

**CIRCULAR**

**Date:** July 31, 2020

**CIRCULAR NUMBER:** COVID#: 2020-118

---

**To:** All child care facilities, ELCC program staff

**Subject:** **The K-12 Education Plan and Early Learning and Child Care**

**Program(s):** all

---

**Type:**  Policy  For Internal Reference Only  
 Procedure  Information Only

**Effective Date** Immediately

---

Today, the province released “Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools” containing guidelines to support the return of students and staff to in-class learning. Manitoba’s plan to resume in-class learning establishes provincial consistency, while allowing for local flexibility where needed. The plan reflects the importance of safety, health and well-being, while ensuring reasonable measures and plans are in place to minimize the risk of transmission and exposure to the virus in schools, if it occurs.

The guiding principles of the plan are:

- Safety, health and well-being for all students, staff and families is a priority.
- High quality learning and assessment continues for all students.
- Accessible, trauma-informed resources and supports for students, parents and caregivers.
- Consistent, reliable and appropriate connection to school learning and belonging, for every student, regardless of location, barriers, special needs or challenges.
- System-wide communication and collaboration will promote consistent approaches throughout the province.

Highlights of the plan are outlined below and the full plan can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/safeschools-stage2.html>

Highlights of K-12 Education Plan

- In-class learning will resume on September 8, 2020. Children in grades K-8 and those with special needs will return to five days of in-class instruction a week and youth in grades 9-12 will return for up to five days of in-class instruction, if high schools can effectively implement physical distancing and the use of cohorts.
- Communication, screening, enhanced hand hygiene, physical distancing, use of cohorts and outbreak management will be paramount in keeping as many students as possible in schools this fall and throughout the pandemic.

- School divisions are developing plans which will be finalized by mid-August and posted on the division's website and be accessible to the school community.
- A strong focus will be placed on recovery learning, remote learning, mental health and well-being.
- Contingency plans will be put in place for various public health situations, which may also vary across the province. Three response levels will be used: Level 1 – In-class Learning (planned for September 2020); Level 2: Blended Learning and Level 3: Remote Learning. Details of each response level can be viewed in the plan.
- Regional public health officials will monitor the situation closely and will provide direction and information to school communities. Public health will be responsible for responding to cases of COVID-19 and overseeing outbreak management protocols.
- If the public health situation deteriorates or guidelines are not sufficient, current measures may be paused and other measures may be reintroduced.

The Departments of Families and Education are working together with school divisions and the child care sector to ensure that families can continue accessing child care within schools.

Schools will work cooperatively with child care centres to ensure that these centres can continue to operate.

For the latest provincial public health information on COVID-19, including helpful information for citizens, service providers and employers, please regularly visit the Manitoba government's website at: [www.manitoba.ca/covid19](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19). Early Learning and Child Care specific resources and circulars can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/covid-circulars.html>

Thank you for your flexibility and responsiveness in supporting children and their families.

Sarah Thiele | Assistant Deputy Minister  
Child and Youth Services