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St. Joseph the Worker's plan for the 2020-2021 school year

In preparing for the reopening of schools on September 8 and navigating the 2020-2021 school year, St. Joseph the Worker Schools is committed to supplying a safe, healthy working environment for students and staff.

This plan will follow Manitoba guidelines in preparing for a range of school re-opening scenarios. In each situation the goal is will be to maximize student involvement with learning and minimize risk of COVID-19 infection in the community.

The situation with COVID-19 is a difficult one as it is constantly changing and plans need to be made to accommodate this uncertainty. St. Joseph the Worker School is activity preparing for many different scenarios to ensure the school is ready for what challenges the 2020-2021 school year may bring.

God bless,

Nathan Polakoff

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.

Non-instructional (no classes for students) Days for St. Joseph the Worker for 2020-2021

1. Wednesday, September 2, 2020
2. Thursday, September 3, 2020
3. Friday, September 4, 2020
4. Friday, November 20, 2020
5. Friday, November 27, 2020 (half day)

6. Friday, January 15, 2021 (half day)
7. Friday, February 12, 2021
8. Friday, March 19, 2021
9. Monday, April 5, 2021 (Easter Monday)
10. Friday, May 21, 2021
11. Friday, June 18, 2021 (half day)
12. Tuesday, June 29, 2021 (half day)
13. 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

Provincial Assessments

An update from Manitoba Education on the provincial tests and assessments schedule for the 2020-2021 school year:

Grade 3 and 4 Assessment and Middle Years Assessment

The provincial data collection associated with the Grade 3 Assessment in Reading, Lecture and Numeracy and Grade 4 Assessment in French Immersion Lecture, 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.

Planning for Re-opening

School will reopen for teachers and staff on September 2, 2020, with students returning on September 8, 2020. While Manitoba is targeting a return to in-class learning for all in the fall, school divisions and independent schools have been asked to prepare for the following three scenarios.

1. In-class learning resumes for all, with near-normal conditions with safety protocols (as outlined below).
2. In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.
3. Remote learning from home, with limited use of school facilities.

General Planning Considerations

This plan is based on the most current information available and is subject to change. Schools must follow existing public health requirements and educational priorities as identified by **Public Health** and **Manitoba Education**. Existing guidelines, considerations and conditions of preparedness outlined in [Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools](#), as well as those previously established for [Limited Use of School Facilities and Day Camps](#) have helped inform this plan.

Pandemic Committee

A Pandemic committee has been established which includes the school's administrator, the church's parish life director, school board chair and a teacher representative. The school principal, in collaboration with the Pandemic committee, will stay current with evolving Public Health Orders and communicate these to the school community. Staff will be informed of developments through the summer and will be provided with specific training on existing Public Health Orders, symptom management and sanitizing protocols prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year. Information on home screening and safety measures in place will be communicated to parents in August 2020 with direction on reviewing these protocols with their children. As classes return to school, classroom teachers will teach new processes to students and reinforce these messages frequently.

School Day Structure/Learning Plans for the Different Scenarios

Scenario 1 – In-class learning resumes for all; with public health measures.

- In-class learning resumes for all Pre-K-6 students.

In school classes resume with public health measures

In scenario one, we would begin the school year with caution, with assigned entrances, and staying within the classroom cohort as much as possible, providing one meter of distance is between student workspaces and plastic barriers between individual work areas. We would look at gradually reintroducing extracurricular activity and increasing options for volunteers and visitors within the school.

Core Curriculum

Emphasis in scenario 1 will be on Numeracy and Literacy, along with Science, Social Studies and French whenever possible other curricular areas will be maintained, although adjustments to time allotments may be necessary to allow adherence to public health orders.

Learning Across All Subject Areas

With near normal conditions, the learning expectation would be regular programming to the fullest extent possible.

Scenario 2 – In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.

- In-class learning resumes, five days per week, for students in Pre- K-6.

Cohorting

In order to accommodate full classes of students, we will be using a cohorting system as suggested by Public Health. In this system, one meter of distance is required between student workspaces. Due to classroom size at St. Joseph the Worker, this would be possible with current registration numbers.

Core Curriculum

Emphasis in scenario 2 will be on Numeracy and Literacy, along with Science, Social Studies and French whenever possible other curricular areas will be maintained, although adjustments to time allotments may be necessary to allow adherence to public health orders.

Scenario 3 – Limited Use of Schools

- In-class learning is suspended. Teacher led remote learning for all K-6 students. Pre-k classes would be suspended.

