



# PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION: RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN

2020-2021

[Abstract](#)

PLPSD Return to School Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year  
Revised August 26, 2020

## Revisions

- **August 26 – Page 9 – Personal Protection Equipment**

## Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Attendance and Participation in Learning](#)

[School Calendar](#)

[Opening Day](#)

[Provincial Assessments](#)

[Institutional Preparedness](#)

[Recovery of Learning](#)

[Safety and Health Protocols](#)

[Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)

[Health and Safety of our Community](#)

[Contact Tracing](#)

[Modifying Behaviours that Mitigate Risk](#)

[Staying Home When Sick](#)

[Screening](#)

[What Happens If A Child Exhibits Symptoms](#)

[Hand Hygiene](#)

[Food Handling](#)

[No-Sharing Policies](#)

[Toys](#)

[Physical Distancing](#)

[Reopening of Schools](#)

[Rethinking Spaces in Schools](#)

[Rethinking Learning and Teaching](#)

[Online and Technology Capacity](#)

[Student Transportation](#)

[Student Services and Clinical Services](#)

[Mental Health and Well-Being](#)

[Mental Health Promotion](#)

[Teacher Service Delivery During Remote Learning \(If Required\)](#)

[Student Specific Plans](#)

[The Role of Support Staff Working with Students During the Pandemic Restrictions in PLPSD](#)

[Childcare and Before and After Programs](#)

[Reviewing Emergency Preparedness](#)

[School Board Meetings](#)

[Divisional Direction](#)

[Our Purpose, Mission and Values](#)

[Facility Use Permits](#)

[Managing New Registrations](#)

[Out-of-Province Student and Staff Travel](#)

[Staff Services – Leaves](#)

[Right to Refuse](#)

[Medical Notes](#)

[Student and Family Preparedness](#)

[Student Screening and Self-Assessment](#)

[Personal Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette](#)

[Communication to the School Community](#)

[School Staff Preparedness](#)

[Visitors to Schools and Itinerant Divisional Employees](#)

[Sports, Clubs and Extra-Curricular](#)

[Professional Learning](#)

[References](#)

## Introduction

Portage la Prairie School Division's senior leadership team along with principals from all PLPSD schools continue to refine the plan for the reopening of schools in September and will continue to update the information on the division website.

Students will return to in class instruction on September 8, 2020.

Teachers and staff will return to schools on September 2, 3 and 4, providing an opportunity for orientation to public health requirements and the educational priorities to support students, as well as professional learning around recovery learning.

Division-level re-entry plans will be finalized by August 17, 2020, and posted on the division website, and they will be accessible to the school community. The Manitoba Education website will have links to the various plans. The plans will outline:

- the school day structure and learning plan
- how the school division will ensure public health orders and guidance are followed
- how the school division will address the mental health and well-being of the school community, including teachers, staff, students, and families
- how information will be communicated to students, staff, and families

Our 'new reality' means that schools around the world will be operating with much uncertainty for the next while and therefore patience and ongoing planning will be a continued requirement. Please be reassured that the PLPSD will be doing everything possible to mitigate risk until a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19 is available.

In the first six weeks, school staff will make it a priority to work with students and families to review what Recovery Learning needs are required as we begin the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

Manitoba Education's [framework](#) to resume in-class learning in 2020-2021 provides guidelines to divisions for planning.

Manitobans will be living with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. We must adapt and learn to live and study safely amidst the pandemic. It is in the best interest of children to be in school, and we must mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on students and families to ensure that learning and assessment continues for all.

Remember that children are often listening when others are talking about COVID-19. Staff should consider this and minimize discussions of COVID-19 that are not related to the specific setting. Staff should be mindful of how children share information in less supervised settings (e.g., during outdoor play, before and after school, during lunch and snack times). In these settings, children can become misinformed. It is important for staff to correct this misinformation as they become aware of it.

For the PLPSD in-class learning will be as follows:

- Kindergarten to Grade 8 students will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week inclusive of home economics and industrial arts for Grades 7 and 8
- Students in Grades 9 and 10 will return for up to five days per week of in-class instruction
- Students in Grades 11 and 12 will return every other day for in-class instruction
- Students with special needs in all grades will return for five days of in-class instruction (full instructional day) per week
- Vocational programming will continue to be available to students in Grades 10 to 12
- For the 2020-2021 school year, Grades 7 to 12 foods courses will not be offered
- At this time no formalized choral programming will be offered to students
- Field trips and outings are permitted; however, the participation of student must be voluntary and accompanied by appropriate parental permission. Enhanced planning for field trips will be necessary to ensure health guidelines are met.
- Students who had difficulty with remote learning (engagement, technical issues, other) will resume in-class instruction up to five days per week

When returning to school in September:

- Classrooms will be configured to support physical distancing with the use of alternate space as needed, such as multi-purpose rooms. Two metres of physical distancing is required to the greatest extent possible
- Where physical distancing is not possible, students must remain within cohorts to reduce exposure to others. Cohorts will distance themselves from other groups to limit exposure. In these instances, there must be at least one metre between students as they sit at their desks in classrooms
- Entry and exits to schools will be managed to avoid congestion
- Lunch and recess breaks will be staggered
- Protocols will be in place to safely move students through schools to reduce congestion in hallways and common areas. Teachers will move across classrooms instead of students
- Students and staff are required to self-screen and stay home when they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19
- Parents and caregivers will be expected to screen their children before boarding the bus or entering a school
- There will also be screening protocols for all people entering a school and limitations regarding visitors
- Students will be reminded of the importance of physical distancing and hand washing
- There will be enhanced cleaning protocols in schools and on buses

- 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

### **Attendance and Participation in Learning**

School attendance is mandatory for children aged 7 to 18 in Manitoba.

All students are expected to participate fully in learning, even when remote learning is required.

Arrangements will be needed for students, teachers, administrators, and school staff who may be at higher risk of COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions or other risk factors.

