



## **Welcoming Emerson Students**

### **Back to School 2021-2022**

This document is a living document that will be updated.

Original: September 1, 2021

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## Welcome Back Everyone,

We are really looking forward to the return of our students on September 8. While the start-up is not what we hoped, we are truly experts in being flexible, thoughtful and responsive to our changing world. The start of the school year will closely resemble the routines and procedures of last year. Our students will be well prepared for the start of the year. What we know for sure is that the Emerson School values remain in place. We will continue to show kindness and an appreciation for one another. We will continue to create an environment that is inclusive and will support all children with their academic and social-emotional needs.

You will find below the Emerson School Return to In-Class Learning Plan. This document highlights the main components outlined in the RETSD Welcoming Students Back as well as specific procedures that will be in place at Emerson School. Our school specific information has been bolded.

The school is taking shape for the new school year. Our dedicated staff have worked hard in preparation for the arrival of our students and the learning spaces are ready to inspire our learners. Over the summer a sensory path was installed that will support our students' self-regulation and wellness needs. We also have new windows that let the glorious sunshine in.

Communication and a strong home-school partnership are important to us. In the first few weeks, teachers will reach out to families to share specific class information and answer any questions you may have. We also work closely with Little Learners, River East Scholars Nursery School and KinderCare to ensure that we have common procedures for a successful start to the year.

Please refer to our school website for the most current information including supply lists, lunch registrations, important dates and school calendars. The most updated version of this document will be on our school website.

As always, I appreciate your support and partnership.

**Mrs. Lissa Palamar**

## Emerson School Return to In-Class Learning Plan

September 2021

### SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS

#### School Access, Community Use & Entry Process

Restricting access to buildings is a strategy to reduce the probability of a COVID-19 infected person entering the school. All RETSD buildings are implementing a monitored access system for the start of school.

- Parents, visitors or caregivers are asked to email or call the teachers, school or administrator when you need to talk as opposed to coming to the school as access to the school is limited.
- If an in-person discussion is necessary, parents are asked not to enter the building without a prearranged appointment. Parents are to wait outside when dropping off or picking up students.
- Everyone who enters an RETSD facility MUST monitor for symptoms and exposure. This responsibility resides with the person or their parent/caregiver. Monitoring is to be done using the COVID-19 Shared Health Screening Tool at: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
- **If entry is essential in order to pick up your child, we ask that parents enter the school through the main doors on Emerson Avenue. Once inside we ask guardians to sanitize their hands at the hand sanitizing station located by the entrance before heading directly to the office to sign in.**
- To help protect the health and safety of everyone, masks are mandatory for any parent or visitor who needs to enter the school when physical distancing of two metres is not possible.

Keeping potentially ill or infected or symptomatic people out of the building helps reduce the probability of community-based transmission of the virus. Any person who exhibits signs and symptoms of illness are asked not to enter the facility and to seek applicable health testing. Additionally, all schools have an identified space to isolate students who display COVID-19 symptoms.

#### Classroom Transition, Cohorts, Student Movement Plans

The movement of people within a school will be minimized and it is critical to maintain physical distancing as much as possible. Whenever possible, staff will change rooms and students will remain in their cohort in the assigned area.

Cohorts involve keeping groups of students together and avoiding interactions with other groups or cohorts. Physical distancing within the cohort is required to the greatest extent possible, including separation between desks. However, it is recognized that strict physical distancing, particularly with young children, is not practical in the school setting. The purpose of cohorts is to limit the mixing of students and staff so that if a child or employee develops an infection, there are fewer possible exposures and contact tracing can be more easily done. The maximum cohort size is 90 students.

All pedestrian traffic inside the facility should follow the same concepts as the “rules of the road” and the directional markers. People briefly passing one another in hallways without six feet of physical distance is not considered high risk but will be minimized by staggered/staged starts and exits at each school. As well, different entry/exit times are being scheduled.

Pathways at Emerson School are marked on the floor with arrows to support student transitions. Many of our students will recognize these procedures as they were in place last year. The creative floor plan of Emerson School lends itself nicely to the cohort model as outlined below.

