



Summary Plan for Re-opening Schools – August 17, 2020

As we prepare for a return to school that is unprecedented, the health and safety of our students and staff is of the utmost importance and top priority in our planning. The decisions we are making are in consultation and align with direction from Manitoba Education and Manitoba Public Health.

Border Land School Division received confirmation on July 30, 2020 that we will be returning to in-person learning in September. The following document is written as a point form information sheet for families. This document, in addition to the more detailed [“BLSD Planning for Re-opening of Schools”](#) posted online July 21, shares what children and families can expect when we re-open and welcome back our students. Please know that with the ever-changing state of the pandemic we will update the plan as necessary and ensure that you receive communication around those changes.

BLSD staff will return to school beginning September 2, 2020 and for three days staff will receive information and engage in professional development and learning regarding:

- COVID-19 current health information,
- Updated Workplace Safety and Health Procedures,
- Mental health support for student and staff,
- Recovery learning,
- Planning for Manitoba response levels to the pandemic,
- School based procedures for re-opening schools.

Given the broad the range of schools across Border Land School Division, schools will finalize their specific school plans with staff and then communicate specific details to their families by September 4, 2020. Recognizing that this may not be communicated as early as families may wish, we ask for your patience as we work to sort welcoming our students back in the safest way possible.

It will be important that parents and guardians talk to their children about returning to school. School will be different than they have experienced before and it is best if we can build our children’s understanding of this difference before they return.

It is expected that all students will attend in-person learning and engage in learning remotely when necessary, unless they have been medically advised not to return to in-person learning due to COVID-19 related risk factors.

We are looking forward to re-opening schools in Border Land School Division. Although we know there is anxiety and nervousness around this, we want our families to know that we are exploring all the possibilities to make this transition back to school as easy and safe as possible. We are prepared to adjust as we learn new things and information changes. As changes occur, we will continue to update our web page and share communication home via your local school.

Summary Plan for Re-opening Schools:

What do I need to do before I leave for school?

- **Self-Screen** using the Manitoba Shared Health Screening tool, confirming you can attend school. <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
- **Hand Hygiene** – wash and sanitize your hands before leaving your home to walk to school or get on your bus
- **Mask Usage** - Pack your mask for use on the bus and in areas of the school where physical distancing is not possible.

What can I expect when I come to school?

Bussing:

Details are still being developed at the divisional level. Parents who are able, are encouraged to drop their children off at school. Please ensure children arrive as close to the start of school time as possible and use the entrance door that has been assigned to them.

- Routes and pick up times are being finalized; calls will be made closer to the start of school to share details.
- Students who live more than 1.6 km from school will be bussed and can expect the following changes:
 - Seating plans will be in place and must be adhered to. Priority is placed on seating siblings or class cohort members together.
 - Students will fill the back of the bus first upon pick up.
 - Daily attendance will be taken on the bus.
 - There will be no additional riders allowed on a bus to go to a friends house etc.
- Enhanced bus cleaning will occur before each new group of students enters the bus.

School Arrival:

- Entrance doors will be assigned to students.
- Hand hygiene stations will be set up at each entrance point and students will need to engage in hand hygiene before entering the school.
- Students are expected to report to their classroom upon arrival.
- Hallway lockers will not be used. Student will only bring what is necessary to have at school, taking it with them to their first class and keeping it with them throughout the day.

In School:

- Directional markers will be in place to indicate which way staff and students can walk, use stairwells etc.
- Students will be seated 1m apart in their cohort or 2m apart in a mixed class.
- There will be a seating plan in all classes that must be adhered to and attendance will be taken in each class.
- There will be a maximum capacity of people permitted in each classroom.
- Recesses, breaks, and dismissal times may be staggered to decrease the amount of congestion in entrances and exits.
- Only touchless refillable water stations will be open. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle filled from home when possible.
- Enhanced cleaning will occur with high touch areas being cleaned at least twice throughout the day.
- Microwaves may not be available, so please plan accordingly.

