

**CIRCULAR**

**Date:** July 31, 2020

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**To:** CCP, Authorities, CYSD staff

**Subject:** **K-12 Education Plan**

**Program(s):** all

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

**Effective Date** Immediately

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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>

The Department of Families will continue to ensure that through this return to in-class learning we are supporting Manitoba’s vulnerable children and youth, and children in care, to ensure they continue to learn. To ensure children, youth and families are supported in a variety of learning situations:

- The Department of Education and Families will work together with parents and stakeholder groups to develop learning guidelines for children with special needs, including children with disabilities and those in Child and Family Services care to ensure that they receive the support required;

- The Department of Education and Families will collaborate to support students in grades 9-12 who may be returning in a blended learning situation; and
- The division will continue to work with Authorities to stay informed and support a safe return to in-class learning.

#### Summary 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.

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).

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

Sarah Thiele | Assistant Deputy Minister  
Child and Youth Services