



Pine Creek School Division

Reopening Schools in 2020 Plan

Introduction

The 2020-2021 school year will be like nothing any of us has ever experienced before.

Pine Creek School Division has been working throughout the summer to prepare for students, educators and support staff to return safely to school.

We continue to learn more about this virus and how we can best protect ourselves and our children. As we learn, and as the situation in our communities evolves, the plans for our school operations will also change.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 in schools requires two kinds of strategies:

- 1) Preventing the virus from entering school buildings
- 2) Ensuring public health recommendations are followed closely inside and outside the building while school is in session.

What hasn't changed?

You belong here.

The safety and well-being of children/students and staff is our priority.

- Grades 1 to 8 students will attend school every day.
- Kindergarten attendance schedules will be shared by individual schools
- Clinicians will continue their excellent work in support of the learning of children in our schools.

What will be new this year?

- Routines, classes, and modes of learning will change often throughout the year. We will continue to communicate quickly and clearly as the pandemic evolves. Expect that we will be continuously responding to changes in recommendations from Public Health.

A: Preventing the virus from entering the school:

- Children and staff with any symptoms of the virus will not be permitted at school
- As part of the rapid response plan, remote learning may be necessary at different times during the school year.
- Parents and visitors will not be allowed to enter the school.

B: Keeping everyone safe at school (public health recommendations to minimize close contact)

- Classes will have fewer students, and children will be with one or two teachers most of the time.
- Cohorts of students will be physically distanced from other cohorts (i.e., separate washrooms, staggered lunch and recess times.)
- Children will spend more time learning outside.

- Grades 9 to 12 students will attend in person every second day for compulsory courses. Some optional courses may be primarily online.
- Parents are encouraged to provide transportation for students wherever possible
- Non-medical masks are required while on the bus and while at school for students in grades 4 to 12 *NEW*

For an overview of what Manitoba families can expect, please see the [provincial document here](#).

What can families do now to get ready?

Adults:

1. Don't bring the infection home. Minimizing community transmission ensures a safer school opening for children and teachers.

[Evidence suggests](#) that most cases of COVID-19 in children are a result of adult to child transmission in the home. Parents and caregivers need to be very thoughtful about participating in activities in the community at this time. Adults need to be especially careful to follow all of the public health guidelines by wearing a mask in public, washing hands frequently and ensuring physical distancing at all times.

Preventing the virus from entering the homes where children live is very important to the successful opening of school in September.

2. Prepare for supervision of children who cannot attend school. We want all children/students in class learning as much as possible. However, there will be times when children cannot attend school. Children and staff who exhibit symptoms will not be able to come to school. There may be other occasions when children/students will be asked to learn from home. [Planning for alternative child care](#) is an essential part of preparing for September.
3. Children will be spending more time outdoors. Please prepare by planning clothing purchases that will keep kids dry and warm while they are learning outside.

Children:

1. Children need to practice wearing masks* for long periods of time. While masks will be available at school, it's best if children have properly fitting masks that they are comfortable with, and that they have practiced with, before they arrive on the first day of school.

*Currently, masks are ~~recommended~~ **required** (update August 19, 2020) for students grades ~~5~~ 4 (changed to grade 4 on August 19, 2020) and up while at school. Masks are required for students grades ~~5~~ 4 and up on the bus, unless medical exemptions apply.

[Resources for proper mask use](#)

2. Practice personal hygiene with children (hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette).

[Resources for Teaching Children About Safety During COVID-19](#)

3. Reinforce that at this time, we are not able to share items/food with other students.
4. Help children to understand what school will look like and how it has changed. [Resources for talking to children about COVID-19](#)

Options for Remote Learning

At this time (August 17, 2020) Manitoba Education has provided the following direction regarding the availability of remote learning for students.

Remote learning will be in place for students who are medically advised not to return to in-class learning due to COVID-related risk factors.

These situations should be rare and limited to children with compromised immune systems or other medical conditions that increase their risk.

Parents and caregivers must consult with physicians on the need for an accommodation.

The Pine Creek School Division Plan for Reopening can be found in the following pages.

Specific school planning continues.

School plans will be available for sharing with school communities prior to the start of school.

We look forward to welcoming our students back to school on September 8, 2020.