Remote Learning

Teachers will use a variety of online platforms, along with packaged materials to deliver programming across all grade levels. Staff will make an effort to ensure that remote learning is successful among all students and will determine what additions or alternations need to be changed to best suit the needs of their students.

In-school Sessions

The school developed a Limited Use Plan for re-opening the school during June 2020. This plan worked successfully, but it will be adjusted to increase the opportunity for student/teacher personal interactions in the event that scenario 3 is enacted. All families will have the option of having their children at school for one on one or small group sessions, ideally for full days to allow students of working parent's greater flexibility to attend.

Emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy

In scenario 3, learning resources will be focused on Literacy and Numeracy, with some allowance for other curricular areas at the discretion of the classroom teacher in consultation with the school principal.

Operational Preparedness

As we plan for the above scenarios, provincial guidelines identify four key areas of preparedness for schools to consider: **Operational (Institutional)**, **Learning**, **Staff** and **Students and Families**, each with points to address.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Our building staff have increased their cleaning and disinfecting regimen, with more frequent cleaning of washrooms and high touch surfaces. Doors of washrooms will be set open to allow for less contact. Other high touch surfaces including handrails, counters and light switches will be cleaned with greater frequency. Additional cleaning, sanitizing and disinfectant supplies have been secured for this purpose and will be restocked as needed.

Hand Hygiene

All entrances, rooms and spaces are equipped with hand sanitizer. Anyone entering the building will be expected to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. Student handwashing/sanitizing will take place before eating, after recess and additionally as needed with students receiving direct instruction on hand washing and use of hand sanitizer.

Screening

The school has a screening protocol based upon the screening tools developed by the Province of Manitoba.

Families must conduct self and child screening before leaving home in the morning. Children and staff who are ill or showing any symptoms shall not come to school.

Physical Distancing in and Around the School

Signage has been installed around the school encouraging hand hygiene, physical distancing and symptoms of COVID-19. Hallways have been clearly marked with arrows directing students, staff and visitors where to walk.

Students in grades pre-kindergarten to grade 2 will use the parking lot entrance to enter the school, where older students will enter through the main lobby entrance. Students will be brought in, in groups to minimize traffic in the hallways. Departure time will be staggered starting at 3:25 with classes individually dismissed, with staff members escorting younger groups out to the designated area within the parking pad. Supervision at pick-up time will be maintained, and increased if needed.

Personal Protective Equipment

Manitoba education has mandated that all staff and students in grades 4 and onward must wear a mask to school. Parents of students of all grades may choose to have their child wear a mask providing they can safely do so by themselves. Putting on and taking off of masks is not the responsibility of the school staff.

Staff will also have access to face shields when working in close proximity with students. Instruction on proper use of PPE will be part of staff development prior to school start. Extra masks will be available throughout the school year for students who require one.

Limiting Non-essential Visitors

Although we welcome parent involvement in our school community, provincial guidelines instruct us to limit the number of non-essential visitors in the school for the time being. If possible, parents are asked to conduct school business via email or telephone. Parents may accompany their children to the school doors, but we ask that parents refrain from coming into the school. At the end of each day, a staff member will walk students from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 2 out to the parking lot pad area where parents or caregivers can pick them up.

Food Handling/Sharing

The school has a well-established policy on “No Sharing” of foods brought from home, originally set as an allergy measure. Students will be reminded of this rule and its increased importance through the pandemic.

Shared food as part of a class celebration will be suspended until further notice. As well, special lunches, as hosted by our Parent council will also be on hold until the process of distributing food has been evaluated and protocols put in place to ensure safety of students, staff and volunteers.

Toys and Other Shared Learning Equipment

Play is an integral part of the learning in the early years. Consideration will be given to how to mitigate the risks of interactive play. Staff will assess the toys and other items used in the classrooms and items that are not easily disinfected, including: stuffed toys, costumes, hats, etc will not be available for student use.

Learning Preparedness

Recovery Learning

We have been fortunate to have reported a high rate of student engagement through the remote learning period in the spring. That said, there are students who will need additional supports as they re-enter school. The resource team at the school will work collaboratively with teachers in identifying students who require additional assistance and will work with students in a one on one or small group situations until it is no longer necessary to provide additional aid. The resource team will have scheduled times to work with students to aid in recovery learning.

October 1st and 2nd will be used as assessment days for students. These days will be critical in identifying areas that students require additional assistance in and inform teachers on where to focus their instruction. This time will be beneficial in identifying any other students who may require more assistance in recovery learning. The schedule for these days will be released in mid-September.