Division-level 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.

Similarly, barring exceptional circumstances, students are expected to engage fully in remote learning if/when it is required.

It will be essential that parents and students monitor and self-assess their health prior to coming to school. Coughing, sneezing, sore throat, body aches are all signs that a student should remain home and contact Health Links. Please review the self-assessment protocols that will be shared by your school principals in September.

It will be important for schools to work closely with their local public health team, and they should reach out if a situation arises where they require clarification or information. Manitoba Education and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) will be working with local public health teams and regional health authorities to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information. A dedicated Manitoba Education email address will be monitored so school administrators have timely access to information and support: [educovid19@gov.mb.ca](mailto:educovid19@gov.mb.ca).

### **School Calendar**

Manitoba Education has communicated the following:

- The school calendar will have three additional days added prior to the Labour Day weekend, meaning the school year will start Wednesday, September 2, 2020 for teachers and staff
- Students will return to class on Tuesday, September 8, 2020
- September 2, 3 and 4, 2020 will be mandated non-instructional days, one of which will be considered as an administration day and two as professional development days.

Schools are to use this time to prepare physical spaces, educate staff on public health protocols, and engage collaboratively on approaches to recovery learning

- School divisions will schedule the seven remaining non-instructional days
- All professional development days should be focused on COVID-19-related priorities and response, including the province-wide professional development day on October 23, 2020

#### Non-instructional Days in PLPSD for 2020-2021

- Wednesday, September 2, 2020
- Thursday, September 3, 2020
- Friday, September 4, 2020
- Tuesday, October 6, 2020
- Friday, October 23, 2020
- Friday, November 13, 2020
- Friday, November 27, 2020
- Monday, February 1, 2021
- Friday, April 16, 2021
- Wednesday, June 30, 2021

#### Winter Break

- Last Day of School: Friday, December 18, 2020
- School Re-opens: Monday, January 4, 2021

#### Spring Break

- Last Day of School: Friday, March 26, 2021
- School Re-opens: Monday, April 5, 2021

#### Last day of school in 2020-2021

- Wednesday, June 30, 2021

#### **Opening Day**

The week of August 31, schools will communicate the schedule of staggered entries and new protocols for students to start on September 8.

#### **Provincial Assessments**

##### *Grade 3 and 4 Assessment and Middle Years Assessment*

The provincial data collection associated with the Grade 3 Assessment in Reading, Literacy and Numeracy and Grade 4 Assessment in French Immersion Literacy, as well as the Middle Years Assessment of Key Competencies in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing, and Student Engagement will be suspended for the 2020-2021 school year, to ensure the focus

is placed on supporting students' return to in-class learning and recovery learning needs. PLPSD will be continuing the assessment for divisional data collection only.

### Grade 12 Tests

Grade 12 provincial tests are scheduled to proceed as normal. Schools will be notified if the public health situation warrants a change to the provincial tests. In the event of cancellation, other forms of assessment will be used to determine students' marks.

### Institutional Preparedness

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), PLPSD shall ensure institutional preparedness by:

- Preparing school facilities to accommodate physical distancing, including increased sanitation, hand hygiene and other public health provisions
- Following the guidelines for re-opening school facilities. These will be updated regularly to reflect new public health orders and guidance
- Posting information about physical distancing, cleaning, and other public health measures to help schools prepare for in-class learning
- Planning for adjustments to transportation routes and schedules for all stages of re-opening, including asking parents to transport their own children where possible
- The PLPSD has already purchased specialized sanitation equipment and developed increased cleaning protocols in preparation for the resumption of in-school learning. These efforts came into practice June 1, 2020 during the limited reopening phase

### Recovery of Learning

- An "Individual Recovery of Learning Plan" was required if a student had limited to no engagement with learning between March 23 and June 29, 2020. It is intended to support planning for individual student learning at the next level
- Plans have been shared with the student's next year's teacher(s)
- The plans will guide the teacher in the fall to "recover" the missing outcomes, for each student
- Targeted interventions should emphasize literacy and numeracy skills and concepts
- All K to 7 students had the opportunity to meet with their next year's teacher in June 2020
- In September, there is planned PD for all teachers that focus on recovery of learning and re-engaging students

*Manitoba Education has noted the following considerations:*

- Some students will need minimal re-orientation to the school environment, relationships and routines, and academic review, as per usual September start-up  
Others will need a longer time to re-orient, re-establish relationships and routines, and

engage in learning experiences that would have occurred during the suspension of in-class learning

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**PLPSD K-8 INDIVIDUAL RECOVERY OF LEARNING PLAN**

**\*For students who had limited to no engagement in learning  
between March 23 and June 29, 2020**

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Program:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Degree or level of student’s overall participation in learning since school closure:**

**None   Limited (<5)   Sometimes (some classes)   Regular (most classes)**

**2. If you selected “none” or “limited” what reasons were given or suspected.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. What significant/priority learning targets were achieved since Mar. 23?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What significant/priority learning targets were not achieved since Mar. 23?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Learning Behaviour Comment added to report card:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

9-11 and 11+ INDIVIDUAL RECOVERY OF LEARNING PLAN

\*Credit is not achieved

\*The Individual Student Plan created by Student Services will supplement the Recovery of Learning Plan

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Degree or level of student’s overall participation in learning since school closure:

None  Limited (<5)  Sometimes (some classes)  Regular (most classes)

2. If you selected “none” or “limited” what reasons were given or suspected.

3. What significant/priority learning targets were achieved since March 23?  
What significant/priority learning targets were not achieved since March 23, 2020

4. Learning Behaviour Comment added to report card:

- Divisional strategies for re-engaging students who have not participated in remote learning:
  - Students that had difficulty with remote learning will be prioritized for intensive recovery of learning and expected to be in attendance daily
  - The high school schedule for Grades 11 and 12, students attending every other day, would not apply to the identified students until essential outcomes were met
  - An Individual Recovery of Learning Plan was developed for each student identified and will be followed in the fall

**Safety and Health Protocols**

PLPSD has developed procedures to ensure the safety and health of staff, students, and other community members that access divisional facilities. These procedures are continually reassessed, revised and disseminated according to the most current public health orders and guidance. Staff should ensure that they are aware of the most current procedures and that they implement them faithfully. Asking questions and checking in with the school principal, PLPSD Health and Safety Officer and Workplace, Safety and Health school representatives when questions arise will ensure that staff are informed. Professional development around safety and health protocols will be scheduled from September 2 to 4, 2020 for all staff.