Pine Creek School Division

Reopening Schools in 2020

The planning principles are provided by Manitoba Education and will follow all directions set forth by the Chief Public Health Officer for Manitoba. Throughout all of our planning, the health, safety and well-being of Pine Creek School Division communities is a priority.

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), Pine Creek School Division will plan for a range of scenarios to maximize health and mitigate risks related to the level of COVID-19 infection in our community. Ongoing assessment of risk and adherence to public health measures will continue until there is a resumption of normal health.

Manitoba Education's framework to resume in-class learning in 2020-2021 identifies three reopening levels:

Level 1: In-class Learning

In-class learning resumes for all; near normal with public health measures.

Level 2: Blended Learning

In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.

Level 3: Remote Learning

Limited Use of Schools (Implemented June 1, 2020)

In-class learning is suspended. Teacher-led remote learning is provided for all K-12 students.

On July 30, 2020 Manitoba Education determined that we would return under the premise of a Level 1 scenario. The plan is outlined in this document: [K-12 Guidelines for September 2020](#)

In-class learning will resume on September 8, 2020, for all students across the province. Students in Grades 1 to 8 will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week.

In Pine Creek School Division, students in Grades 9 to 12 will return on alternate days to ensure physical distancing at the high school level.

Students should expect some remote learning, along with in-class instruction, throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

Students with special needs in all grades will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week. Teachers and staff will return to schools on September 2, providing them with an opportunity for orientation to public health requirements and the educational priorities to support students, as well as for professional learning around recovery learning.

The provincial reopening 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. As a school division, we will be taking direction from Manitoba Education and the Chief Medical Officer on a daily basis; therefore, the following plan is subject to ongoing revisions throughout the year.

Guiding Principles

- 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.

A: Safety, Health and Well-being for All

1. Understanding Transmission

School divisions and schools are required to follow up-to-date public health measures and guidance, and to develop the administrative measures that support individuals to consistently follow personal preventative practices.

COVID-19 is most commonly spread from an infected person through respiratory droplets generated through coughing, sneezing, laughing, singing and talking. It spreads more easily when contact is close (within six feet or two metres) and prolonged (more than 15 minutes).

COVID-19 can also be spread by close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands, or touching something with the virus on it and then touching one's mouth, nose, or eyes before cleaning one's hands.

Some people who have few or no symptoms can spread COVID-19.

Although public health measures can significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering and being transmitted in child care and school settings, the risk is never zero. It is important to remember that children tend to have less severe illness from the disease, this is not always the case. COVID-19 can cause more severe illness among people who are 60 years of age and older, and among those who have weakened immune systems or underlying medical conditions.

Children under one year of age and those with immune suppression and chronic medical conditions are considered more vulnerable and at higher risk for severe illness.

Parents, guardians and staff are encouraged to consult with their health-care provider if they have concerns about their own health, their child's health, or the health of other household contacts.

The most effective measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 include separating people by maintaining physical distance and the use of physical barriers. However, these measures are not always practical in child care and school settings. Therefore, it is most effective to use a layered approach, including multiple measures from the areas listed below, and to develop

administrative measures that support individuals to consistently follow personal preventive practices (e.g., environmental cleaning and conducting frequent hand hygiene) that decrease the number of interactions while increasing the safety of interactions that occur. Adapted responses and recommendations may be required in situations where health, age, ability, status, or other socio-economic and demographic circumstances may limit the ability of some groups or individuals to follow the recommended measures.

Effective Measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Frequent hand-washing
- Respiratory hygiene (coughing into your sleeve, for example)
- Physical distancing
- Prevention of transmission by removing symptomatic individuals
- Not touching your face

2. Staying Home When Sick

It is essential for the health of everyone in our school communities that anyone with symptoms stays home. Early detection minimizes the risk to others.

Individuals cannot enter the schools if they

- are experiencing symptoms suggestive of COVID-19
- have travelled outside Manitoba in the previous 14 days (outside of areas excluded by public health orders, which currently exclude locations in Western Canada, the territories, and Ontario west of Terrace Bay)
- are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19
- are awaiting a COVID-19 test result (excluding persons tested as part of voluntary asymptomatic surveillance for COVID-19, as they do not need to isolate)

3. Screening for Symptoms

a) Students/Children

Screening for symptoms is critical to identify any potential cases of COVID-19 as quickly as possible before exposure to others.

