

# Protecting Manitobans

## May 9, 2021 K–12 Education Briefing FAQs

(For planning purposes only)



### How many schools are impacted by this move to remote learning?

- Over 300 public and independent schools in the city of Winnipeg are impacted.  
Note: This includes public (five) and independent schools in St. Norbert.
- Over 20 schools in the city of Brandon are impacted.
- Other schools already in remote learning will continue.

Note: Institutional schools are not impacted but will continue to work closely with public health officials to monitor the situation and cases in schools, if applicable.

### What about schools operated by city school divisions that are outside of the city of Brandon or the city of Winnipeg?

- The Manitoba Capital Region is an area surrounding Winnipeg. It includes 16 municipalities and over 75 additional schools (excluding Hutterian schools).
- There are schools overseen by several school divisions in the city of Winnipeg and in the Brandon School Division that are outside of the city limits.
- At this time, schools outside of Winnipeg and Brandon remain open for in-class learning but will be monitored closely with public health officials to determine if a move to remote learning is advised.
- This monitoring approach is important, as many schools are just outside of the city limits. Public health officials will proactively move schools with multiple cases (outside of same household cases) to remote learning as per their existing guidance.

### How many schools have cases associated with them? Has this been increasing?

- As of May 6, 2021, 574 cases have been reported within the last 14 days.
- In the past 14 days, a higher proportion of student cases have been among students aged 5 to 9 years (35 per cent) compared to older students (aged 10 to 14 years, 33 per cent; aged 15 to 19 years, 31 per cent). This is different from the second wave where cases were older students/adults.
- The number of schools with one or more cases is 208 of 817 schools (25 per cent). The majority of schools are in Winnipeg (154 of 208 schools or 74 per cent).

### How many schools are already in remote learning across Manitoba?

Public health officials provided assessment criteria to the field to support and guide public health recommendations for moving classes, cohorts, and schools to remote learning.

Current Remote Learning (as of 12:00 p.m., May 7, 2021)

- 19 schools are in full remote learning:
  - 12 in the Winnipeg health region
  - one in the Southern Health-Santé Sud region
  - three in the Prairie Mountain Health region
  - one in the Northern health region
  - two in the Interlake-Eastern health region
- 41 groups of classrooms/cohorts are isolating

### **How will decisions be made to move others schools to remote learning?**

Shifting students to remote learning when cases are detected in schools will follow the recent guidance issued by public health officials. When cases are detected in schools, school officials can shift to school-wide remote learning for one to two days to allow time for further consultation with public health officials and Manitoba Education in order to determine if a longer period of remote learning is required, unless directed otherwise from public health officials.

Criteria in place with public health officials to inform remote learning decisions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a school with new cases in two or more cohorts, and those cases are not from the same household, or
- there are new cases outside of the cohorts currently in isolation.

### **How many schools will remain open for in-class learning?**

Over 475 schools will remain open for in-class learning.

### **What additional measures will be in place for schools that will continue to provide in-class learning?**

For remaining schools, the following additional measures will be implemented during this period:

- Schools with multiple cases (outside of same household cases) will be moved proactively to remote learning.
- If students and/or staff are symptomatic, school officials can require that they stay home for 10 days. The symptomatic student or staff should be encouraged to seek testing. Household members without symptoms are to self-isolate (quarantine) until the sick individual's test result is received.
- All extra-curricular activities, organized sports, and off-site activities are suspended—this does not preclude walks/runs in the local community.
- Indoor singing and indoor use of wind instruments are suspended.
- All other public health measures will remain in effect.

Manitoba Education and public health officials will be actively monitoring the situation and will move additional schools to remote learning if and when needed.

### **Are household members of students or staff who are symptomatic required to self-isolate?**

For any schools not in full remote learning, the following additional measures will be implemented during this period:

- If students and/or staff are symptomatic, school officials can require that they stay home for 10 days. The symptomatic student or staff should be encouraged to seek testing. Household members without symptoms should also self-isolate (quarantine) until the sick individual's test result is received.
- If the symptomatic student or staff is not tested, all household members should be encouraged to self-isolate with them until their 10-day self-isolation period is over and no one else in the household is symptomatic.

For self-isolation requirements for household members of an individual who is a close contact of a positive case, refer to [Updated Guidance on Close Contacts and Self-Isolation Requirements, and COVID-19 Variants of Concern](#).

## **What will schools moving to remote learning mean for schools and their children and families?**

All schools that move into full remote learning will activate their Critical (Red) level plans, including

- providing remote learning to all students; and
- providing on-site support for Kindergarten to Grade 6 children (who are not required to self-isolate) of critical services workers who cannot make alternative care arrangements, as well as for high-risk students and those with special needs (Kindergarten to Grade 12).

Schools should strive to achieve the remote learning standards to the greatest extent possible.

## **Are there changes to busing?**

For schools in Winnipeg and Brandon that are moving into remote learning, along with others that are in remote learning, follow the Critical (Red) level guidance provided in [Guidance for Schools to Accommodate Kindergarten to Grade 6 Students Who Are Children of Critical Services Workers during a Critical \(Red\) Pandemic Response System Level](#). This includes the guidance provided for busing.

Bulletin #1 states that urban school divisions may also transport children of critical services workers who do not have other means of transportation, such as students with mobility issues, during a Critical (Red) level, provided two metres of physical distancing between passengers is maintained on the bus. See [Critical \(Red\) Response—Children of Critical Services Workers](#).

For schools open for in-class learning, implement the additional measures announced on May 9, 2021. There are no changes to busing at this time.