Early detection and proactive measures to minimize the risk of transmission will assist with limiting the impact of a case within the school and help prevent disruption of in-class learning and restricted access to the school by students and staff.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

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. Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing and hand-washing, but it provides another layer of protection for the user. 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 required for students in Grades 4 to 12, staff and visitors 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.

- As mandated by Public Health students (Grade 4 and up), teachers, staff, visitors and volunteers are required to wear non-medical masks in areas where physical distancing of two metres is not possible
- Students under Grade 4 can also use non-medical masks
- All school bus passengers in Grade 4 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
- Masks will be provided to students and staff who need them. Inventory will be monitored to ensure adequate supply
- 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 mold 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>

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

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

In June 2020, with the re-opening of schools, PLPSD implemented the following protocols:

- Hand sanitizing stations at all main school entrances
- Supplied all schools with two hydrostatic sanitation cleaning devices
- Classrooms are supplied with hand sanitizer spray bottles
- Classrooms are supplied with approved spray cleaner
- School buses are sanitized after each run
- Bus drivers were provided with disinfectants
- Cleaners and custodians received training on enhanced cleaning protocols
- Additional staff have been hired to complement increased cleaning protocols

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](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.

### **Health and Safety of our Community**

According to Manitoba Education, "current evidence indicates that staff and students can return to school while protecting individual health and minimizing risks from a public health perspective."

As schools plan for the return of staff and students, a balanced focus on maximizing people's health and well-being while mitigating risk is our paramount goal.

### **Contact Tracing**

If a student or staff member reports that they have received a positive test for COVID-19:

- The principal will immediately advise the superintendent
- The superintendent will contact public health officials, seek advice, and collaborate with health officials. Any information about positive test cases will be communicated through Public Health and not the PLPSD. Health Information is considered private, therefore information about positive cases in the PLPSD will not be shared publicly by the division

*To facilitate contact tracing, schools must:*

- record student attendance in school and on buses regularly and accurately
- maintain a log of all visitors and itinerant employees that access the building
- keep groups of student cohorts together and avoid interactions between groups - If there is a case of infection in a school, this practice can help with contact tracing, but also limit potential exposures and drastically reduce the potential number of exposed staff and students

Upon request by public health officials, schools will provide contact information for other students or staff who would be considered "close contacts" of the individual that received a positive test result. Public health officials are responsible for communicating with "close contacts" and for advising the wider school community. Schools must not communicate such information without specific direction from the superintendent and public health officials.

### **Modifying Behaviours That Mitigate Risk**

To ensure the safety of the work environment for all, staff will adhere to the safe work procedures and keep abreast of updated procedures and protocols.

In the event that a family member of the staff person in the same household reports that he or she has received a positive test for COVID-19:

- The staff member will immediately advise their direct supervisor
- The school and division will work with public health officials
- Staff members must be in good health to attend work
- Before leaving for the worksite all staff are to use the [Manitoba Health COVID-19 Screening Tool](#), using the following guidelines:
  - Any cold or flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, muscle ache, headache, nausea, fatigue) they should remain at home
  - If a person in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, is in close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if anyone in the household has travelled out of the province, he/she is required to consult with [Health Links](#) prior to attending school
  - As indicated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back – Restoring Safe Schools](#), arrangements will be needed for teachers, administrators and school staff who may be at higher risk of COVID-19 due to underlying health conditions or other risk factors

### **Staying Home When Sick**

Individuals should self-isolate and not enter schools or education facilities 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)

An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>.

## **Screening**

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

Symptom and exposure screening must occur at the start of each day.

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. Schools must maintain records of staff absenteeism.

Schools must communicate that parents and caregivers need to monitor their child daily for symptoms and exposures before sending them to school. Parents and caregivers are responsible for ensuring their children are not displaying symptoms before sending them to school or on the bus. Schools can also support children with self-screening upon arrival at school.

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. As well, children who are crying can exhibit a runny nose. 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/caregiver to contact Health Links – Info Santé or their health care provider.

## **What Happens if a Child Exhibits Symptoms?**

If a child develops symptoms while at school, the child should be isolated in a separate room. If a separate room is not immediately available, the child needs to be kept at least two metres/six feet away from other children and staff. If possible, a mask should be provided for and worn by the sick child (over two years of age only).

The parent should 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.

Ask the parent or guardian 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.

If the child is young and requires close contact and care while isolated, caregivers can continue to care for the child until the parent is able to pick up the child. Caregivers should be mindful of hand hygiene and avoid contact with the respiratory secretions of the child. A medical mask should be worn by the staff person caring for the child.

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 practice 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 should 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.

