



8/17/2020

# St. Edward's School Re-Opening of Schools

Parent & Community Information



L. Doyle  
PRINCIPAL

## **Updates:**

**August 21, 2020**

### **Masks**

The use of non-medical masks for staff and students in grades 4 – 12 is mandatory. Students in other grades may also choose to wear non-medical masks. Parents are expected to provide reusable masks for their children.

### **Medical Exclusions:**

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 requires isolation and contacting Health Links.

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# St. Edward's School

## Re-Opening of Schools

### INTRODUCTION

On July 30, 2020, Manitoba Education announced the plans for the reopening of Manitoba schools. 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." In preparing for the reopening of schools on September 8 and navigating the 2020-2021 school year, our priorities remain unchanged: the health, wellbeing and safety of our community and doing our part at St. Edward's School to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Our plan is based on policy and public health directives that have been approved by the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer.

We are living in a time that requires a constant assessment of risk and public health measures to mitigate risk and to ensure our community is safe. This will be in force until such time that a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19 is available. Parallel to Manitoba's strategy to maximize health and mitigate risk proportionate to the level of COVID-19 infection in the community, St. Edward's plan reflects the importance of safety, health, and well-being, while ensuring reasonable measures are in place to minimize the risk of transmission and exposure to the virus in our school. This, of course, will require many changes to our regular routines. We cannot guarantee that no student or staff member will get sick, but we are optimistic that the measures we have put in place will go a long way in protecting our community. Patience, understanding and co-operation are paramount to the success of our plan. By working together, we are confident that your children will experience a positive return to school.

**At this time, all students are expected to return to in-class learning.** Remote learning will not be offered unless mandated by the government. If parents do not feel comfortable sending their children to school, they must pursue Home Schooling. It is understandable that parents have many questions and concerns regarding the return to in-class learning. The purpose of this document is to communicate with students and parents our plan for safe and healthy pathways to successfully navigate the 2020-2021 school year in relation to the pandemic. Hopefully it will help to reassure the parents as they prepare for the new school year. Advice from the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer and Manitoba Education will continue to guide our planning and the decisions we make throughout the school year. This document will be updated as needed as the public health situation in Manitoba changes.

## School Preparedness: Institutional Procedures

In-class learning will resume for our students in September 2020. September 2, 3 & 4 will be devoted to staff orientation regarding public health protocols and for final preparations to our facility.

Based on public health measures, the following will be in place:

- We will meet the requirements for physical distancing and cohorting of students by analyzing the size of each space to determine how appropriately sized cohorts of students can be spread out across the school's available spaces.
- Re-purposing spaces such as the resource room, the MPR (music room) and the church hall (P.E. space) to accommodate smaller groups of students in each classroom, if needed.
- Separation barriers will be used as needed.
- Specialty teachers and EAs will be reassigned to allow for smaller learning cohorts of students, when needed.
- The movement of people within our school will be minimized with staff members changing rooms and students remaining in their cohort in their assigned areas.
- Timetables will be revised to avoid crowding in hallways, entrances and other non-instructional spaces.
- Staggering drop-offs, pick-ups, and breaks to the greatest extent possible. (see separate schedule)
- Increased sanitation, hand hygiene and other public health provisions will be followed.
- Information about physical distancing, cleaning, and other public health measures will be posted.
- Limiting nonessential visitors to the school.
- Designing and delivering curricula using a 'blended learning' method when needed
  - Teaching students how to use various on-line platforms
  - Instructing staff (teachers and EAs) in various on-line platforms
- In order to ensure social distancing measures and cohorting that is required, assemblies, concerts, and other large gatherings will not be held until allowed by the public health guidelines.
- Community use of the school will be suspended.

### **Opening Day**

Students, staff and parents/guardians, can anticipate staggered appointments on September 8 in order to best prepare to navigate our "new reality". An email will be sent to parents requesting them to sign-up for a time to come to school to pay fees and to purchase uniforms. Students will meet their teachers on September 8.

