few examples of what can be expected for the coming year.

As Manitoba teachers and school leaders welcome students this fall, the focus will be on re-establishing relationships and routines. To support educators and students, we have worked with school leaders, administrators, and partners to identify shared priorities for the upcoming school year by

- focusing on re-engaging students
- promoting mental health and well-being
- responding to literacy and numeracy needs
- supporting students with diverse learning needs

The Manitoba government is investing \$22 million to strengthen student learning and support across Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools.

- \$11 million in per-pupil allocations for school divisions and funded independent schools to use to support teachers and students according to their local needs, using their discretion to direct accordingly.
- \$9 million in targeted investments for students most affected by the pandemic. The funds have been allocated to school divisions using a targeted approach, focusing on enrolment changes, the socioeconomic indicator of schools, and the number of students in care. School divisions will use these funds to provide additional resources and programming in response to individual student needs.
- \$2 million towards provincial initiatives, including more access to digital, online resources for educators and students, increased funding to Kids Help Phone, and \$1 million to the Remote Learning Support Centre to provide after-school learning supports. These provincial initiatives will augment the supports that school divisions and schools will implement locally.

In addition to these investments, we are also moving forward with [Manitoba's K to 12 Education Action Plan](#), which positions our education system for success. The action plan builds upon the strengths of the K to 12 education system and sets out the path for responding to the recommendations from the Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education. Priorities include high-quality learning, student engagement and well-being, excellence in teaching and leadership, and building responsive and innovative systems.



What to Expect – 2022/23 School Year

The well-being of students and staff remain a top priority, and all public health updates are regularly posted on the [government website](#). The department worked with public health officials to provide the following information.

1. COVID-19 Protocols for the School Year

It is expected that COVID-19 will continue to be an ongoing presence in Manitoba communities as everyone returns to school this fall. Thankfully, widespread vaccination, testing and treatment options, and continued vigilance and planning mean the threat of COVID-19 is considerably reduced compared to when schools closed in 2020.

Students and staff within the school community are asked to continue to practise the public health fundamentals as we continue to live with COVID-19. These include

- monitoring daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- staying home when sick
- getting vaccinated and boosted as soon as eligible
- assessing one's risk and acting accordingly
- respecting individual choice regarding mask use



Schools will continue to follow public health advice and enhance infection prevention practices such as improving ventilation, encouraging frequent hand washing with easy access to hand hygiene products, and implementing routine cleaning and disinfection protocols with a focus on high-touch surfaces and common areas including washrooms.

As strategies have been developed to protect people and as everyone has learned to live with COVID-19, schools will no longer be asked to issue community notification letters at this time. In the event there is concern about an outbreak, schools can contact local public health officials to obtain additional guidance.

For the 2022/23 school year, COVID-19 vaccinations will be available at sites that currently offer the vaccine to children, such as doctors' offices, regional offices/clinics, and pharmacies. To find a nearby location that provides vaccines, please visit the government website at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/finder.html.

To ensure preparedness, schools need to continue to plan for different scenarios, including if public health measures need to be re-implemented. The department will continue to collaborate with school divisions, funded independent schools, educational partners, public health officials, and emergency planning agencies on long-term preparedness and response planning for any potential disruptions to schools to ensure the continuation of student learning.

2. Supporting Student Learning

Manitoba educators, students, and families have demonstrated remarkable innovation and resilience throughout the recent experiences with COVID-19. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of relationships and collaboration to respond to student learning and social/

emotional needs. Manitoba teachers continue to focus their efforts to understand both the collective and individual learning strengths and learning needs of their classroom and students.

Through extensive collaboration with educators, stakeholders, and the [Curriculum Advisory Panel](#), a provincial Framework for Learning has been developed to guide curriculum and assessment in the English, Français, French Immersion, and Senior Years Technology Education programs. The framework prioritizes the provincial global competencies such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, connection to self, creativity, and citizenship as the foundation to all curricula.

The collaboration has also reframed the understanding of success in schools to be one in which every learner reaches their full potential, as communicated in the Good Life/*Mino-pimatisiwin (Ininew)*. The vision is for students to have hope, find meaning and purpose, have a voice, feel safe and supported, and be prepared for their individual path beyond graduation—whether it be advanced education, training for a trade, or directly entering the workforce.

