



# Evergreen School Division

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June 23, 2020

To: Evergreen Community  
From: Roza Gray, Superintendent  
Re: **COVID-19: PUBLIC UPDATE # 13**

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Restrictions continue to be revised and updated by the provincial government in response to data regarding COVID-19.

## Three Plans for Learning in September

Manitoba Education has not yet announced details regarding a return to learning in the fall. However, to support the best possible start in the fall, and to be able to respond quickly to changing health directives, Evergreen School Division is preparing plans for three scenarios:

- a) a return to in-school classes with restrictions
- b) a blend of learning at home and at school
- c) continued learning from home

## Planning Framework:

We continue to be guided by the following principles:

- *The physical health and well-being of our students, staff and families is our priority.* We will therefore continue to follow the direction of health and government officials.
- *Student learning will continue throughout the pandemic.* We will plan for in-school, blended and remote learning. We will provide ongoing instruction and support for all the students and families in the Evergreen community.
- *Providing equity for students will require flexible and creative opportunities.* Students who need additional support, have complex needs or cannot participate in remote learning due to connectivity challenges will be given special consideration.
- *Co-ordination and co-operation will be essential to our success.* The Division and the Evergreen community will need to be flexible and work together to best meet the needs of our students.

## Planning Assumptions

- At this time, it seems likely that a return in the fall will continue to require that we plan for students and staff to maintain 2 metres of physical distancing from others. This will be challenging.
- Over the course of this pandemic, continued changes to our plans may be necessary as we must comply with any new directives from public health.

## Planning Priorities

**It is our goal to have as many students as possible to attend school as regularly as possible.**

*This will require the continued flexibility and support of families and staff.* Significant changes will be necessary in the way in which we organize student learning, our physical spaces in schools, our transportation system, and other student activities.

## Information for Families

In the interest of continued transparency, and to support families in their planning, we share the following:

**Transportation:** With current public health orders regarding physical distancing (distance of 2 metres) in place, our capacity to transport students will be significantly limited. For example, a 72-passenger bus may only be permitted to transport 12 students at a time. As a consequence:

- Anyone who does not require transportation services will be asked to let us know.
- Families who presently pay for transportation services (because the distance from the home to the school does not meet the 1.6 km eligibility requirements) may not be provided this additional service.
- The number of pick ups and drop off locations per family will be limited to one location per run (i.e. one morning pick-up spot and one afternoon drop-off spot).
- Changes to drop off and pick-ups (due to childcare arrangement or other reasons) will not be possible.
- As it may be necessary to have multiple shorter bus routes per morning and afternoon, pick-up and drop off times will change.
- Although we will do our best to transport as many students as possible as often as possible, it may not be possible for transportation to be provided daily. In other jurisdictions transportation may be provided on alternate days, or alternate weeks.
- *More information is not available at this time. We do not anticipate a final decision from the provincial government regarding physical distancing restrictions on buses until August. We will communicate any changes to families as soon as we are able.*
- **Parents and caregivers are asked to plan for alternative transportation to provide themselves as much flexibility as possible.**

**Programs:** If current public health orders regarding limits to group size and physical distancing requirements remain in place, our programming will be significantly affected. For example, a typical classroom which presently holds as many as 25 students may be limited to as few as 10 students. Therefore,

- If we can transport all our students to school (given the transportation challenges listed above); students from the same class may need to be separated into more than one space in the school building.
- Student movement between schools for programs and activities may not be possible. This includes curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Optional programs, such as Junior Kindergarten, may not be possible (as this classroom space may be required for mandatory programs). Our schedule for the Kindergarten program may also change.

#### **Timetable/ Calendar**

- The provincial government announced yesterday students will start on September 8, 2020 and that other dates need to be changed. The Division calendar is being revised and will be sent to families by the end of the week.
- The start and end times of the school day may need to be adjusted. If this change is significant, consultation with families affected will occur in August.

#### **Safety Precautions**

- Enhanced cleaning and sanitizing procedures will be in place.
- Parents/caregivers will be asked to screen children for respiratory symptoms before sending them to school.
- Reminders/ signage will be made regarding frequent handwashing and hygiene related to coughing/sneezing.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms and entryways/exits.
- If at any time, staff or students are showing symptoms of illness they will be expected to return home.
- Maintain physical distance of at least two metres to the greatest extent possible, except for brief exchanges

**We understand that this communication raises more questions than provides answers. It is unsettling for us all to have so much uncertainty.** We are doing our best to plan for three scenarios so that as soon as the health directives are communicated, we will be able to make quick progress on a smooth transition to the 'new normal'.

We will communicate our plans as soon as we are able. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding at this unprecedented time.