### **Enhanced Hygiene Protocols**

Public health orders are to be followed at all times to reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19. The following hygiene measures will be in place:

- Increased sanitation, hand hygiene and other public health provisions:
  - Increased cleaning and sanitation of washrooms, classrooms and high-touch surfaces.
  - Water fountains that are not touchless will be covered to prevent use. Bottle refill stations will continue to be available, but students must bring their own bottles.
- Personal hygiene practices that minimize the risk of virus transmission will be followed. These include:
  - Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or a flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing and immediately disposing of used tissues in a garbage container.
  - Avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth.
  - Limiting/restricting the use of toys/objects that cannot be easily cleaned/sanitized.
  - Using hand sanitizer and/or washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds immediately upon entry into the school, after each recess break, and throughout the school day, as needed. For example:
    - after going to the washroom;
    - before and after eating;
    - after getting hands dirty; and
    - after coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose.

### **Custodial Responsibilities**

St. Edward's custodial staff has worked diligently to prepare our building for the return of students.

To ensure our building remains clean and well-sanitized, we are:

- Providing hand sanitizer stations in all classrooms and at each entry.
- Ensuring we have an adequate supply of liquid soap and other cleaning products.
- Ensuring our electric hand dryers are in good working order.
- Ensuring all spaces are cleaned after each use.
- Ensuring that common areas and high touch surfaces are cleaned throughout the school day.
- Suspending use of the building by outside groups.

### Visitors and Volunteers

Schools have been told to minimize visitors and volunteers at school facilities and to implement guidelines to prevent the spread of the virus. These guidelines are as follows:

- All parents and visitors must report to the office upon entering the building.
- Please do not come inside before school to drop off backpacks, etc.
- Please do not come into the school with your children in the morning.
- Please wait in your vehicle at dismissal time for your children to come outside.
- Parents are still welcome to come into the building if they need to visit the office; however, all visitors and volunteers must first self-screen and adhere to physical distancing and hygiene practices in place for students and staff.

### Before & After School Program

With permission of the public health officials, our Before and After School program will continue to operate this school year. Parents may come to the Alverstone door to drop their children off for the Before School Program and to pick up their children who are in the After School Program.

Social distancing protocols will be in place and toys and equipment will not be shared.

## School Day Routines

### Arrivals and Departures

Arrival and departure times will be staggered according to family names. To keep the numbers at the appropriate levels, please keep to your assigned times as much as possible. To alleviate parking lot congestion, please STOP, DROP, and GO when dropping off your children.

#### Arrival Times

Time	Group
8:25	Patrols & Siblings
8:30 - 8:40	Family Names A to J
8:40 - 8:50	Family Names K to Z & Kindergarten

- The patrols will enter the building as they arrive.
- The 8:30 – 8:40 group will line up in their assigned places and will go inside the building at 8:40.
- The 8:40 group will go inside as they arrive.
- There will be a regular outside supervisor on duty every day before school, beginning at 8:30.

### Dismissal Times

Time	Group
3:30 - 3:40	Family Names K to Z & Kindergarten
3:40 - 3:50	Family Names A to J
3:50 – 3:55	Patrols & Siblings

- Mr. Muys will take his kindergarten students outside at 3:30.
- The designated grade 1 & 2 students will be taken outside by a staff person at 3:30.
- Mr. Dimalanta and Mrs. Bernardo will take their second groups out at 3:40.
- All other grades will send their students outside at the designated times.
- There will be a regular outside supervisor on duty every day until 3:50

### Recess Breaks

Public health advises that playgrounds and play structures are low risk for transmission. There are no recommended specific requirements for cleaning play structures. For recess breaks, the following will be in place:

- Recess breaks will be staggered to ensure social distancing is in place.
- Each grade will be assigned an area of the playground to use.
- Separate containers of equipment will be provided for each class or cohort and items will be cleaned after use.

### Lunch Time

- Lunch times will be staggered, with some grades eating at 12:00 and going outside at 12:30. The other grades will go outside at 12:00 and will eat at 12:30. The late lunch group will be given the option of bringing an extra snack to eat before going outside at 12:00.
- **Lunch Schedule:**

<b>12:00 – 12:25</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>In</b>	K, 1, 3, 5
<b>Out</b>	2, 4, 6
<b>12:25 – 12:55</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>In</b>	2, 4, 6
<b>Out</b>	K, 1, 3, 5

- Students must bring their own lunches.
- For special occasions, provided lunches must be individually wrapped in disposable containers.
- Special lunch programs can be offered with necessary adjustments to ensure health guidelines are in place.
- Students will be reminded that sharing food and drinking containers is not allowed.