What's New for 2022/23?

- To support curriculum implementation, student engagement, and learning, Manitoba educators and students across the province will now have free access to more digital, online learning resources. For more information, please visit the Online Catalogues page of the Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/index.html.
- The department is revising and updating provincial reading, writing, and oral language progressions for the English and French Immersion programs (K–8).
- The department is enhancing the Kindergarten to Grade 12 English language arts and French Immersion language arts curriculums with grade-level outcomes.
- Direction des ressources éducatives françaises (DREF) continues to support Français, French Immersion, and French/English program K to 12 educators by hosting a free library of instructional resources that are current, user-friendly, and easily accessible. To learn more and to subscribe, please visit the French educational resources page on the Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/biblio/index.html (note this page is in French).
- Provincial evaluations will continue for Early Years and Middle Years and a new curriculum-based Grade 10 provincial evaluation will be piloted in the 2022/23 school year. The shift from a Grade 12 to a Grade 10 evaluation will provide educators the opportunity to respond to identified learning needs at an earlier point in time to better prepare students for graduation.

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- The department will launch a partnership with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy to assess, understand, and respond to the effects of COVID-19 on learning outcomes. We look forward to sharing preliminary findings in the second quarter of 2023, with a focus on two broad questions:
 - How have learning outcomes changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and which students have been most affected?
 - Which non-education outcomes have been affected by the pandemic, and which students are disproportionately affected?
 - The department supports student re-engagement and well-being through targeted funding to support school divisions with innovative responses that are reflective of local needs. This work includes a new attendance policy that will be launched later this fall in partnership with school divisions, supporting the collective goal of getting all students back to school full-time and in person.

3. Advancing Indigenous Education

On April 28, 2022, the Manitoba government launched *Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With—An Indigenous Education Policy Framework* (see www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iid/docs/mamàhtawisiwin_en.pdf) and announced the province-wide expansion of the Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Schools Initiative (see www.edu.gov.mb.ca/iid/elders.html).

Mamàhtawisiwin supports the holistic achievements of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners by helping Manitoba educators to incorporate Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities into their teaching and practices, setting Indigenous students up for success in school and beyond. *Mamàhtawisiwin* includes strategies and actions to realize the roles and responsibilities of educators and departmental staff towards supporting student success both within and outside the classroom.

What's New for 2022/23?

- The department will help bring *Mamàhtawisiwin* to life in Manitoba schools with a supplement that includes a self-reflection tool to support planning and reporting, which will be published online. Overview and orientation sessions will be held with educational organizations and community partners.
- The Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Schools Initiative promotes the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles, and traditional knowledge in the provincial curricula. Based on the success of the pilots, the initiative has been expanded province-wide. School guidelines will be developed, and a symposium will be hosted in fall 2022.
- The department continues to work with partners to ensure all school staff have treaty education. A steering committee co-chaired by the department and the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba will ensure that this goal is achieved as quickly as possible.



4. Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being

Throughout the pandemic, everyone has recognized the importance of mental health and well-being. School divisions and schools are prioritizing their funding in different ways to augment existing supports to provide a menu of mental health programming, services, and tools responsive to local needs.

Students' mental health, well-being, and engagement are significant predictors of academic, social, and personal success. [Manitoba's K to 12 Education Action Plan](#) highlights student engagement and well-being as a pillar of student success. Collaborating with Manitoba Mental Health and Community Wellness, the department is focused on mental health strategies such as the framework's 5Ts for Mental Health Education in Schools, which are defined as follows: talking about mental health, providing appropriate training for teachers and staff, incorporating mental health into teaching, providing helpful tools for students, and taking care of teachers (see <https://studentbehaviorblog.org/5-ts-for-mental-health-education-in-schools/>).

Additionally, the Manitoba government has committed to ongoing funding to mental health initiatives for children and youth through the 2022/23 school year. This includes the distribution of Thrival Kits, investments to expand Project 11, and investments in new youth hubs (Huddle) across Manitoba. The Huddle sites provide a one-stop service where youth and their families can access primary care, mental health and addictions services, as well as other social services. We look forward to working with Manitoba Mental Health and Community Wellness on the new [pathway](#) announced last spring.



What's New for 2022/23?

