

August 19, 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

The safety and well-being of all River East Transcona stakeholders is at the forefront of all critical decision-making in the school division. As such, the wearing of masks is now required by all Kindergarten to Grade 12 students, staff and visitors in RETSD schools, buildings and buses. On August 18, the board of trustees unanimously passed a motion to this effect, in essence, enhancing the safety of all members of our community.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of the strong recommendations from Public Health, considering the stated preference of the division's staff (including members of the Manitoba Teachers' Society), and the feedback from community parents, the board of trustees has made the unanimous decision to enhance safety protocols in the division. The practising of the public health fundamentals of staying home when you are ill, performing regular hand washing/sanitizing, practicing good cough etiquette will be maintained in RETSD. Along with the wearing of masks by all individuals in our facilities, these practices will be utilized in a continued effort to help prevent the spreading of COVID-19 infection.

Other divisional safety protocols include maintaining physical distancing of two (2) metres to the best of our ability, cohorting of K to Grade 8 students and providing handwashing/sanitizing stations in schools. For more information on the division's COVID-19 safety protocols, including school opening plans, please consult your child's school website in the coming days. For information about the provincial mask exemptions, visit [https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask\\_exemption.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask_exemption.pdf).

Your board of trustees has been working closely with senior administration as return to school plans are being developed. The board and the senior administration will monitor the requirements and recommendations of Public Health throughout the school year and when appropriate, will revise division-wide safety protocols implemented to help prevent COVID-19 infection transmission.

With the safety measures in place, we can look forward to a successful and healthy school year.

Sincerely,



Jerry Sodomlak  
Chairperson



Kelly Barkman  
Superintendent/CEO