



## Department of Families

Community Service Delivery  
Disability Programs and Specialized  
Services

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## Ministère des Familles

Division de la prestation de services dans les communautés  
Programmes de soutien des personnes handicapées  
et services spécialisés

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September 4, 2020

Dear :

Manitoba Education's *Welcoming Our Students Back* plan emphasizes the importance of getting students back into classrooms for in-person learning, with a focus on safety and health. On September 2, 2020, the Department of Education issued additional informational materials for students, parents and educators as families prepare for an informed return to schools. These resources can be found at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index) and include the following:

- Letter to parents from Manitoba's Chief Provincial Public Health Officer, Dr. Brent Roussin;
- Restoring Safe Schools – What to expect when welcomed back to school;
- Welcoming our Students Back: A Guide for Parents, Caregivers and Students;
- COVID-19 Screening Questions

Guidance specifically for children with special learning needs is also provided at the website, entitled *Welcoming Our Students Back: Supporting Students with Special Needs and Students at Risk as They Return to School*. This document outlines the plan for safely transitioning students with special learning needs back into classrooms for in-person learning. Full-time in-class learning is a priority for students who benefit from face-to-face interaction with their teachers and peers, and who may have difficulty navigating remote learning independently. Students with special learning needs in all grades are prioritized to return for five days of full, in-class instruction per week.

Many parents have questions around safely resuming in-class learning for their child. It is important that any questions are communicated to your child's school team so that planning can take into account your child's unique learning needs. Schools are expected to communicate directly and frequently with families to provide them with information about the school year and ongoing plans for instruction and supports. Communication is the key to building confidence among everyone involved in supporting your child's safe learning plan.

Effective use of the Student-Specific Planning Process is essential at this time. Student-specific plans include adaptation plans, modification plans, individual education plans, behaviour intervention plans, health care plans and personal transportation plans. These plans are key in supporting students with special needs and students at risk as they transition back to in-class learning. This year, your child's student-specific plan may need to be reviewed and adjusted more frequently to ensure effective supports, strategies, and services are maintained or adjusted.

If you have questions about your child's learning plan, please contact your child's classroom teacher or the school principal. You are encouraged to lead discussions on student-specific planning so that your questions, concerns and ideas are heard. Service providers involved with your family, both in the school and in the community, can assist by sharing information that can support that planning. Students with special needs and students at risk may require additional supports, as well as consistent and more frequent collaboration and planning, strong communication, flexibility, and creativity within the student support team.

School is going to be different for everyone in the fall of 2020, including students with special needs and students at risk. Teachers will be teaching all students how to interact in ways that are compliant with the public health measures for resuming safe in-class learning.

Children's disABILITY Services continues to be here to support your family during this challenging time. Thank you for the hard work you do in ensuring a safe return for your child this fall.

Sincerely,