Children who are displaying symptoms cannot board the school bus, and cannot attend school.

Symptoms may include:

- Cough
- Headache
- Fever/ chills
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat/ hoarse voice
- Shortness of breath/ breathing difficulties
- Loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting, or diarrhea for more than 24 hours
- Poor feeding if an infant
- Runny nose
- Fatigue
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Skin rash of unknown cause

An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found [here](#).

Parents and caregivers are responsible for screening all children for symptoms at the start of each day.

If someone is unsure whether they or their child should be tested and self-isolate, they should be directed to the COVID-19 Screening Tool at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool>

All screening that identifies suspected cases of COVID-19 should be referred to Health Links – Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257.

b) Staff

Staff must self-monitor daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Staff who have any symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home, isolate, and be excluded from work.

Signs with Exclusion Criteria will be posted at all school and office entrances.

A student or staff member who meets any of the exclusion criteria will not be admitted to the school and will be advised to immediately isolate and consult Health Links – Info Santé or their health-care provider.

Those with symptoms should be tested. If the test is negative for COVID-19, they can return 24 hours after symptoms resolve.

If individuals do not get tested, they should isolate for 14 days from symptom onset, and they may return if symptoms have resolved at that time. A chronic stable cough, sneeze, runny nose or nasal congestion that is unchanged and clearly linked to a known medical condition such as asthma or allergies, is not an absolute requirement for exclusion.

Changing or worsening of chronic symptoms require isolation and contacting Health Links – Info Santé. Staff should exercise judgment based on the symptoms, but when in doubt, err on the side of caution by excluding the child and advising the parent or caregiver to contact Health Links – Info Santé or their health-care provider.

Routine screening or monitoring of temperatures with a thermometer or other device to assess for fever is not recommended. Normal temperatures can vary throughout the day and can be different between individuals.

It is recommended that parents and staff focus on monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19, as outlined in the Screening Tool and poster at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool>.

4. Visitor Access to Schools

In general, for the protection of students and staff, visitors will not have access to schools.

Where possible, online communication, video, and telephone will be used to interact with families, rather than in person.

Visitors entering the school will be prioritized to those supporting implementation of public health measures and activities that benefit student learning and well-being (e.g., teacher candidates, public health officials, etc.). This will also be limited to those who regularly volunteer to minimize the number of possible exposures.

All visitors must adhere to self-screening, physical distancing, and recommended hygiene practices. Visitors with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not enter the school. Schools are required to keep a list of all visitors.

Community use of schools will be suspended for the foreseeable future.

5. Physical Distancing

Physical distancing of two metres or six feet between all individuals will occur whenever reasonably possible in a school setting. The maximum number of individuals congregating (i.e., close interactions among people longer than 15 minutes) in a common space for indoor and outdoor settings must comply with the most up-to-date public health orders at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/soe.html#current>.

- Where possible, arrange spaces to encourage the recommended separation. For example, space children to avoid close contact and assign a designated chair and table for each child.
- Schools must manage the flow of people in common areas, including hallways, to minimize crowding and allow for the ease of people passing through. Young children need easy-to-understand visual prompts. For example, use tape on the floor, hoops, mats, or other items that can mark off personal space. Another idea is to organize play activities with a visual cue about how many children should be

in that area (e.g., two chairs next to an activity with markers or numbers taped to the floor).

- Implement the practice of staggered entrance and exit times, or use separate entrances (if feasible).
- Avoid close greetings (e.g., hugs and handshakes).
- Stagger staff break times and avoid large, in-person staff meetings.
- Assemblies and gatherings are discouraged, and those that exceed public health advice may not be scheduled.
- Physical barriers can be used, where appropriate, when physical distancing cannot be maintained. This includes plexiglass barriers for high-traffic areas, such as reception desks and check-out counters. These must be implemented with a plan for frequent cleaning and sanitizing for infection prevention and control.
- Fire drills and lock-down requirements must be considered within the COVID-19 environment, as current procedures are not conducive to physical distancing. Modifications of drills to achieve goals should be considered.

