



September 8, 2020

Manitoba Education Standards for Remote Learning

Remote Learning Scenarios

Manitoba's *Restoring Safe Schools* plan recognizes the critical importance of schools in the lives of students and families, and it encourages as much in-class learning as possible while maintaining a focus on safety, health, and wellness.

There is also a recognition that some students may require remote learning, as follows:

- **Periodic:** Remote learning can be provided periodically when K–12 students are at home in isolation/quarantine, when cohorts are not possible, and for some high school students during the Yellow/Caution level. Learning is directed by the classroom teacher.
- **Restricted and Critical Levels:** As part of the Pandemic Response System, remote learning is required at different response levels (i.e., at Orange/Restricted and Red/Critical levels). Since in-class learning would be suspended during this time, learning would convert to remote delivery and would continue to be directed by the classroom teacher. For additional details about the Pandemic Response System, read Manitoba's COVID-19 response level system summary at www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/restartmb/pandemic_response_system.pdf.
- **Medical Accommodations:** These accommodations are for students who are medically advised not to return to in-class learning due to COVID-19–related 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 health care providers on the need for accommodation (see *Restoring Safe Schools: COVID-19 K–12 School Settings Practice Guidance and Protocols*, August 24, 2020, page 18 at www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/covid/k-12-reopeningplan-guidance.pdf). Note: This option can be available if health care providers have concern for immediate family members in a shared household where they cannot physically distance. This learning is organized at the division level (not by the in-class teacher) and may be coordinated across divisions.

If there are concerns about the extent to which learning is taking place and whether learning loss for students is occurring, the school will facilitate additional planning with the parent/caregiver, which may result in alteration to the arrangements.

Remote Learning Standards and Expectations

- Standards and expectations for remote learning have been developed to ensure consistent application across Manitoba schools. School divisions and funded independent schools will ensure the following minimum standards are in place for students. The standards will need to be communicated clearly to teachers, staff, parents, caregivers, and students. School divisions must advise parents, caregivers, and students if there is a delay in fully implementing these standards. Alternative learning plans will need to be in place until then.

Parent/Caregiver Involvement

- Parent/caregiver involvement and support will be required and will vary depending on the age of the student and the student's ability to work independently. This learning approach relies on the parent/guardian to monitor engagement and completion of required independent work.

Student Participation

- 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 1–4: Five to six hours of instruction (synchronous) per week
 - Grades 5–8: Seven to eight hours of instruction (synchronous) per week
 - Grades 9–12: Two hours per course (synchronous) per week
 - **Independent work:** Student assignments will reflect the learning outcomes of the Manitoba curriculum. Assignments 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. Students will be expected to participate for the following minimum amounts of time (independent work):
 - Grades 1–4: Two and a half hours per day
 - Grades 5–8: Three hours per day
 - Grades 9–12: 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 provide support and play-based learning ideas.

- Attendance will be recorded. Students may be required to attend school (or an alternate setting) for assessment and discussions with teacher/school administrators, as needed and requested.

Students with Special Learning Needs

- Student-specific plans (e.g., adaptation plans, modification plans, individual education plans, behaviour intervention plans, health care plans, and personal transportation plans) are key in supporting students with special needs and students who are at risk as they transition back to in-class learning. Whether the students are in class or in remote learning environments, student-specific plans may need to be reviewed and adjusted more frequently to ensure effective supports, strategies, and services are maintained or adjusted.
- Given the unique nature of each student's specific plan, not all supports are transferrable to a remote online learning environment. This learning approach will require parent involvement and support. Students must be available for the real-time teacher instruction, as scheduled by the teacher for all students in that class/cohort.
- Students who live with complex medical needs and who have received medical advice to not attend school in person will continue to receive appropriate supports, as per the student-specific planning process and their individual health care plan.

Learning Focus

- For Grades 1–8, the focus will be placed on key curricular areas: math, English language arts, social studies, and science. Physical education, health/well-being, music, and art will be integrated into the four (4) key subject areas.
- Consideration should be given to break up into small blocks the times per day that Grades 1–4 students perform synchronous work. This will assist in the transition back to in-class learning if there are routines at the beginning and end of each day.
- Teachers for Grades 1–8 will schedule a minimum of 20 minutes per week with each student in real-time conversation. Teachers could consider scheduling two times a week at 10 minutes per day.
- High school (Grades 9–12) will follow the full curriculum to ensure full credit attainment. Regular check-ins should be established between the teacher and students. Technical-vocational programming may be interrupted as a result of remote learning.

Technology Requirements

- Remote learning requires access to a laptop with a camera and Internet. If Internet access is not possible, then print-based options with telephone contact (or an alternative) will be explored in discussion with the school division. These instances should be minimized to the greatest extent possible, given the critical importance of routine and daily contact.

- School divisions are responsible for ensuring that technology is accessible to all students or that an alternate plan is in place (e.g., Teacher Mediated Option [TMO]).

Medical Accommodation Remote Learning

- A medical note is not required to ascertain the student's medical needs, as the small number of children who are immunocompromised are likely already known to the school. However, school divisions and independent schools can request more information if needed.
 - If a note is requested, school divisions/schools should use a form letter that outlines the policy direction for COVID-19 risk factors and identifies that this situation applies to a particular student or immediate family member.
 - Schools or divisions must follow up by phone (or alternative method) with each family to discuss and ensure that parents/caregivers understand what is involved with remote learning and that this could continue until the spread of COVID-19 is broadly contained and a vaccine and/or effective treatment for COVID-19 is available, which is not anticipated until at least late in the school year.
- Parents/caregivers must commit to supporting their child's remote learning and be available to supervise the student's learning (if applicable).
- Parents/caregivers will commit to the remote learning option for a set period of time and can switch at natural entry points, which may vary for Early Years, Middle Years, and Senior Years (i.e., reporting period/semester change). School divisions will provide parents/caregivers with this information.
- Parents/caregivers must provide notice if they plan to return their child to classroom learning. Deadlines for notification will be provided by the school division. Parents and caregivers should consult with their health care provider to assess whether the risk factors still apply.
- Students will be grouped into classes according to their grade level but not necessarily into one grade per class (e.g., Grade 1/2; Grade 3/4; Grade 5/6; Grade 7/8). This model is an opportunity for increased multi-age classes/opportunities.
- Technical-vocational courses and work-based practicums or credits such as Credit for Employment will not be available to students during remote learning due to medical accommodation.