- The department will provide an additional \$150,000 for the Kids Help Phone (KHP), a 24/7 mental health professional e-counselling and crisis support program for youth, accessible by phone, chat, and texting from any part of the province with services in English, French, Ukrainian, Russian, Pashto, Dari, Mandarin, and Arabic.
- To further support our students who are experiencing or witnessing abuse, harassment, bullying, or hazing, all school staff in Manitoba will complete the Respect in School program and coaches will all be required to take the Respect in Sport training.
- In partnership with Manitoba Mental Health and Community Wellness, the national Queen's University Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey will be implemented, which will provide much-needed wellness and health information for students in Grades 6 to 10 to guide program and policy direction to improve child and youth outcomes. This survey will be launched in November 2022.
- Similar to last year, Manitoba is investing \$5 million in the Teachers' Idea Fund, dedicating \$3 million to proposals that emphasize mental health and well-being. This includes initiatives that focus on social and emotional learning, and provide enhanced mental health resources and support for students and staff in schools.

5. Remote Learning

For most students, in-classroom learning is optimal for academic achievement and social and mental well-being. As such, it is critical that schools and families continue to prioritize in-person learning.

There is also a role for remote learning in the future, building on the innovations and the learnings from the past two years. Remote learning supports students who cannot be in the classroom and also brings certain learning experiences and courses to students that would otherwise not have the opportunity—especially students in smaller schools across rural and northern Manitoba.

Manitoba's K to 12 Education Action Plan commits to developing a Manitoba Remote Learning Strategy to articulate the vision and plan for how we can reflect on the many lessons learned and innovations over the past two years, and consider how to integrate new learnings and approaches into the future of remote learning in Manitoba's education system. Many stakeholders have already participated in initial consultations regarding the development of this strategy and there are more to come.



What's New for 2022/23?

- Continued support for the provincial online high school via InformNet in partnership with Pembina Trails and St James-Assiniboia school divisions. Manitoba high school students will again be able to benefit from these courses. We do look forward to moving to a provincial consortium model to ensure the online high school is co-designed and planned with partners and educators across the province.
- As a provincial response to support Senior Years students with credit acquisition during the pandemic over the past three years, thousands of Senior Years students from all 37 school divisions and 14 funded independent schools have successfully acquired over 8,700 credits through access to remote learning programs.
- Investments in the [Remote Learning Support Centre](#), which supports remote learning for students in Grades 1 to 8 who are immunocompromised or who live in households with immunocompromised family members. Part of the investment is to provide after-school learning supports. Plans are to maintain remote learning supports in future years but it is anticipated that more and more of these students will return to in-person learning.
- All schools are encouraged to use remote learning again if schools must close due to inclement weather or at the request of public health officials. This is to ensure that learning continues regardless of the circumstances.



Investments in Education

Manitoba remains committed to increasing funding for education with a four-year, \$1.6 billion funding guarantee announced in 2020. The Manitoba government is investing an additional \$460 million in education in the 2022/23 school year, including the following:

- \$51 million in operating funding, which includes an additional \$7 million in funding for students with special needs
- \$77 million one-time funding to assist with financial pressures
- \$22 million to strengthen student support and learning across Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools
- \$308 million in capital investments to build new schools and renovate existing ones, ensuring we are on track to build 20 new schools by 2027 and are able to make considerable investments in maintenance, including ventilation projects
- more than \$2 million to expand the Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Schools Initiative
- scoping costs to build an integrated Student Information System

Work continues on a funding model review. The goal of the review is to make sure provincial funding is allocated to school divisions in a way that is simple, transparent, predictable, flexible, accountable, and, most importantly, equitable. This will support the success of all students, regardless of where they live, their background, or their individual circumstances. The new model, including a transition plan to support school divisions in adjusting to the changes, will be announced in winter 2022/23 for implementation in the 2023/24 school year.

Conclusion

Healthy and strong communities are built on the foundation of a strong public education system. As outlined, the province and education partners have the resources, programming, and tools in place to support an enriching in-person school experience in 2022/2023 that enhances classroom learning and enables students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. Manitoba has exceptional teachers, school staff, and leaders who place high-quality learning and well-being at the forefront. Students are at the centre of all that we do across Manitoba's education system.