



Education

K-12 Education Division
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June 2020

To: Superintendents of School Divisions
Principals of Funded Independent Schools
Student Services Administrators

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Phase Two of Restoring Safe Services and the Limited Use of School Facilities

The provincial government has announced Phase Two of *Restoring Safe Services: Manitoba's Pandemic and Economic Roadmap for Recovery*. Effective June 1, new measures will be implemented that continue to safely restore services, open additional businesses, and continue physical distancing practices. This plan includes re-opening school facilities for limited use, where physical distancing and other public health orders can be followed. Guidelines for schools outlined in Phase 2 can be found at: www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/phase-two.html.

The safety of students, teachers, school staff and families remains paramount, which is why we continue to rely on the advice of Manitoba's public health officials.

Remainder of the 2019/20 School Year

Classroom learning will remain suspended for the remainder of the school year. However, effective June 1, schools will be open for staff and specific programs. Students will be able to meet with teachers for the purpose of assessment and planning for the resumption of classes in the next school year. Remote learning continues but will wind down throughout June as student assessment and transition planning begins.

Students should be invited to schools during scheduled times at least once in June after school re-entry plans have been finalized. Schools may invite some students for additional school visits and specific programs. Attending school will be optional for students and families during this time. Student transportation is not a requirement in this plan, however school divisions may decide to reinstate bus routes based on local needs.

As of June 1, teachers and other staff should be returning to schools that are ready to re-open. Each school division and funded independent school is responsible for developing and communicating their policy for staff to return safely to the workplace, including providing orientation and implementing workplace accommodations and adjustments as needed. The re-entry into schools will proceed with caution as we work to build confidence of students, staff and the public. School divisions and schools should continue to monitor their re-entry plans to ensure that they meet public health requirements.

Limited Use of School Facilities

In Phase Two, the use of schools should be for the purpose of student assessments, clinical supports, transition planning and specific programming as outlined in the Limited Use of School Facilities guidelines. www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/limited_use_school.html

Under the Phase Two plan:

- Occupancy must be based on maintaining physical distancing of two metres/six feet in individual rooms, with no more than 25 people per room. Limited access to school facilities will continue to be permitted in settings where physical distancing can be maintained.
- Multiple groups of 25 can operate within a school setting provided that these groups can be segregated to prevent contact throughout the day. This may be accomplished through the use of separate exits or by staggered drop-off/pick-up schedules. Schools will need to exercise caution and consider the total number of students and staff in the building at any given time to avoid congestion and/or gatherings beyond the public health recommendations on group size.
- Sports, band and most other extra curricular activities can resume in school settings, provided they follow physical distancing and other public health guidelines for those activities. Choirs and musical theatre activities will not be allowed.
- Public Health does not require students and staff to wear masks or other personal protective equipment. However, the use of non-medical masks is permitted if desired. The best way to protect against transmission is to regularly wash hands, practice physical distancing and stay home when ill. The Limited Use of School Facilities guidelines outlines requirements for self-screening and hand hygiene.
- Increased frequency of cleaning, particularly high touch surfaces and common/shared areas, will be required. Manitoba Education will continue to work with school divisions, funded independent schools and First Nations Education Authorities if there are challenges in accessing cleaning supplies.
- Day camps may operate if they maintain occupancy and activity levels that allow people to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, except for brief exchanges. The maximum number of children per site is 24. Overnight camps are not permitted. The guidelines outlining the specific requirements for day camps can be found at: www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/phase-one.html.

Looking Ahead to Next Year

Manitoba Education is fully committed to opening schools at the outset of the upcoming school year. Planning is underway to prepare for the return to classroom learning, as well as for alternate options if the public health situation worsens and a more gradual return is required.

Thank you for your cooperation as we work together to continue to support Manitoba families, children and communities during these challenging times. For the most up-to-date general information and public health direction, please refer to <https://engagemb.ca/covid19-csp>. For the most recent education-related COVID-19 information, please visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html.

Sincerely,

original signed by

David Yeo
Acting Assistant Deputy Minister
K-12 Education Division

- c. Honourable Kelvin Goertzen, Minister of Education
Dana Rudy, Acting Deputy Minister, Manitoba Education
Sarah Whiteford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Manitoba Education
Directors of First Nations Education Authorities
Principals of First Nations Schools