6. Cohorts/Groups

It is recognized that strict physical distancing at all times—particularly with young children - is not practical in the school setting. When physical distancing is not possible, cohorts can be used to limit exposure and facilitate contact tracing if a case is identified. Students will likely be a part of multiple cohorts from within and outside of the school setting. The purpose of cohorts is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that, if a child or employee develops an infection, there are fewer possible exposures and contact tracing can be more easily done.

Cohorts involve keeping groups of students (e.g., classes) together and avoiding interactions with other groups.

- Physical distancing within the cohort is required to the greatest extent possible, including a minimum of one-metre separation between students in the cohort when seated at desks or tables.

- Maximum cohort size is to be no more than 75 students. There is no limit on the number of cohorts in a school, as long as distinct cohorts of 75 can be separated to prevent contact with other groups. Each cohort must be able to arrive, depart, and participate in school activities without co-mingling with members from other cohorts as much as possible.
- Whenever possible, keep children and staff together with the same cohort throughout the day, including lunch breaks and recesses. Locations of classrooms, use of additional space, and timetabling by cohorts can all be considered to reduce mixing.
- Stagger schedules and movement of cohorts to avoid being in shared spaces (e.g., foyers, hallways) at the same time.
- Different cohorts/groups should not be in shared spaces at the same time. Where this is not possible, physical distancing between groups is required. It is important to maintain at least four metres between groups or cohorts of children (i.e., two groups of children can be in the same area, provided the groups do not intermingle and four metres of space is maintained between the two groups).
- Avoid the movement of classes of students where possible. It is preferable that teachers move between classrooms instead of students.
- Keep daily records that include the names of students, staff and volunteers of cohorts.

7. Ventilation

There is less likelihood of transmission in well ventilated environments.

Consider the following strategies:

- Avoid recirculation of air to the greatest extent possible, and ensure filters are clean.
- In general, ventilating indoor environments with fresh air—whether by increasing the outdoor air ratio of the HVAC system settings as much as possible or by opening windows and avoiding or reducing recirculation—will dilute the air exhaled by the occupants, including any infectious particles. Even if this is not feasible for the whole facility, consider this for higher risk areas (e.g., where crowding may be an issue).

- Minimize the use of fans and limit them to the lowest settings if they are needed. Direct air flow away from people and surfaces. Ensure that these surfaces are cleaned along with other high-touch surfaces.
- Assess the risk of opening windows and doors (i.e., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms). Do not prop open fire doors to increase ventilation or to reduce exposure to frequently touched door handles.

8. Transportation to Schools

Physical distancing and/or cohorts are also required in school transportation.

For more information, refer to the Guidelines for Transportation to Schools at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/transportation.html>

To support physical distancing on buses, to the greatest extent possible, parents are encouraged to transport their own children if they are able.

Active transportation, such as walking and biking, should also be encouraged. For advice on carpooling, please visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/transportation.html>

9. Hygiene Practices

Handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the recommended hand hygiene practice.

Staff and students must engage in frequent hand hygiene, including at the following times:

- the start of the day and before going home
- before and after recess
- after going to the washroom and helping children with washroom routines
- after a diaper change (both children and staff)
- before and after preparing food
- before eating or drinking
- after getting hands dirty
- after wiping nose or handling dirty tissues

- after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose
- after soothing a crying child
- before and after putting on and taking off a mask
- before and after being on a bus
- after cleaning tasks (staff)

School staff should help young children to ensure handwashing is done correctly. Where possible, encourage and supervise hand hygiene and make alcohol-based hand sanitizer available at all building access points and throughout the facility.

Young children require supervision when using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Good hygiene practices can be taught in an age-appropriate and playful manner. One idea is to have timers to help ensure students wash for an adequate time. See how many 20-second songs the children can identify. Be creative—engage the children in coming up with games and other ways to encourage everyone to wash their hands for 20 seconds.

Respiratory etiquette should be modelled, taught and reinforced regularly. This includes coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, as well as properly and promptly disposing of any used tissues, and exercising proper hand hygiene.

Personal items (e.g., hats, hair accessories, lip balm, food and drinks) should not be shared. Avoid touching one's mouth, nose or eyes, and encourage children to do the same.