Emerson will have 4 Cohorts listed below:

<b>Ms. Booth</b> <b>Mrs. Martens</b>	<b>Mrs. Bangart/Ms. Rollins</b> <b>Ms. Campbell</b> <b>Mrs. Ingram/Ms. Nowak</b>	<b>Ms. Muzyk</b> <b>Ms. Wilson</b> <b>Ms. Haines</b>	<b>Ms. van de Vijzel</b> <b>Mrs. Link</b>
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### Transportation

- All school bus passengers including the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These masks should be put on before getting on the bus.
- Students will sit in assigned seats. These seats will be the same seats used every day. Where possible, students will be seated one student per seat. If this is not possible, students from the same household or in-school cohort can be seated together.

Please see the guidelines for Transportation to Schools:

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k122/covid/reopening/transportation.html>

### COVID-19 Signage

Manitoba Health has provided a variety of signage that is posted in all schools to communicate public health best practices. See them at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>

Additionally, RETSD will be providing all schools with divisionally branded mask requirement signage

### Self-Screening, Symptom Monitoring Process & Personal Hygiene

Students must stay home if sick or displaying symptoms. Monitoring for symptoms and exposure is to be done using the COVID-19 Shared Health Screening Tool. Symptoms may include:

- Cough
- Headache
- Fever/ chills
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat/ hoarse voice
- Shortness of breath/ breathing difficulties
- Loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting, or diarrhea for more than 24 hours
- Runny nose
- Fatigue
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Skin rash of unknown cause

See a more detailed description on the RETSD website: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

Public health orders are to be followed in all schools. To reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19, students and visitors are expected to take common prevention measures, including regular handwashing with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Dry hands thoroughly. An alcohol-based hand cleanser can be used if your hands are not visibly dirty and soap and water are not available.

It is especially important to clean your hands:

- After coughing or sneezing
- When caring for a sick person
- Before, during and after you prepare food
- Before eating
- After toilet use
- When hands are visibly dirty

You should also cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the garbage and immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand cleanser. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.htm>

Public health orders are to be followed in all schools. To reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19, students and visitors are expected to take common prevention measures, including regular hand washing with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Dry hands thoroughly. An alcohol-based hand cleanser can be used if your hands are not visibly dirty and soap and water are not available.

**Teachers will reinforce the concepts of social distancing, good hand washing practices and cough/sneeze etiquette in the classroom through videos and conversation. These healthy practices will be incorporated into our Classroom Treaties and in the Emerson School Matrix.**

**Please see recommended videos put out by the province.**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=KsgzWbXOcw8> - Why We Wear Masks
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-hand-washing-heroes-dv.html> - Hand Washing Heroes
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/video/covid-19-kids-hygiene.html> - Hygiene for Kids

### **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

RESPONSE LEVEL YELLOW—CAUTION—Please be assured that all staff who are working across cohorts or schools MUST wear disposable medical masks

Masks offer an added layer of protection. All students, teachers, staff and visitors are mandated to wear a non-medical mask in all schools, other RETSD buildings and buses. Extra masks will be made available at all schools, sites and buses throughout the school year for those who do not have their own.

**While mask breaks will be permitted at appropriate times (when seated and/or eating), masks are to be worn by students in all school environments. Masks can be removed when students are outdoors and consistently maintaining the required physical distancing.**

Parents are strongly encouraged to talk to their children about how to wear a non-medical mask. To put on a mask safely, perform hand hygiene. Place the mask on the face carefully so it covers your mouth and nose, handling it with the strings or elastic ear loops as much as possible, and mould the nose bridge to ensure it does not move while it is on. Avoid touching the mask once you have put it on. If the mask needs to be adjusted, hands should be cleaned before and after adjusting the mask. Never pull the mask down below the nose, mouth or chin. Never dangle the mask from one ear or both ears. To remove the mask safely, remove it from behind using the strings or elastic ear loops. Do not touch the front of the mask. Perform hand hygiene after removing the mask. Non-medical masks should be laundered daily.