### **Hand Hygiene**

- Encourage, and where possible supervise, hand hygiene and make alcohol-based hand sanitizer available at all building access points and throughout the school and in classrooms
- Supervise young children when using alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- 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 but not limited to the following times:
  - at 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/drinking
  - after getting hands dirty or if they have become contaminated
  - 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)
- As part of these routine measures, signage should 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 performing hand hygiene 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/>

### **Food Handling**

The best practice is that parents/guardians provide their own food for their child. If this is not possible, the following guidance applies:

- Staff should serve all food items
- Utensils should be used to serve food items by staff, not fingers
- Remove shared food containers from eating areas (e.g., snack bowls, pitchers of water or milk, salt and pepper shakers)
- Communal microwave ovens will be removed
- If using single service packets of condiments, provide the packet directly to each child, rather than self-serving from a bulk container
- For snack programs, dispense snacks directly to children and use prepackaged snacks only
- Close kitchen and nourishment areas that could be accessed by children or visitors
- Implement other measures as necessary or appropriate, or if directed by local public health
- Ensure that food handling staff practice meticulous hand hygiene
- Cease all classes and activities involving student participation in food preparation

### **No-Sharing Policies**

It is important to reinforce in children the policies of no food sharing and no water-bottle sharing. Generally, these policies are intended to reduce potential exposures to allergens, but the practice of not sharing food or water bottles in schools also helps reduce virus transmission among staff and children. Students are encouraged to keep personal belongings with them. Locker use should be limited or discontinued to avoid congregation in hallways.

## **Toys**

As per standard procedures, it is recommended that schools have toys that are easily cleaned and disinfected. It may be prudent to increase the frequency of the cleaning schedule for these items, especially when illness is circulating in the setting or the local community, or if symptomatic staff and children have been touching the toys.

Plush toys should be avoided. Children's personal toys (i.e., for security or comfort) are not to be shared with other children and should be stored in a way that ensures this.

In general, sensory play must not be used at this time. Children should not use or handle modelling clay, indoor sand, and sensory tables, as these items cannot be easily disinfected. An exception can be made for children with additional support needs where the use of these items is an important part of their individual plan. These items should then be used under staff supervision and exclusively by the individual child.

## **Physical Distancing**

Two metres of physical distancing is required, to the greatest extent possible. When this is not possible, students will remain within cohorts to reduce exposure to others. Cohorts will distance themselves from other groups to limit exposure. In these instances, there must be at least one metre between students as they sit at their desks. Signage will be installed outlining physical distancing protocols and floor markings where any lines may form, both inside and outside the facility. Spaces and schedules will encourage the recommended separation. Physical barriers, where appropriate, are also an option when physical distancing is not possible. Staff and students are encouraged to be outdoors as much as possible. All protocols set out by Manitoba Education regarding contact sports and games, or the use of shared equipment will be followed.

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.

## **Re-Opening of Schools**

Navigating the pandemic and its uncertainties in the 2020-2021 school year will require us to reimagine many of our practices and conceptualizations from timetabling and the use of space to curriculum and its delivery.

PLPSD applauds Manitoba Education efforts to prioritize in-class learning in 2020-2021. The province recognizes that our public schools are essential "to the mental health and well-being

of children. Planning should focus on returning as many students to in-class learning as possible while following public health advice and subject to available physical space and resources."

Manitoba Education has made full-time in-class learning a priority for "students in K-8, students with special needs (all grades), and students who require additional supports who benefit from face-to-face interaction with educators and who may have difficulties navigating remote learning independently. Their return to school also provides parents and caregivers with a greater ability to return to work."

### **Rethinking Spaces in Schools**

PLPSD has prioritized resuming in-class learning still requires a level of physical distancing:

- Schools will implement strategies to avoid crowding in hallways, entrances and other non-instructional spaces
- Schools will limit nonessential visitors and stagger drop-offs, pick-ups, class times and breaks to the greatest extent possible
- Schools will not schedule assemblies and gatherings that exceed public health advice
- If necessary, schools may have to look at alternate sites to increase physical distancing where space in the current school is not available
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged through outdoor classroom spaces, physical education activities, and recess

Manitoba Education recommends keeping groups of students together (cohorting), and preventing circulation and exposure between cohorts where possible, to limit exposure to and spread of COVID-19 while pandemic restrictions are in effect.

Cohorting is recommended but not required if two-metre spacing between students is possible. Cohorting will be used in almost all cases in K to 12.

The extent to which cohorting will occur will depend on available space, age of students, and students' developmental ability to follow safety protocols school configurations and staffing requirements.

### **Rethinking Learning and Teaching**

PLPSD will be required to reimagine teachers and educational assistants in relationship to smaller learning 'cohorts' of students and a holistic approach to learning and teaching.

- Some staff assignments will need to change temporarily
- In all grades, K-12, will focus on strengthening student-centered instructional practices that advance deeper-learning (play-based in the early years, project-based in middle and senior years)

Manitoba Education makes explicit that 2020-2021 will require school systems to continue to refine their 'Blended Learning' strategy.

## What is Blended Learning?

- Teacher-directed remote learning will be an essential component of K to 12 education throughout the pandemic. When remote learning is needed, students may work independently on their own, as well as work with a teacher in real time. Blended in-class and remote learning plans may need to be implemented on short notice. Mechanisms to maintain ongoing contact with students who are participating in remote learning are critical to keeping students engaged
- Remote learning plans will be developed for students with underlying health conditions that prohibit them from returning to in-class learning (before broad access to a vaccine) and students in 14-day quarantine or isolation

## PLPSD will continue to:

- monitor students that require support to obtain access to devices and the Internet
- enhance staff access to technology (devices, software and systems) to ensure the ongoing development of its 'blended learning strategy'
- refine its 'blended learning strategy' (by meaningfully engaging staff, students and parents/guardians)
- co-create the strategy
- develop their technical proficiency and capacities
- Provide ongoing professional development for staff about remote learning

## **Online and Technology Capacity**

PLPSD will continue to leverage technology (Google Classroom and SeeSaw) to support teaching and learning. Since the beginning of the pandemic our priorities have been:

- Ensuring students have access to the internet and laptops
- MiFi devices have been distributed to provide better remote internet access
- Remote hotspots have been set up at Oakville School and Portage Collegiate Institute for free Wi-Fi access
- Laptops / tablets have been distributed for home use
- Offering professional development for teachers to transition to an online teaching environment
- PLPSD teachers have taken part in online professional learning regarding the use of technology to support online learning
- PLPSD offers an EdTech mentorship program that allows teachers to collaborate with a mentor colleague
- Technology and its use to support distance learning will continue in the 2020-2021 school year for our teachers
- Enhancing technology in the classroom for staff and students

- PLPSD is continuing to enhance the availability of technology for both teachers and students as well as looking for new technologies to assist in teaching and learning in our schools

Note: Parents requesting devices (laptop /tablet/MIFI) should contact the school principal where their child attends, to request a device.