## **Outside of existing school-level plans, what additional supports are available for teachers?**

The Manitoba Remote Learning Support Centre will also work with schools and school divisions to enhance and further develop remote learning resources and supports. The [Remote Learning Online Portal](#) contains learning supports and resources that teachers can use to support remote learning.

## **What are the expectations, guidelines, or standards for this period of remote learning?**

Classroom teachers will provide remote learning for all students. For programming requirements, refer to [Manitoba Education Standards for Remote Learning](#). Schools should strive to achieve the remote learning standards to the greatest extent possible. It is recognized that synchronous or real-time learning may not be possible in all instances, especially for Kindergarten to Grade 6, during this period of temporary remote learning.

The current minimum standards are as follows:

- Students will be required to participate daily in learning and assessment with minimum standards, as follows:
  - Real-time online instruction** will be coordinated by the assigned teacher for all students registered in the class. Students must be available for the following real-time learning times (synchronous—MS Teams or equivalent):
    - Grades 1 to 4: five to six hours of instruction (synchronous) per week
    - Grades 5 to 8: seven to eight hours of instruction (synchronous) per week
    - Grades 9 to 12: two hours per course (synchronous) per week
- **In terms of independent work**, student assignments will reflect the learning outcomes of the Manitoba curriculum but will be differentiated to meet the learning needs of students.
- Independent work can include reading, viewing, and responding to pre-recorded videos, and engaging in project-based learning. Some parent/caregiver support may be required.

- The following is the recommended minimum amount of time for independent work:
  - Grades 1 to 4: two and a half hours per day
  - Grades 5 to 8: three hours per day
  - Grades 9 to 12: one hour per course per day
- Kindergarten: Students will engage in one to two hours per day of play-based learning. Kindergarten teachers will connect with the student, along with parents/caregivers, a minimum of once per week to facilitate connection, and to provide support and play-based learning ideas.
- Teachers for Grades 1 to 8 will schedule a minimum of 20 minutes per week with each student in real-time conversation. Teachers could consider scheduling two times per week at 10 minutes per day.
- High school (Grades 9 to 12) will follow the full curriculum to ensure full credit attainment. Regular check-ins should be established between the teacher and students.

### **What do schools have in place to support families with limited or no access to technology?**

Remote learning may require access to a laptop with a camera and an Internet connection. If Internet access is not possible, then print-based options with telephone contact or an alternative will be discussed with the school. Schools and school divisions will ensure that technology is accessible to all students or that an alternative plan is in place.

### **How will children and families who are vulnerable or high-risk be supported?**

In a Critical (Red) level response, schools will accommodate children over age 12 if their parent is a critical service worker who requires care and the child has a disability that precludes them from being able to stay at home independently. No medical note is required. Schools have developed individualized education plans for students with special learning needs.

Schools and school divisions may also use their discretion to accommodate high-risk students in a Critical (Red) level response.

School staff will support students to participate in the real-time online instruction coordinated and scheduled by their in-class teacher(s). Students will participate in their real-time learning from a personal or school-provided technological device, on site, in the classroom that they are assigned.

### **How will this temporary move to remote learning affect child-care centres?**

At this time, childcare services remain open. Public health officials will continue to review data and other measures to determine if changes are needed.

Students in remote learning at home should not attend the before and after school program as they will be at home learning. Children who are attending school in-person may continue to attend before and after school child care. The following additional guidance has been provided by the Early Learning and Child Care Program to the child-care sector in [Changes to Education System and Impact for Early Learning and Child Care](#).

The information listed above would take effect, if additional schools located outside of Winnipeg or Brandon move to remote learning following guidance from public health officials.

Please note that the Manitoba Child Care Search tool connects Manitoba families directly with licensed child-care facilities. Using this tool, families can search for facilities that meet their needs based on location, hours, and availability. As of April 23, 2021, there were more than 4,000 vacancies across the province. For more information, visit [Manitoba Child Care Search](#).

**How will this temporary move to remote learning affect programs such as in-school Technical-Vocational Education programs and on-the-job work-placements learning opportunities?**

Bulletin #5 extends provisions to schools to provide access for technical-vocational programs where no remote option is available while schools are in the Restricted (Orange) or Critical (Red) level of the Pandemic Response System. This is limited to Level 1 technical training that requires practical hands-on learning in facilities with an instructor for certification requirements. See [School Use of Technical-Vocational Education Program Facilities under the Critical \(Red\) Level of the Pandemic Response System](#).

Circular (November 25, 2020), provides **COVID-19 Work Placement Guidance and Protocols** regarding the work placement learning opportunities such as the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP), Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE), Credit for Employment (CFE), Career Development Internship (CDI), the Community Service Student-Initiated Project (CSSIP), and other work placements and coursework practicums. See [COVID-19 K–12 Education—Updates on Work Placement Learning Opportunities Including Guidance and Protocols](#).

Courses that offer services to members of the public, such as hairstyling, esthetics, and automotive technology, are to suspend that aspect of their programming.

To accommodate physical distancing of two metres, schools should reduce the number of students in the technical-vocational education facility by scheduling them on alternating days, if necessary. See [School Use of Technical-Vocational Education Program Facilities under the Critical \(Red\) Level of the Pandemic Response System](#).

**How will this temporary move to remote learning affect programs such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Information Guidelines?**

Schools that offer AP and IB programs, must refer to the governing bodies to determine appropriate exam protocols during remote learning. If a student can write an exam remotely, this option should be used. However, if on-site completion of an exam is needed while a school is in remote learning, a school can accommodate students as long as the required public health guidance is followed, including physical distancing, mask usage, and limiting time within the facility.