## Academics and Speciality Programming

### In-Class Learning

As has been directed by Manitoba Education, beginning September 8, in-class learning will occur with additional public health measures. **All students are expected to attend daily and to participate fully, unless medical conditions prevent this.** Teachers will continue to provide a well-balanced education, following the Manitoba curriculum and best practices. Regular assessment and issuing of report cards will continue as in past years, following the guidelines and policies of Manitoba Education. In addition to this, to prevent the spread of infection, we will:

- limit the use of shared resources;
- maintain social distance measures;
- implement cohorts and the use of physical barriers as needed; and
- reduce group work and projects, using digital platforms to maintain social distancing when group work is necessary.

### Technology Education Programming & Access to Devices

During the suspension of in-class learning, St. Edward's School continued to increase the availability of technology for both staff and students through the purchase of new iPads, desktop, and laptop computers. To support students during the suspension of in-class learning, laptops purchased from Computers for Schools were made available for students who needed them. New computers, with up-dated programs and cameras were purchased for staff members. Students will be surveyed to identify technology needs and strengths. To further this process, the following will be in place:

- Students will be taught how to use various on-line platforms for remote learning.
- Staff will be provided with professional development opportunities to be prepared for a transition to an online teaching environment.
- Technology needs will continue to be assessed throughout the 2020-21 school year and equipment will be up-dated/purchased as needed.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities, Music & Physical Education**

- Until further notice, no extra-curricular activities will be offered during the school day or after school.
- Music classes will be offered keeping the most recent public health guidelines in mind. At the time of this document, the following measures were advised:
  - No choir activities (singing).
  - No concerts until restrictions are lifted.
  - Each cohort will have assigned equipment, which will be disinfected after each use.
  - All students will use their own supplies.
  - To reduce hallway interactions, some music classes may be held in the classrooms.
- P. E. will be offered keeping the most recent public health guidelines in mind. At the time of this document, the following measures were advised:
  - Classes will be offered outside, weather permitting.
  - Individual activities, as opposed to team sports, will be offered.
  - Each cohort will have assigned equipment, which will be disinfected after each use.

### **Recovery Learning: Meeting the Needs of All Students**

- Students were invited in to school in June for assessment purposes. Staff members used the information gathered throughout that process to assess students' needs and to plan for recovery learning. During transition meetings, this information was communicated to the receiving teachers. Students who will require recovery learning and resource support were identified, and recommendations were noted on report cards.
- Teachers were provided with professional reading materials which provided strategies for meeting the needs of students through 'recovery learning' and 'just in time learning' (addressing needs as they occur in the curriculum).
- Teachers were provided with unit planning templates to assist with their planning for the new school year.
- Time for on-going dialogue with colleagues and preparation time will be provided for teachers.

### **Recovery Learning Supports**

- All students will continue to be assessed once in-class learning resumes and lessons will be adjusted accordingly. Resource and clinician support will be available for students who need special services.

### **Re-engagement Strategies**

Although there were varying levels of engagement, all students were engaged during remote learning, to some extent. Students who were unable to engage fully, will be re-assessed when they return to school and will be provided with extra classroom and resource support as needed.

### **Addressing Special Needs**

Whether it is with in-class or remote learning, the following will be in place for our students:

- Teachers will consult with the principal, the resource teacher and the CSS clinicians for support with students with special needs.
- Individualized plans will be implemented, as needed.
- Special needs students may be asked to attend in-class learning, regardless of the scenario in place, to ensure their needs are being met.
- Parents of students with special needs will be kept informed of their child's progress and will be contacted regularly by the classroom teacher, the resource teacher, and the specific clinicians working with their child.

