



**MINISTER
OF EDUCATION**

Room 168
Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R3C 0V8

MAR 10 2020

To: Superintendents of School Divisions
Directors of First Nations Education Authorities
Student Services Administrators
Principals of First Nations Schools
Principals of Funded Independent Schools

Dear Colleagues:

As you are aware, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) in January 2020. Our top priority is always planning for the safety of all students and staff.

COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to other viruses. As such, I encourage schools to continue to take measures to help prevent the spread of viruses. Best practices for the prevention of viral illness include regular and thorough handwashing with warm water and soap, coughing and sneezing into an arm or tissue, encouraging people to stay home from school or work when they are sick, and ensuring that surfaces and objects are wiped with disinfectant regularly.

For students and staff traveling abroad, the risk associated with COVID-19 will vary depending on the destination. If your schools are planning out-of-country trips, please review the attached insert from Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and ensure that students and parents/guardians are aware of the potential risks. For current travel advice and health notices about COVID-19, please visit the Government of Canada's Travel Advice and Advisories website at: www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice.

Manitoba Education will continue to work closely with local health officials, school divisions and other partners to monitor, gather information, assess risk and respond as new information becomes available. For up-to-date information and resources, please visit the following websites:

- www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus
- www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Kelvin Goertzen

Attachment

c. Chairs of School Boards