### **Student Transportation**

Student transportation on buses will be pose a significant challenge for PLPSD in the fall due to the physical distancing requirements. On August 13, 2020 Manitoba Education released [Guidelines for Transportation to Schools](#) for the 2020-2021 school year. We understand that the decision to reduce our regular ridership will impact many families, however, we are following the recommendations of Manitoba Education and Public Health.

In order to meet the needs of approximately 1,600 students who get to school on one of our buses, we will need the support of families to find alternative means of transportation in 2020-2021.

PLPSD will be implementing temporary solutions to reduce the number of students on buses. This will include:

- Grades 11 and 12 students will be transported every other day
- Prioritizing elementary and middle school ridership with alternate days for high school students
- Transporting only eligible bussing students. Non-eligible students (school of choice, students that reside within the 1.6 km range) will not be approved to travel on the buses for the 2020-2021 school year, due to the physical distancing requirements
- Encourage parents to have their child walk, drive their child, and carpool to school
- Expand Walking School Bus options (supervised walking with an adult)
- All school bus passengers in Grade 5 and over, as well as the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These should be put on before getting on the bus and taken off after exiting the bus, if removal is appropriate for the setting. Students in lower grades may also wear non-medical masks. Guidelines on how to wear a mask can be found at: [www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html)
- Families are required to complete the self-screening protocol prior to riding the bus <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

### **Student Services and Clinical Services**

Student Services and Clinical Services staff are also preparing for a 'new reality' in 2020-2021 school year that may include smaller student cohorts, remote learning, ongoing disruptions to on-site learning due to student health and pandemic restrictions, use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other changes required to adapt to pandemic restriction requirements.

PLPSD Schools regularly engage in student-specific, classroom and school-level student services planning. PLPSD will strive to support students with additional needs in school settings where and when possible. As part of our Limited Reopening of Schools Strategy, the PLPSD placed emphasis on connecting with families of children with complex learning needs as a priority.

It is expected there may be an ongoing need for some remote learning due to possible changes in provincial public health restrictions or more frequent student health barriers to onsite learning. During pandemic restrictions, which may increase or decrease quickly, school student services and clinical teams will need to navigate various contexts for student support including small cohorts onsite and remote learning. It will be important that student-specific planning include continual capacity building for remote learning and use of technology for communication and learning where possible, to mitigate disruptions in learning when students are not able to attend school. Please see important additional information from Manitoba Education: [Resources Supporting Students with Special Needs](#).

#### Priorities

- Wellbeing of students, families and staff
- A focus on equity for our most vulnerable students
- Maintaining connections between school staff and students

#### Guidelines

Student specific resources/ supports and services can be effectively provided remotely if necessary.

We will continue with our service delivery models as is possible. However, ongoing capacity building (identification and preparation) for remote and small cohort learning opportunities will be important.

Remote learning comes in many forms and is not always online learning.

Engagement and dialogue with families is key.

Schools and families have local contexts that they must navigate.

Planning and time for planning are key. Ongoing necessary training for staff to work safely with students including:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- PLPSD will provide PPE and staff training as required on the use and care of PPE to keep students and staff safe and will implement the Manitoba Education [Guidelines](#)

### [on Supporting Students Who Require Interventions or Supports that Cannot be Delivered from a Distance](#)

It is essential to connect with parents/guardians to understand their circumstances and needs, to establish a communication plan, and share information to inform student-specific planning whether at school or at home.

We need to provide notice to families regarding specific tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 supports that student services will provide to their children remotely if necessary.

- Arrange regular, ongoing check-ins with families by teachers, administrators and outreach facilitators (phone, email, online tools, etc)
- Use check-ins to discuss resources, supports and services, prioritize learning needs, problem-solve learning and behavioural issues at home, and customize the daily schedule for students
- Help to overcome individual obstacles to accessing materials and resources
- Scheduled times with students and families is recommended
- Consider office hours and staff accessibility  
Specific hours in the day parents can sign-up for ahead of time and touch base with a specific person at the school

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

PLPSD will continue to provide support for mental health and wellbeing as staff and students return to work in September, survey results indicate that staff and students have found the pandemic to be particularly stressful time for a variety of reasons, so mental health supports will be incorporated in to the return planning.

### **Mental Health Promotion**

PLPSD Student Services Department will be providing mental health support programs in coordination with school counselors. The PLPSD will also have the additional support of a Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN) as part of a provincial pilot program, this individual is trained to engage in mental health supports for youth. These teams will be helpful to promote positive mental health in schools upon re-opening.

Mental Health Promotion is about creating environments that promote and sustain positive mental health for everyone. Activities, supports and learning opportunities are designed to enhance protective factors and minimize risk factors. Schools are an ideal setting in which to promote mental health for children and youth, providing an opportunity to reach large groups of children during their formative years of cognitive, emotional and behavioural development.

Mental Health Promotion in schools focuses on enhancing protective factors that contribute to the social and emotional growth of children and youth and decreasing the risk factors that impede psychosocial development.