As part of these routine measures, signage will be posted and highly visible, and it should include visual cues that remind staff and children to perform hand hygiene (e.g., sneezing or coughing into their elbow, putting used tissues in a waste receptacle, and washing hands or using hand sanitizer immediately after using tissues).

Several printable resources, including posters and factsheets, are available online at the following websites:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.html>

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/posters/>

10. Personal Protective Equipment

Non-medical masks can play a role in reducing the transmission of COVID-19.

Wearing nonmedical masks is an additional personal practice that can help to prevent the infectious respiratory droplets of an unknowingly infected person (the wearer) from coming into contact with other people. Non-medical masks have not been tested to meet any standards. Although encouraged, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing and handwashing.

Those wearing masks should be reminded, in age-appropriate language, not to touch their mask and to comply with other personal preventive practices, such as frequent hand hygiene and physical distancing as much as possible.

Non-medical masks are recommended in situations where a person cannot maintain a two-metre physical distance for extended periods of time and is in close proximity to a person outside of their regular contacts. This includes hallways and when riding the bus to school, and it may include classroom settings.

~~• Students (Grade 5 and up), teachers, staff, visitors and volunteers are strongly recommended to wear non-medical masks in areas where physical distancing of two metres is not possible.~~

~~• Students under Grade 5 can also use non-medical masks.~~

~~• All school bus passengers in Grade 5 and older, and the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading if removal is appropriate for the setting. Students under Grade 5 can also use non-medical masks. Masks will be provided to students and staff who need them. Inventory will be monitored to ensure adequate supply.~~

August 19, 2020 Update: Non-medical masks are required to be worn by all students grades 4 and up while on the bus and while in the school building, and outside where physical distancing is not possible.

Non-medical masks should not be worn by anyone who:

- is unable to remove the mask without assistance (e.g., due to age, ability or developmental status)
- has breathing difficulties
- is under two years of age

When a non-medical mask is used, your hands should be cleaned before and after putting it on and taking it off.

Follow the recommendations listed above for the use of non-medical masks, including for their removal.

Removed masks are considered contaminated and should be placed in a container or bag for appropriate cleaning and disinfection at a later time.

Non-medical masks should be laundered daily.

A medical mask (surgical or procedural mask) is required when unable to maintain a distance of two metres or six feet from a child who is exhibiting signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. To put on a mask safely, perform hand hygiene by handwashing with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Place the mask on your face carefully so it covers your mouth and nose, handling it with the strings or elastic ear loops as much as possible, and mould the nose bridge to ensure it does not move while it is on. Avoid touching the mask once you have put it on. If the mask needs to be adjusted, hands should be cleaned before and after adjusting the mask. Never pull the mask down below the nose, mouth, or chin. Never dangle the mask from one ear or both ears.

To remove the mask safely, remove it from behind using the strings or elastic ear loops. Do not touch the front of the mask. Discard the mask immediately, ideally in a no-touch receptacle.

Perform hand hygiene by handwashing with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html> for the latest guidance on the use and care of masks.

Consideration can be given to teachers and staff to wear face shields or coverings and eye protection, in addition to a mask (not in place of a mask).

Visit the following Public Health Agency of Canada page to access a poster and guidelines for how to safely use a non-medical mask or face covering:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19-safely-use-non-medical-mask-face-covering.Html>

11. Cleaning and Disinfecting

Increased frequency of cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing - particularly on high-touch surfaces and in common/shared areas - will be required.

Schools must:

- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, electronic devices, chairs, desks, art supplies, toys, games, gym equipment, tools and equipment) frequently - at least twice daily, or more often as needed.
- Increase monitoring of hand-cleaning supplies to ensure an ample supply at all sinks in washroom and kitchen areas.
- Ensure washrooms and lunchrooms are cleaned and disinfected frequently (at least twice daily, and more often as needed) and stagger use.
- Turn off water fountains that are not touchless or cannot be cleaned between users.
- Ensure there is enhanced cleaning of bus seats and other high-touch surfaces (e.g., windows and railings) before each new group of students attends the bus.

