

October 30, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Today, our chief provincial public health officer announced that Winnipeg and surrounding areas will be moved to Critical (RED) in the pandemic response system. This change does not impact schools, which will all continue to operate in Restricted (Orange).

Our schools have done, and continue to do, a tremendous amount of work planning and executing stringent health and safety protocols. We are in constant communication with Public Health and Manitoba Education to do everything we can as a school division to limit the transmission of COVID-19 in our buildings.

We are counting on you, as members of the greater community to follow public health guidelines and encourage those you know to do the same. Most members of our community are following the rules, we thank you for your efforts as we know it's not easy.

Our students deserve to have teaching and learning continue in a safe environment. We can drastically limit the transmission and exposure risk in our schools, but we need your help to keep the virus out by following all public health guidelines during non-school days and times. Now is not the time for gatherings or social events.

Birthday parties, sleep overs, carpooling with students from multiple cohorts, lunch hour gatherings off school property and students congregating on remote learning days are just a few of the concerning situations that our schools are hearing about that have been occurring in our communities.

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and for the safety of our entire community these events, if outside the current Public Health orders or guidelines, should not be happening. To effectively combat COVID-19, we need all members of the community to be fully engaged and doing their part. Following the fundamentals is applicable whether we are in school with in-class learning, blended learning, or temporary remote learning:

- Stay home if you are sick
- Wash/sanitize your hands and cover your cough
- Physically distance when you are with people outside your household
- If you cannot physically distance, wear a mask to help reduce the risk to others or as required by public health orders

All K-8 students have the option of temporary remote learning while schools are operating in Restricted (Orange) level of the pandemic response system. With today's announcement, your circumstances or ability to support temporary remote learning may have changed and a letter from your school will be sent to K-8 families on Monday providing you with a link if you'd like to choose remote learning at this time. Senior years schools will continue to operate with a blended learning model.

If you choose to participate in trick-or-treating this year, information is available on how to do it safely at <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/halloween.html>.

We recognize that these changes may be difficult for your family, yet the benefits will change the trajectory of this virus in our community.

Thank you for your anticipated support of this message.

Sincerely,



Kelly Barkman
Superintendent/CEO