### **Teacher Service Delivery During Remote Learning (If Required)**

- Co-plan inclusive, developmentally appropriate learning activities with teachers and develop learning resources for parents/students
- Provide student-specific planning support for teachers and families
- Support student-specific planning implementation
- Support outreach for students at-risk and struggling to engage in remote learning easily
- Support understanding of each child's remote learning environment and current considerations for student-specific plans
- Support teachers in the identification of students' learning recovery needs upon return to school
- Domains of Remote Service Delivery (where necessary)
- Providing Supports and Resources for remote learning activities
- Providing remote instruction and services (small group and individualized)

### **Student Specific Plans**

- Learning should be enjoyable and promote relationship, communication and well-being
- Student specific goals must consider new learning environments and supports available
- Consider greater use of outdoor spaces
- Move from student-specific programming to cohorts of students with common needs where possible to reduce social isolation and staff circulation/distribution of resources and needs for spaces
- Inclusion must be meaningful and purposeful, not merely physical/social
- Assets and resources available to students will vary
- Co-planning and co-constructing using a team approach with parents/guardians and older students is even more essential
- Whether curricular or student-specific, goals should be developmentally appropriate and relevant and appropriate for onsite or remote learning contexts
- Focus on making curriculum learning accessible (accommodation, adaptation, modification if the student is eligible)

### **The Role of Support Staff Working with Students During Pandemic Restrictions in PLPSD**

PLPSD recognizes the value of its support staff and their contributions in supporting the inclusion of all students in our community schools. During the pandemic period, the learning environment has changed to include remote learning and learning in schools in smaller cohorts with public health restrictions. As a result, the context and possibilities for meaningful work for support staff working with students have changed.

PLPSD support staff will play an important role in supporting the transition of students back to schools and greater supervision responsibilities as we work to organize students into smaller

cohorts needed to respect physical distancing requirements. Support staff who work with students will experience changes in expectations and assignments as required to supervise and support students in their cohorts.

However, the distinctions between the roles and responsibilities of support staff and professional staff have not changed. The norms for roles and responsibilities, and the requirement for professional staff to plan for and assess learning, provide initial instruction to students and support staff, and to schedule and manage communication between staff, students and parents/guardians, remains in effect. For clarity on roles and responsibilities please see the document [Educational Assistants in Manitoba Schools](#).

The following applies to engaging support staff in working with students:

- Support staff may have increased responsibility for supervision and support of student learning planned by professional staff
- Remote student engagement is to be scheduled and supervised by the teacher/supervisor in Google Meets/SeeSaw in collaboration and as planned with students, staff and parents/guardians
- It will be understood that professional staff will join and supervise/participate in the remote or onsite learning activities with a frequency and duration as they deem appropriate and necessary depending upon the learning task, the staff/student relationship and familiarity with each other, the learning task, and other factors which may require more direct support
- Professional staff will be available to support as needed
- Support staff will communicate student progress or other feedback to supervising professional staff daily and not to parents/guardians
- Only professional staff will communicate with parents regarding students as per normal protocols

### **Childcare and Before and After School Programs**

PLPSD and its Early Learning and Childcare partners have intentionally worked together to develop a strong planning partnership by building a bridge between the two systems to support a seamless transition for young children as they move from childcare to school.

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic did not put our collaboration on hold. The PLPSD and Early Learning and Child Care partnership has continued and has been paramount to ensuring a safe and consistent approach to opening spaces for children in childcare centers located in the division – Wee World (NMS) - opening Fall 2020, Short Stop (ECVS) and Tiny Tots (OVS). Tiny Tots will be closed until January 2021, at that time a decision will be made about the resumption of services.

### **Reviewing Emergency Preparedness**

At the beginning of each school year, principals conduct a review of their school-specific emergency response plan (see *ED - Emergency Situations and Preparedness - Crisis Response Plan*). At this point, public health orders do not require physical distancing requirements to be respected during evacuations or lockdowns. The need for emergency procedures to be expedient, effective, and consistent outweighs the risk that COVID-19 would pose during these situations. That said, students should be encouraged to respect physical distancing once they have arrived at the muster point. PLPSD will revise emergency preparedness protocols as advised.

### **School Board Meetings**

The PLPSD board of trustees will continue to meet regularly throughout 2020-2021 (the Board shall continue to meet on the second and fourth Tuesday in each and every month, September to June, inclusive, in the Board Room at eight (8:00) o'clock p.m. or at such other times or places as the Board may from time to time designate.) Should a public health order restrict physical gatherings, meetings will occur via electronic means. Public participation is welcome, with advance registration required.

Should restrictions be imposed on gather sizes, the PLPSD Board of Trustees would resume meeting via Google Meets, and will continue to broadcast their meetings live via YouTube.

### **Divisional Direction**

The PLPSD remains firmly committed to its Purpose, Mission and Values, and its policies. By articulating PLPSD's foundational principles, these documents provide clear direction. With all the uncertainty brought on by COVID-19, such clear direction is even more important. The Division calls on all members of the school community – staff, students, and parents/guardians – to keep these documents top of mind as they engage in their daily work in 2020-2021 and beyond.

### **Our Purpose, Mission, and Values**

The Portage la Prairie School Division is committed to providing excellent educational programs to help students learn and mature.

The Division believes strongly in the concept of community and promotes the provision of appropriate programs to meet the varied needs of students in regular classrooms from neighbourhood schools.

The PURPOSE of The Portage la Prairie School Division is:

- To provide, or make provision for, appropriate schooling opportunities for students eligible to attend The Portage la Prairie School Division

The MISSION of The Portage la Prairie School Division is:

- To recognize the individual needs and potential of our students and to provide these students with the opportunity to undertake schooling experiences that will contribute to the development of their full potential. Schooling experiences will consider the future demands that will be placed upon society by our rapidly changing world

The following VALUES have been identified as a high priority and are therefore expected to be incorporated into the decision-making and behaviour of the staff and students of The Portage la Prairie School Division.

- *HONESTY*
- *COOPERATION*
- *COMMITMENT*
- *DIGNITY*
- *EQUALITY*
- *COMPASSION*

### **Facility Use Permits**

Permits for evening and weekend facility use are suspended until further notice. The suspension will accommodate increased cleaning requirements and afford schools greater flexibility to repurpose gyms and multipurpose rooms for other types of instruction.