Blended learning

Undoubtedly, there will be students who must remain home for periods of time during the pandemic. We have increased our ability to livestream lessons, so that students at home can participate with their class. Teachers are able to send and receive assignments electronically. The school will work with the school community to identify those who require technology to aid with remote learning needs and will plan accordingly. If internet connectivity is a persistent issue, teachers and administration will strategize to find alternatives for families. As well, teachers will prepare learning packages as needed for pick-up or delivery. Frequent email and phone communication with students and parents will be in place to ensure engagement in remote learning. Video conferencing and support staff will also be used as an additional resources.

Music Education

Our Music program will focus on activities that present less risk for students by limiting the amount of coral singing done. Music education will instead focus on the use of instruments and dance.

Physical Education

Allowing students to be physically active will be an important part of the school's reopening, as it is important for mental health and social emotional connection in addition to physical well-being. Our PE program will incorporate activities that allow for increased distancing and will endeavour to allocate equipment to particular cohorts to reduce the amount of disinfection necessary between classes. Students will be expected to clean hands before and after gym class. Physical education classes will primarily be held outside (weather permitting).

Assemblies and Other Gatherings

Public Health Orders will likely limit the size of groups as we move into the fall. This will impact our ability to gather as an entire school. Lunch will no longer be eaten in the school basement, instead classes will eat with their own cohorts in their classrooms to minimize larger indoor groups. In order to maintain our sense of community we will utilize livestreaming using the projectors in each classroom.

Field Trips

All field trips for the 2020-21 school year are initially going to be suspended. St. Joseph the Worker School is prepared to look further into the possibility of having field trips if deemed completely safe by Public Health.

Recess Time

Outdoor play is important for children's health and well-being, so daily recess periods will continue. Classes will be staggered during recess periods. Each class will have their own recess toys, which will be cleaned and sanitized after each recess.

Fire and lock down drills

Fire and lock down drills will continue to occur with social distancing practices established, and cohorts appropriately separated during these drills.

Staff Preparedness

Symptom Management

Our staff has a very high attendance rate, which speaks highly of their professional commitment. In this pandemic, however, staff members will have to demonstrate this commitment to the school community by remaining at home when they are ill or have any respiratory or other COVID-19 symptoms.

Personal Risk Factors

Staff members who have personal risk factors or require medical accommodations must advise the Principal of the issue. Each case will be dealt with according to Manitoba labour law and the school's employment guidelines.

Staff Well-being

Staff members have experienced a great deal of stress through the period of remote learning. Emphasis on personal well-being and stress reduction will be a feature of our professional dialogue through this year and beyond.

Student and Family Preparedness

Communication

The school has strong mechanisms in place to communicate information to parents and will utilize them to educate and inform parents. If there are families that are not responsive via the normal mechanisms, we will look at other ways of reaching out to them.

Attendance and Participation in Remote Learning

Students are expected to attend in-class learning unless they are ill or exhibiting symptoms. Families will be required to report absences to the school office as per our regular process, but must also indicate the reason for their child's absence (illness, appointment etc.) If remote learning is enacted as part of the learning plan, students will be expected to participate. School staff will work to identify any barriers to full participation in remote learning and assist families in addressing them.

Personal Risk Factors for students

Students who are unable to return to school due to a medical mandate will be supported in remote or blended learning. In class assignments will be posted to classroom portals and teachers will reach out to students through a variety of different mediums. This is not a substitute to in class learning or a home schooling program.

Illness at School

Parents will be expected to screen their child at home prior to bringing them to school. If a child should become ill or symptomatic while at school he or she will be isolated away from the group, a mask will be provided if the student is not already wearing one and parents will be contacted to take the child home. Parents are encouraged to have contingency plans in place to care for an ill child and will be expected to pick up their ill child within 1 hour of receiving the phone call.

Presumptive COVID-19 case

St. Joseph the Worker school will contact Public health if a presumptive case of COVID-19 is identified within the school community and will follow their directives.

Before and After School Care

Childcare is essential for many of our families. In order to accommodate this need, and in light of the size of the program, we will break the participants into smaller age-based groups and disperse them into multiple spaces in the school. Additional information pertaining the before and after school program will be provided in September.

Community Mental Health and Well-being

Attention to the mental health and well-being of our school community will be a priority over the coming months. Resources and clinical support will be available for staff and students if required.