



Dear Families and Caregivers,

August 23, 2021

As our return for the 2021-2022 school year and a return to significantly more indoor time with mixed households draws near, The Whiteshell School District and Board of Trustees wishes to provide information regarding our Return to School Plan. This plan is designed to be dynamic, responsive, and universal in meeting our obligation to provide a safe environment for all members of our school community. This plan will evolve as information and health guidance changes and will be reviewed and reconsidered for continuous improvement and effectiveness on a month by month basis or as Public Health information changes.

The information below is not intended to divide our community over ideological beliefs, but rather to unite us in a collective understanding and prioritization of safety and good health that is sustainable and allows for as near-normal return to school life and activities as possible for all children.

Irrespective of the safety measures and intent, we respect there will be divergent thoughts and opinions around our planning and we invite your feedback as always.

Indoor and In-Class Settings

- All people in our buildings are expected to follow the Covid-19 prevention fundamentals (self-screening, hand hygiene and staying home when sick).
- Masks are required for all students (JK-12), staff and visitors while using indoor spaces.
- Assigned seating will continue in classrooms.
- Cohorts will be identified in JK to G 6 to reduce the potential exposure in students not yet eligible for vaccination.
- Schools will continue distancing students to the greatest extent possible, with 1-2m spacing in classes.
- Schools will manage and limit overcrowding and flow of people in all common areas.
- Schools will continue the use of separate entrances and exits for cohorts and/or grade levels.

Cleaning and Hygiene

- Hand hygiene stations will remain in place at the entrance and exit of school facilities and classroom cleaning and disinfecting will focus on high-touch surfaces and common areas.
- Washroom facilities will remain designated for specific cohorts.
- Sharing toys, manipulatives and shared play stations is permitted, provided good hand hygiene is practiced before and after use.

Extra-curricular Activities and Music

- Extra-curricular activities and field trips are permitted in accordance with public health guidance and orders, with the exception of overnight trips.
- Wind instruments and indoor singing are allowed, while ensuring adequate ventilation and encouraging maximum physical distancing as possible. Instruments and accessories (e.g. drum sticks, mallets) should not be shared.
- School and classroom libraries are open for use with a focus on good hand hygiene.



Gatherings and Community Use of Schools

- Gatherings and assemblies will align with public health recommendations and will be small, grade or cohort specific and limited to school students and staff.
- Community use of schools will be permitted after hours and will be allowed and limited by the schools on a case by case basis if all safety and cleaning protocols can be met.
- Visitation during school hours will be limited by appointment.
- Parents and guardians will remain outside the schools during pick-up and drop-off times unless an indoor need is specifically required (by staff) on an acute and limited basis.

Other Environmental Considerations

- Schools will focus on maintaining ventilation and continue to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are working properly, while opening windows when weather permits.
- Teachers are highly encouraged to use outdoor spaces for learning, weather permitting.
- Playground spaces will remain open to the public after school hours only.
- Cafeteria spaces will be open, but limited in volume and under strict food handling protocols.

Further Safety Measures Being Considered

- Voluntary disclosure of vaccination status for staff /students who are eligible to be vaccinated.
- Vaccine mandates for all staff as supported by the Manitoba Teachers' Society.

The Whiteshell School District is committed to meeting and/or exceeding the key priorities of Manitoba Education.

- Follow health and safety measures as per public health guidance
- Promote mental health and well-being of all stakeholders
- Assess and address student learning impacts resulting from the pandemic
- Encourage vaccination of Manitobans through outreach and promotion

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback to offer, please contact the School District Office at 204.753.8366 or email tstef@sdwhiteshell.mb.ca, or reach out to any of the District Trustees:

Lorraine Nelson (Chair) - nelson@sdwhiteshell.mb.ca
Jeff Miller (Vice-Chair) - millerj@sdwhiteshell.mb.ca
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We are looking forward to a safe, productive and enjoyable year ahead and appreciate your support of our efforts to begin the school year. This plan will be reviewed monthly at a minimum.

Be well,

Tim Stefanishyn
Superintendent/Secretary Treasurer
Whiteshell School District

Quality Education, Inspired Learning, Collaboration, Communication, Citizenship, Courtesy, Respect, Healthy Living, Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Responsible Leadership, Accountability