### **Remote and Blended Learning**

If the government mandates remote or blended learning, teachers will be prepared to deliver an effective program to the students, even on short notice. **All students will be expected to participate fully in remote learning, if it is in place.** In a situation of remote learning, a transition will be made to a focus on literacy and numeracy, with some integration of other subject areas. In a blended scenario, asynchronous (working independently on their own) and synchronous (working with a teacher in real-time) options will be offered for the students. In the event of remote learning being implemented at any point of the school year, the following measures will be in place to ensure student success:

- Upon returning to school, students will be surveyed to identify technology needs and strengths and any gaps/needs will be addressed. Under staff supervision, students with strong technology skills may be used to help students who need extra support, as long as social distancing is possible.
- Students will be taught how to use various on-line platforms, including taking part in video conferences and submitting assignments, with the goal of building independence and self-motivation so they will have the necessary skills to move to remote learning, if necessary.
- Staff (teachers and EAs) will be instructed in various on-line platforms through P. D. sessions.
- Lessons will be planned to ensure continuity is in place for students should a return to remote learning be necessary.

### **Maintaining Contact & Fostering Engagement**

- On-line platforms such as Seesaw, Google Classroom/Hangouts/Meet, and Zoom will be used.
- Print materials will be available for students who need/want them.
- Emails will be sent to parents and students to keep them up-dated throughout the remote learning period. Regular phone calls will be made to parents and students who do not have access to email accounts.
- Home visits will be made if teachers have not been able to contact parents and students by any of the above means.

## **Students, Staff, and Families**

### **Student Attendance: Regular attendance is mandatory**

Students are expected to attend in-class learning (or participate in remote learning if in place) on a daily basis, unless unable to do so for medical reasons.

- For in-class learning, parents will continue to call the school to inform the office of their child's absence and the reason for it.
- For remote learning, teachers will keep track of students who are not participating in learning and the parents will be contacted via email or a phone call to determine the reason for the lack of engagement. Efforts will be made to solve the problem (i.e. lack of technology, unfamiliar with how to submit assignments, etc.).
- Teachers will keep the principal informed regarding lack of engagement by their students.

### **Staff Attendance**

Staff members are expected to attend school daily, unless unable to do so for medical reasons.

- If a teacher is not well, s/he will follow the school's sick leave policy, which includes contacting the principal if s/he is unable to attend school due to an illness or an appointment.

### **Student Health**

Students must be in good health to attend school. Before leaving for school parents/guardians are to use the Manitoba COVID-19 Screening Tool, (<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>) and must adhere to the 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. An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>.

- 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, they are required to consult with [Health Links](https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html) (204-788-8200) and must follow their directions prior to the student attending school .
- If a child becomes ill at school, they will be isolated in a safe space where they can be monitored. The parents will be called and asked to pick up their child. Parents are requested to pick-up their child promptly.
- The child’s workspace and commonly touched surfaces will be disinfected immediately.
- A child can return to school once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health.

**Staff Health**

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](https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/), (<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>) and must adhere to the guidelines.

- If a staff member shows any cold or flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, muscle ache, headache, nausea, fatigue) they should remain at home. An up-to-date list of symptoms can be found at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>.
- 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, they are required to consult with [Health Links](https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html) (204-788-8200) and must follow their directions prior to the staff member attending school.
- If a teacher becomes symptomatic at school, s/he will immediately isolate him/herself from other staff and children, notify the principal, and go home to self-isolate. The teacher’s work area will be cleaned and disinfected and class coverage will be arranged.
- In the case where a teacher becomes ill, or needs to self-quarantine, they must have lessons planned and available for at least two weeks and/or they must be able to provide remote learning for their students.

In the event that a family member of a student or staff person in the same household reports that they have received a positive test for COVID-19:

- The student’s parent/staff member will follow the public health regulations.
- The school will work with public health officials and will follow their advice for all cases.

### **Positive Cases of COVID-19 in Our School**

- If there is a positive case linked to a class, public health will lead the response and will provide guidance. Public health will advise staff and students if they have been in close contact, if they need to self-isolate, or self-monitor, and when they can return to school.
- Decisions about school or class closures will be made on a case-by-case basis with public health leading the response.

### **Use of Personal Protective Equipment**

At this time, Public Health is strongly recommending the use of non-medical masks for staff and students in grades 5 – 12. Students in other grades may also choose to wear non-medical masks. Wearing a mask does not mean other public health measures can be reduced. Wearing non-medical masks is an **additional layer of protection** that can help to prevent the infectious respiratory droplets of an unknowingly infected person (the wearer) from coming into contact with other people.