Health Canada has posted a list of disinfectants shown to be effective against COVID-19 at

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>

School administrators are encouraged to review existing activities and practices within their settings to help determine where enhancements or increased cleaning frequencies may be beneficial.

This includes limiting the use of high-touch objects and surfaces by multiple individuals (e.g., providing children with their own containers of arts and crafts materials that are not shared with others).

- Waste should be disposed of regularly.
- Hand hygiene should be performed after waste removal.
- No-touch waste receptacles are preferred.

12. Addressing Health Concerns

a) When a child gets sick

If a child develops symptoms while at school, the child will be isolated in a separate room. A medical mask will be provided to be worn by the sick student, unless there are safety issues that prevent the student from wearing a mask. The parent will be notified to come and pick up the child immediately.

Parents or caregivers must pick up their child as soon as possible if they are notified their child is ill*.

Parents and guardians are to contact Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257) or the child’s health care provider for direction, if required.

A medical mask should be worn by the staff person caring for the child while waiting for pick-up.

**If a parent/caregiver is unreachable to pick up a sick child, school staff should keep the child isolated in a separate room until the parent or caregiver arrives. If the medical condition requires urgent assessment, or if the parent cannot be located, they should follow standard procedures. Anyone in close contact with the child while waiting should wear personal protective equipment, including a medical mask.*

Once the student is picked up, the staff member should practise diligent hand hygiene. Additional environmental cleaning will be required. Focus should be on high-touch areas and areas where the child spent time. All items (e.g., bedding and toys) used by the child while isolated will be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child has been picked up.

A sick child can return to the school once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health. If that child has a positive test, further direction will be provided by public health. Public health typically follows up with contacts of cases within 24 to 48 hours of receipt of the laboratory report.

b) When a staff member exhibits symptoms

If a staff member or volunteer in a school becomes symptomatic, they will immediately isolate themselves from other staff and children, notify their supervisor, and go home to isolate.

They should then contact Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257) or their health care provider for direction. Additional environmental cleaning will occur. Focus will be on high-touch areas and areas where the staff or volunteer spent time.

Staff members who are away sick or who are self-isolating must follow the school's human resources policy and collective agreement provisions. Medical notes are not required for staff who have COVID-19 or flu-related symptoms, or for those who are caring for individuals in this situation.

A sick staff member can return to work once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health. If that staff member has a positive test, further direction will be provided by public health.

c) Personal Risk Factors

At this time (August 17, 2020) Manitoba Education has provided the following direction regarding the availability of remote learning for students.

Remote learning will be in place for students who are medically advised not to return to in-class learning due to COVID-related risk factors.

These situations should be rare and limited to children with compromised immune systems or other medical conditions that increase their risk.

Parents and caregivers must consult with physicians on the need for an accommodation.

In Pine Creek School Division, secondary school students who prefer to learn remotely have the option of completing some courses through TMO

- Teacher Mediated Option. The registration process for this option is forthcoming.

d) Outbreak Management

In the event of the confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with a school, public health will lead the response and ensure appropriate supports are in place to coordinate the response.

Contact tracing involves identifying the contacts of a positive case and contacting those individuals who may have been exposed.

Public health may:

- request records that identify cohorts/groups of staff, students, volunteers and visitors in the school for a specified timeframe
- contact students, staff and families if they have been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case, and confirm whether they need to self-isolate or self-monitor, and when they can return to school
- recommend testing following established guidelines to staff, students, volunteers and visitors who may have been exposed to a positive case
- assess the need for the school to be closed for a period of time

Schools will clean and disinfect areas where exposures took place. These areas will not be used until they are determined to be safe. School closure would be a last resort and only upon evidence of transmission among multiple cohorts.

If there is an outbreak at a school, this will be announced through Manitoba media bulletins and public health will provide instructions to those who have been in close contact.

13. Food Handling

Children should bring their own food to school. Sharing of food is not permitted.

Lunch times will be staggered. Wherever possible students will be outside during eating times.

If bringing food from home is not possible, the following guidelines will apply.

- Staff should serve all food items.
- Utensils (not fingers) should be used by staff to serve food.
- Shared food containers will be removed from eating areas (e.g., snack bowls, pitchers of water or milk, salt and pepper shakers)
- For snack programs, snacks will be dispensed directly to children. Only prepackaged snacks are to be distributed.
- Kitchen and nourishment areas that could be accessed by children or visitors are closed.
- On-site food preparation by students is not permitted.

