



Evergreen School Division

Box 1200 • Gimli, Manitoba • R0C 1B0 • Ph. (204) 642-6260 • Fax (204) 642-7273 • www.esd.ca

October 30, 2020

Dear Evergreen School Division Families,

This afternoon Manitoba's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Roussin, informed Manitobans that all schools in the province will move to Restricted Level (Orange) under Manitoba's Pandemic Response System (PRS). This change was made in response to rising numbers of COVID-19 cases, primarily in the city of Winnipeg and the surrounding area.

It is important to note that although community transmission of the virus is concerning, the risk in schools remains low. Public Health indicates the following:

- To date, there have been no reported positive cases (students or staff) in Evergreen School Division.
- In Manitoba schools where positive cases have been identified, there has been minimal school-level transmission.
- Cohorts and other public health measures have been effective in mitigating the risk of transmission and informing contact tracing.

A move to the Restricted Level (Orange) includes the following:

| Orange - Restricted Level | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Response Plan Measure | Requirements |
| Physical Distancing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools must ensure two metres of physical distancing to the greatest extent possible, and adjust classroom space as necessary.• Excess furniture must be removed from classrooms to create additional space and other spaces within schools must be repurposed to accommodate more distancing (e.g., multipurpose rooms, shared spaces, common areas, and libraries). |
| Extracurricular activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any extracurricular activities are only permitted if all learning and distancing requirements have been met. If these activities continue, established guidelines must be followed and, in the case of sports, participants should maintain distance when not active. |
| Students with Exceptional Needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students with exceptional needs will continue to follow their individualized education plans and may continue in-class learning full time. |
| Transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents and caregivers are strongly encouraged to transport students if they are able. Please contact the transportation department if you intend to withdraw from bus service. School buses will continue to operate.• Masks are required for all bus passengers. |
| Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students will stay in their current school buildings under this response level. |
| Mask guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers and staff who move across cohorts of students, including substitute teachers, are required to wear medical masks.• Medical-grade disposable masks have been issued to all schools. N95 masks are not required. |
| Band / Choir | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indoor choir and the use of wind instruments are not permitted. |



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Students do best when they can attend school with their teachers and peers. In-person instruction, daily routines, and relationships are critical to student learning and well-being. Due to careful planning and use of available space, all students in Evergreen have been, and will continue to be welcomed to our schools every day.

Evergreen School Division has been preparing for a change to Restricted (Orange) and will make the transition over the course of next week. Schools have plans to create the physical distancing necessary for full time, in class learning to continue. Programming and other changes will be communicated.

Since our return to school in September, our staff and students have been remarkable in their commitment to care for one another during these trying times. Despite the many changes, schools continue to be a joyful place for learning and growing. Our teachers and support staff are delighted to have students back in class, and students and parents have done an outstanding job of adjusting to the many new rules and protocols. We embrace the required public health measures and continue to provide the routines, learning opportunities and social interactions that are so vital to children.

We will continue to work with public health officials to ensure all necessary health measures are in place to keep our schools as safe as possible. If, during the period of this restricted level, you believe your child should be considered for an alternative to fulltime in-school attendance (due to increased vulnerability to the virus or other personal circumstance), we will explore ways to support you. Please note that Edsby and MS teams are platforms that would require reliable high-speed internet access, a device (laptop or iPad) and parental support during school hours (for children grades 1-8). Please contact your child's school before the end of the day on Tuesday, November 3rd to discuss.

This pandemic clearly demonstrates what we know to be true. Our schools are a reflection of the communities we live in and are as safe as the actions we take together to look after our children and each other. Thank you for your vigilance in complying with the public health orders to keep our children and staff safe.

With best wishes for good health,

Roza Gray
Superintendent