### **Managing New Registrations**

Mobility is a part of life for many families in Canada, and while there has been less mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic, some families will still choose to relocate for better housing, work opportunities, and many other reasons. We can expect that families will continue to relocate within the province of Manitoba, between cities and provinces across Canada, and internationally. Furthermore, relocation will continue to happen throughout the school year, meaning that students new to our Division can arrive at any time.

To guide the safe and successful welcoming and registration of new students, the following guidelines apply:

- Families new to PLPSD must contact the school by phone or email to arrange a registration appointment. Families who are uncertain of which school to contact should contact the Division Office for assistance
- The school will arrange an appropriate time and mechanism for registering new students (in-person, online, or other)
- If the family is relocating from a region that warrants a mandatory quarantine or isolation period, they may be asked to verify their travel dates, and quarantine dates and plans. New registrations will only occur after any mandatory quarantine or isolation period has been completed

- Scheduling and timetabling of new students may require additional time to comply with distancing and cohort limitations. Families will be advised that this may take several weeks or more if students are required to self-isolate due to travel restrictions

### **Out-of-Province Student and Staff Travel**

All out-of-province student travel is suspended for the remainder of the 2020 calendar year. A similar suspension of any PLPSD-related staff travel is likewise in place. The travel ban will be reviewed no later than September 30, 2020, regarding any trips intended for the period from January 2021 to June 2021.

The rationale for the suspension of travel is as follows:

- The obvious concern for student and staff safety and well-being
- Continued uncertainty about predicting the spread, impact, and potential second wave occurrences of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Travel restrictions and quarantine requirements vary across regions and countries
- Significant and unpredictable insurance issues regarding both medical and liability insurance for travelers and the Division
- Unpredictable cost projections due to uncertainty regarding the availability and cost of transportation, variability of currencies and exchange rates
- Reducing the financial impact on families by cancelling trips with as much advance notice as possible

### **Staff Services – Leaves**

#### **What Happens if a Staff Member Exhibits Symptoms?**

If a staff member or volunteer in a school becomes symptomatic, they should 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 should occur. Focus should be on high-touch areas and areas where the staff/volunteer spent time.

- The following paragraphs present additional information on employee leaves and [recent amendments](#) to the Employment Standards Code – Bill 55, due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

#### **Leaves**

As a result of COVID-19 if an employee cannot work because they are providing compassionate care to a family member or they are needing to provide childcare due to school/daycare closures:

- An Employee is to submit an unpaid leave request stating his/her need to provide compassionate care/childcare due to the impact of COVID-19
- The employee will email in writing his/her unpaid request or submit a Leave Form to the administrator/supervisor who will forward the request to superintendent
- The employee applies to the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)/Employment Insurance

*If the employee is instructed to go into quarantine by Manitoba Health Links or self-isolates:*

- Sick days will be used for absences, and "illness" is reported in CIMS (*PLPSD Human Resource Online Portal*)
- When all sick days have been used or if no sick days are available, the employee will be placed on an unpaid sick leave
- For long-term unpaid sick leave, employee should apply to CERB/Employment Insurance
- MTS/PTA Members: if no available sick days, may be eligible for short-term or long-term benefits

*If the employee is home because of an ill partner or unwell children:*

- Depending on the symptoms and situation related to the illness, the employee is to call Health Links and follow their directive
- Family Leave should be used as defined in the Collective Agreement and reported in CIMS
- Pending the situation, sick days may be used for absences and reported in CIMS
- If all sick days have been used or if no sick days are available, the employee will be placed on an unpaid sick leave
- For long-term unpaid sick leave, employee should apply to CERB/Employment Insurance
- MTS/PTA Members: if no available sick days, may be eligible for short-term or long-term benefits

*If the employee is ill:*

- Depending on the symptoms related to the illness, employee is to call Health Links, and follow directive given by Health Links
- Sick days are to be used for absences, and illness reported in CIMS
- When all sick days have been used or if no sick days are available, employee will be placed on an unpaid sick leave
- For long-term unpaid sick leave, employee should apply to CERB/Employment Insurance
- MTS/PTA Members: if no available sick days, may be eligible for short-term or long-term benefits

*If administrator/supervisor is concerned an employee is ill, and/or his/her exposure to others:*

- Administrator/supervisor will send employee home
- If a staff member becomes ill over the weekend they should contact their direct supervisor
- Depending on the symptoms related to the illness, employee is to call Health Links, and follow directive given by Health Links
- Sick days should be used for absences, and illness reported in CIMS
- When all sick days have been used or there are no sick days available, the employee will be placed on an unpaid sick leave
- For long-term unpaid sick leave, employee should apply to CERB/Employment Insurance
- MTS/PTA Members: if no available sick days, may be eligible for short-term or long-term benefits

*If an employee, whose assignment requires him/her to be at school/work location, and refuses to report to work because of an immune-compromised partner or child who cannot leave the home:*

- The employee should contact Health Links and if Health Links instruct the employee to stay home:
  - Sick days should be used for absences, and illness reported in CIMS
  - When all sick days have been used or there are no sick days available, the employee will be placed on an unpaid sick leave
  - For long-term unpaid sick leave, employee should apply to CERB/Employment Insurance
  - MTS/PTA Members: if no available sick days, may be eligible for short-term or long-term benefits

### **Right to Refuse**

If an employee, whose assignment requires them to be at school/work locations and refuses to report to work and stays home for reasons that have not been discussed or confirmed by Health Links:

The employee should follow Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) process for refusal to work due to health/safety concern.

### **Medical Notes**

Bill 55, [The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act](#) has suspended the requirement of a physician's certificate or medical note for the following employee leaves: maternity; compassionate care; unpaid leave organ donation; critical illness; long-term serious injury or illness; public health emergency leave.