14. No Sharing Policies

It is important to reinforce in children the policies of no food sharing and no water-bottle sharing. The practice of not sharing food or water bottles in schools helps reduce virus transmission among staff and children.

B: High Quality Learning and Assessment for All

1. 2020-2021 School Year Calendar

The Pine Creek School Division 2020-2021 School Year Calendar is available [here](#). Because of the interruption in learning, Parent-Teacher Interviews will be held about 6 weeks into each semester. Alternative formats will be available for these interviews.

2. 2020-2021 Individual School Plans

The school-level return to school plans will look different for each school in Pine Creek School Division. We continue to develop these plans and they will be made available before the start of the school year.

3. Attendance

All students are expected to participate fully in school, even when remote learning is required. Students will be assessed on their work, reflective of their performance and learning.

Schools are critical to the mental health and well-being of children.

Because students and staff must stay home when sick, schools and school divisions have plans in place for absenteeism.

Classroom teachers will support the development and provision of at-home learning packages for students who are isolating or quarantined.

Due to the nature of the contact among teachers, staff and students, and the ability to maintain physical distancing, substitute teachers, clinicians and other staff can currently work across multiple schools. However, restrictions may be put in place if the risk level increases.

At this time, Kindergarten student attendance will be addressed in individual school plans to follow.

All Grades 1 through 8 students will attend school **every day**.

All Grades 9 through 12 students will have face-to-face classes **every second day**. Students may be asked to attend school more frequently depending on circumstances. Specific attendance dates will be communicated through the school plan to follow.

4. Supports for Students with Special Needs

There are unique challenges experienced by students with special learning needs during this time and additional supports may be required.

These supports will be communicated with families on an individual basis.

Manitoba Education continues to work with Manitoba Families and education stakeholders to further develop guidance and support for students with special needs and students at risk. For more information, please visit <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/rsssn.html>

5. Mental Health and Well-Being

Student and staff mental health and well-being is a core element of the reopening planning. It is foundational in ensuring a return to a welcoming environment that supports learning. We continue to plan for school-level and Division-level interventions to ensure that all staff and students have access to the support they need at this unprecedented time.

C: Resources

More information on Manitoba Education's COVID-19 response, including resources, planning documents, and frequently asked questions, can be found at Latest COVID-19 Education News at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html>

My Learning at Home, a resource to assist families to support their children in remote learning from home, can be found at <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/learningathome/index.html>.

Current information about COVID-19 in Manitoba can be found at <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/>

Public Health Resources

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve in Manitoba, please check the provincial website at www.manitoba.ca/covid19 for the most up-to-date information.

- All screening that identifies suspected cases of COVID-19 is to be referred to Health Links – Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-7257.

- A detailed online self-screening tool for individuals to use is available at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.

Communication Resources

- Up-to-date public health information is available at <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>

- An up-to-date list of symptoms is available at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/about.html>

- The following website has posters that can be printed and used: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/posters/>

- A printable workplace screening poster is available at www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/coronavirus/COVID-19-poster-1.pdf

Resources on Talking to Children about COVID-19

Resources for Supporting Children's Emotional Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic

This site provides guidance, recommendations, and resources from child trauma experts at Child Trends and the Child Trauma Training Center at the University of Massachusetts:

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/resources-for-supporting-childrens-emotional-well-being-during-the-covid-19-pandemic?>

How Teachers Can Talk to Children about Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
This UNICEF site provides tips for having age-appropriate discussions to reassure and protect children.

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teachers-can-talk-childrenabout-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

Transportation Resources

Specific guidelines for transportation to schools are available at
<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/transportation.html>

Additional Resources:

[Welcoming our Students Back: Restoring Safe Services](#) (July 30, 2020)

[Welcoming our Students Back: A Guide for Parents, Caregivers and Students](#)
(August 13, 2020)

[Resources for Families](#) (a collection of resources about school reopening across Canada and around the world).

For more information on COVID-19, please visit <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/>
or Manitoba Education's Latest COVID-19 Education News website at
<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html>
for the latest news and for frequently asked questions.