(Parent/Guardian FAQ, Mb Government)

- If a mask is used, hands are to be cleaned before and after putting it on and taking it off. 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).
- Removed masks are considered contaminated and must be placed in a container or bag for appropriate cleaning/disinfection later.
- Reusable masks are to be laundered daily.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

### **Addressing Student Concerns**

Children need to be heard when they express concerns. They don't need detailed explanations, but they do need answers to their questions and they need to feel safe. Children often overhear adult conversations which can lead to feelings of anxiety. Staff members will be aware of this and will minimize discussions of COVID-19 that are not related to the specific setting. Children may also hear and repeat information that is inaccurate. Staff will correct the misinformation as they become aware of it.

### **Mental Health & Well-Being:**

Mental health and well-being of our school community including staff, students and families is an important part of our plan. At St. Edward's we will:

- Build feelings of safety and trust by making the school a welcoming place:
  - Greet everyone by name.
  - Encourage students, staff, and parents to ask questions.
- Listen to others, and respond with care when someone expresses they are feeling unsafe or anxious and will refer them to the proper resources/personnel if we are unable to help them. We will follow-up to ensure their needs have been met.
- Address spiritual and mental health needs through:
  - daily religion classes;
  - morning announcements (birthday announcements, prayer requests, etc.) to promote community;
  - regular 'mental health' check-ins for students, families and staff through observations and conversations;
  - prayer times, discussions and 1:1 conversations; and
  - P. D. sessions for staff with a focus on how to deal with stress and anxiety.
- School clinicians will be available for specific cases and, if available, to offer professional development sessions for staff.
- The message of **no need to feel guilty, stay home** if you show any cold or flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, muscle ache, headache, nausea, fatigue) will be emphasized. In addition, students and staff will be provided with useful strategies to reduce stress and anxiety and to reduce their risk of becoming ill. For example:
  - Wash hands regularly
  - Exercise every day
  - Spend time outside
  - Take time for yourself and do something you enjoy
  - Treat others with kindness
  - Talk with friends or family members on the phone or online

### **Communication**

Communication will be in the form of:

- Emails
- Phone calls
- School newsletters
- School website
- Teacher communications

## Definitions

**Social Distancing:** Keeping at least 2 m apart from others, or 1 m if in a cohort. If more than one cohort is in the same area, at least 4 m between groups or cohorts of children must be in place. (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.)

**Cohorts:** Keeping a group of students together and avoiding interactions with other groups or cohorts. Physical distancing within a cohort is required to the greatest extent possible. 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.

**Recovery Learning:** Students will need an opportunity to adjust to new school routines and expectations. Some students had lower participation in remote learning than others and educators will need to address the achievement/learning gaps that may exist.

## Websites

Health Screening Tool: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

Up-dated list of symptoms: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>

Guidelines on how to wear a mask: [www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html).

Manitoba Education: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html)

EngageMB: <https://engagemb.ca/welcoming-our-students-back-restoring-safe-schools>

My Learning at Home: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/learningathome/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/learningathome/index.html)

COVID-19 in Manitoba: <https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/>

Most Up-dated Information: [www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html)

World Health Organization: [www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1\\_8](http://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1_8)



## Conclusion

Dear Parents;

It is very evident that we are undergoing very difficult times. Since last March, nothing has been 'normal' and we are all experiencing COVID-19 at very different levels. Teachers are dealing with finding new ways to teach their students. Parents are dealing with keeping their children safe and healthy while still performing their usual jobs and family responsibilities. Many families may also be experiencing hardships due to a loss of employment, inability to visit with friends and extended family members and perhaps even illness related to the coronavirus. Thinking about a return to in-class learning is most likely adding extra stress and producing high levels of anxiety in educators and parents alike.

One of the translations of the word 'school' is 'a safe place'. That is our hope for St. Edward's – that it will be a safe place for our students and their families. At this time, public health regulations prevent us from having some of our usual open-door policies and our social gatherings, such as meet the teacher, assemblies, and concerts will have to be cancelled, but please know that we are there for you should you need anything. We are blessed with a very caring and supportive parent community and we know you will continue to work with us as we navigate this very different school year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any needs or concerns that we can help you with.

We look forward to seeing the children again and hearing their happy voices. We will do our best to keep them safe and healthy while they are at school!

Miss Linda Doyle

Principal, St. Edward's School