## **Student and Family Preparedness**

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), PLPSD shall promote student and family preparedness by:

Identifying students with disabilities and those who are vulnerable to disengage from school, develop and implement strategies to re-engage them and prioritize these students for five days a week in-class learning, where possible.

Refer to [Resources Supporting Students with Special Needs](#) for principles and practical resources to assist with planning.

Communicating expectations for in-class attendance and participation in remote learning.

Students are expected to attend in-class learning. If remote learning is included as part of their learning plan, students will be expected to participate.

Developing comprehensive strategies for regular communication with families to raise awareness of the health and safety measures implemented at the school.

Ensuring the understanding that students may not attend school when sick or exhibiting symptoms of illness.

Refer to the online [COVID-19 screening tool](#) to develop materials.

Signal that in-class learning may be increased or suspended on short notice in response to changing public health advice.

## **Student Screening and Self-Assessment**

Students must be in good health to attend school. Before leaving for school parents/guardians are to use the [Manitoba COVID-19 Screening Tool](#), using the following guidelines:

If a student shows any cold or flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, muscle ache, headache, nausea, fatigue) they should remain at home.

If a person in the household has been diagnosed with COVID-19, is in close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if anyone in the household has travelled out of the province, the person is required to consult with [Health Links](#) prior to attending school and follow their directions.

## **Personal Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

- Students will use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately upon entry into the school
- Students will be instructed to follow all floor signage such as directional arrows or physical distancing spacing at all times within the school building
- Personal hygiene practices that minimize the risk of virus transmission must be followed at all times, these include:
  - covering the mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing with a tissue or a flexed elbow
  - immediately disposing of used tissues in a garbage container
  - washing hands frequently, particularly after coughing or sneezing without a tissue, touching frequently used surfaces such as door handles or taps as well as before and after eating
  - avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth

Cleaning and sanitizing of shared spaces will be a priority in PLPSD schools and facilities. Washrooms will be cleaned on a regular basis according to health and safety guidelines.

### **Communication to the School Community**

Since the onset of the pandemic, PLPSD has gathered feedback by surveying stakeholders including:

- Teachers/Support Staff
- Transportation Surveys
- Parent survey regarding the remote learning experience
- School leaders regarding student and staff engagement
- School / Outreach contact with each family to assess needs

***Our [divisional website](#) will continue to provide the most up-to-date and comprehensive information for students and families. Regular email and social media updates will also continue to be provided. Important information and links will also be sent out via the PLPSD Facebook and Twitter accounts.***

### **School Staff Preparedness**

As mandated by Manitoba Education in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), PLPSD shall ensure staff preparedness and compliance with Public Health orders and guidelines in all our schools and workplaces by:

- Orienting staff to new public health protocols that must be followed in the school, before resuming in-class learning
- Including all staff in orientation, including bus drivers, custodial staff, etc.
- Providing orientation to volunteers, if they are on site in a limited way, to ensure they receive orientation when they begin

- Using the online [COVID-19 screening tool](#) to inform staff orientation
- Presenting information on self-monitoring, managing a suspected case of COVID-19, managing shared spaces, etc.
- Identifying staff who may need to work at home due to underlying health concerns that make them more vulnerable to exposure to COVID-19, and making any necessary adjustments
- Planning for health and safety training that may be required, and also ensuring that professional learning focuses on COVID-19 pandemic priority areas, including recovery learning, collaborative planning, mental health and wellbeing and remote learning strategies
- Professional Development for all professional staff on recovery of learning, blended learning and student re-engagement

### **Visitors to Schools and Itinerant Divisional Employees**

Upon entry to each work site, visitors and Itinerant Division Employees must sign-in on the Entry Log with the date, name, and entry time, and the location(s) being accessed in the building. Staff will need to sign-out their departure time on the Entry Log.

Upon request by public health officials, schools will provide contact information for staff who would be considered "close contacts" of any individual that received a positive test result. Public health officials are responsible for communicating with "close contacts" and for advising the wider school community. Schools will not communicate such information without specific direction from the superintendent.

Physical distancing [measures](#) to reduce your risk of infection:

- Minimize prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two meters/ six feet) contact between your co-workers and other individuals in public
- Where possible, meet with colleagues online or via telephone instead of in person
- Avoid greetings that involve touching, such as handshakes
- Avoid travel, crowded places, and events, especially if you are at higher risk (e.g., seniors and those with underlying medical conditions)
- Disinfect frequently used surfaces in your workspace

Follow public health advice related to self-monitoring and self-isolation if you have been exposed to COVID-19 through travel or contact with someone infected with COVID-19.

### **Sports, Clubs and Extra-Curricular**

As guidelines continue to be developed, the PLPSD will determine which activities can be offered safely according to the recommendations of Public Health.

The Province of Manitoba has issued the following directives for learning and teaching safely during the current public health situation:

- [Sports Guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for Vocalists and Instrumentalists](#)

PLPSD is committed to ensuring that all staff are aware of such guidelines and that all guidelines are implemented. As more guidelines are developed and approved by the Province, PLPSD will communicate them to staff and support their implementation.

### **Professional Learning**

The following professional learning norms (articulated in policy) shall guide our professional growth as we prepare for the return to school and respond to the ever-evolving public health situation.

- Student learning informs professional learning
- Professional learning is most efficacious when it's personalized, differentiated, job-embedded and collaborative
- Professional learning is a continuous collaborative inquiry:
  - designed to incrementally improve practice
  - informed by student learning data
  - grounded in current research
  - guided by both the school's and division's multi-year strategic plans
- Professional learning must be framed by continuous cycles of assessment, planning, and action that measure the impact of collective teaching practice on student learning and lead to greater collective efficacy.

### **References**

PLPSD would like to thank Louis Riel School Division for the permission to use information and content from the LRSD Recovery of Learning Document.