Masks:

Manitoba Education has released guidelines regarding masks in schools. A provincial question and answer document regarding mask use has been developed

https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/parent_guardian_faq.pdf

- Students (Grade 5 and up), teachers, staff, visitors and volunteers are strongly recommended to wear non-medical masks in areas where physical distancing of two metres is not possible.
 - When seated in class, students can remove their mask while working, but it is strongly recommended that they wear their mask when they move around the room.
- Students under Grade 5 can also use non-medical masks.
- The driver and all school bus passengers in Grade 5 and older are required to wear a non-medical mask. These should be put on before loading and taken off after offloading if removal is appropriate for the setting. Students under Grade 5 can also use non-medical masks while riding the bus.
- Bus drivers will not be permitted to allow passengers to board who are not following the direction from Public Health.

One non-medical cloth mask will be provided to all grade 5-12 students in BLS.

Programming:

The school day hours will be the same.

Cohorts will be established and used wherever possible. These cohorts are critical to Public Health for the purpose of contact tracing. **A cohort** is a group of students who remains

together for their school day and has limited interaction with other groups of students. Students may belong to a classroom, bus, and recess cohort.

- **K-8 Students** will attend five days a week and will be placed in cohorts by grades. This cohort will stay together throughout the day and they will not interact with other cohorts in the school.
 - Kindergarten programming in BLSD is 50%, therefore K students will attend full days every second day.
 - Where possible, teachers will travel to the class to teach the students.
 - Individual class cohorts may combine on the playground to a maximum of 75 people – the school will determine cohorts and where they can be during recess.
- **9-12 Students** will attend in-person classes at least three days per six-day cycle.
 - Each high school will determine days of attendance and communicate this information out to families prior to Sept 8.
 - Expectations related to school work for the days a child is not in the school will be clearly communicated to families from the classroom teacher. Students will be engaged in learning on the days they are not present in school.
 - Physical distancing of 2m will be maintained at all times for courses where students are mixing and cohorting is not an option.
 - Students who have a spare will be asked to go home if possible or report to a designated area for that time frame.
- **Special Needs Students** : a student with exceptional learning needs is defined by Manitoba Education as follows: a student who requires specialized services or programming when deemed necessary by the in-school team because of exceptional learning, social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic or special health-care needs that affect his or her ability to meet learning outcomes will attend 5 days per week for in-person teaching and learning.
 - further information regarding Student Services and Clinical Services can be found on page 8 of the [“BLSD Planning for Re-opening of Schools”](#)
- **Technical Vocational Courses:**
 - Will continue as a cohort group and will follow the Public Health guideline for physical distancing. Specific details will follow from the host school to RRTVA students.
- **High School Elective Courses:**
 - BLSD is working to maintain as many optional courses as possible with some potential changes to cleaning, shared supplies and potential content shift.
 - Where courses are not being offered or are being postponed, local schools will communicate to those students.

Lunch Break:

- All students who are able are asked to leave school and go home for lunch.
- Lunch will be eaten in classrooms, unless a space with physical distancing is available.
- Lunches must not be shared.
- Students must engage in hand hygiene practice prior to and after eating lunch.
- Microwaves may not be available.

Visitor Access:

- Visitors and volunteers are permitted, but visits should be minimized to the greatest extent possible.
- Where possible, visits should be scheduled in advance.
- All visitors must follow screening and hygiene protocols in place.
- Community access of schools is not occurring at this time.

Field Trips:

- At this time no field trips will be planned until, at the earliest, January 2021.

Sports:

- Decisions about sporting events are currently being discussed and when a decision is made, that information will be communicated to families and students.

What if I am sick or get sick?

- You should stay home, self-isolate and not enter any schools if you
 - Are experience any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/about/index.html>.
 - Have travelled outside MB in the previous 14 days (outside of areas excluded by public health orders).
 - Are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - Are awaiting a COVID-19 test result (excluding a person who tested voluntarily but is asymptomatic).
 - Please stay home and notify the school of your illness.
- If a student becomes ill at school they will immediately be isolated from others in a designated location. If they are able, they will be given a medical mask to wear, and parents/guardians will be contacted to come and pick up the child.
- All staff who may be in contact with the child while they are isolated will wear personal protective equipment.

What happens if a case of COVID-19 is in my school?

- In the event of the confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with a school, Public Health will lead the response and ensure the appropriate supports are in place to coordinate the response:
 - Contact tracing involves identifying contacts of a positive case and contacting those individuals who may have been exposed.
 - Cohorts, seating plans and attendance are all critical information that BLSD will supply to Public Health.
- Public Health will assess the need for the school to be closed for a period of time. BLSD will follow Public Health directions and communicate that information as needed.