Some students might require specific interventions or supports that cannot be delivered from a distance. Precautions related to these types of supports vary depending on the needs of the individual student. School staff will be in contact with the families of students who may require this support while at school.

Staff must wear non-medical masks and may wear PPE as appropriate and where physical distancing cannot be maintained in order to support additional student needs.

To accommodate limitations to wearing a mask at school or on a school bus, information regarding the child's limitations to wearing a mask must be provided to the school. While a medical note is not required, details such as the date a parent/ guardian consulted with a health-care provider regarding their child's ability to safely wear a mask, and your child's medical limitations with wearing a mask, is required. Please see the school for the necessary documentation.

For those who would like to use a face shield, it must be done in combination with a face mask. A face shield is not a replacement for a non-medical mask. For more details about face mask exemptions, see the linked document:

Guidance for Mask exemptions in Schools:

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask\\_exemption.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask_exemption.pdf)

At Emerson School we will following the guidelines above and mask breaks will be offered to students when seated and distanced.

### **Protocol for Students Who Exhibit Symptoms**

**If a student develops symptoms while at Emerson School, they will isolate in the Conference room located in the general office area. A mask will be provided for and worn by the child exhibiting symptoms (noting that masks are to be worn by everyone in RETSD buildings). The student's parent/caregiver will be notified to come and pick them up immediately and instructed to call Health Links at 204.788.8200 or 1.888.315.9257.**

A sick child can return to the school once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health.

**Emerson School will be sending out verification forms at the start of the year that will ask for four contacts for each child so that we can ensure students can be picked up promptly.**

A sick child can return to the school (What Should I Do if My Child is Sick? When Can Students Attend School?) once it has been determined that it is safe to do so by their health care provider or public health. If that child has a positive test, further direction will be provided by public health.

## Protocol if there is a Positive Case in the School

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 connected with a class, public health will lead the response and provide guidance. Public health will advise staff and students if they have been in close contact, if they need to self-isolate or self-monitor and when they can return to school.

Decisions about school or class closures will be made on a case-by-case basis with public health leading the response and providing guidance.

Classroom teachers will support the development and provision of at-home learning packages for students who are isolating or quarantined as directed by public health.

## Cleaning & Sanitization Schedule

RETSD has worked diligently to develop a cleaning and sanitizing plan for the re-entry of students. School custodial staff are aware of and are implementing this plan.

To increase cleaning and sanitation:

- Cleaning and disinfecting with a focus on high-touch surfaces and common areas, however frequency can return to normal practices. Washrooms are the exception, as they require more intensive cleaning.
- Providing hand sanitizer in all areas of the schools as required
- Ensuring adequate supply of liquid soap and hand towels in all locations. Ensuring all air hand dryers are in working order
- Procuring disinfectant wipes for IT equipment to ensure shared devices are cleaned in between users

## EMERSON SCHOOL ROUTINES

### School Physical Setting

**As per the messaging from the Chief Public Health Officer of Manitoba, schools are safe. Each classroom at Emerson School has been provided with necessary cleaning supplies to help ensure cleanliness throughout the day. Additionally, soap and water are readily available throughout the school. Common spaces are subject to more frequent cleaning by school custodial staff.**

**In order to help maximize safety:**

- **As stated by the province, all students, staff and visitors are mandated to wear a non-medical mask in schools and when physical distancing of two metres is not possible.**
- **Two metres physical distancing is required to the greatest extent possible.**
- **Signage and floor markings will indicate directional traffic flow inside the school, where lines form and where to stand both inside and outside of the school building.**
- **Teachers will review and reinforce physical distancing guidelines and procedures with students.**
- **Teachers have arranged classrooms with various seating options to accommodate their students.**
- **Learning spaces are clearly marked and sanitized between students.**
- **Students will be provided with their own set of supplies and learning materials.**
- **Water fountains that are not touchless are closed off or bagged so that they cannot be used.**



- **The bottle re-fill station near the gym will continue to be available. Students must supply their own bottle, and these should not be shared.**

### Student Attendance

Students are expected to attend in-class learning and fully participate. Please call the school (204-669-4430) if your child will be absent for the day. If your child has been medically advised not to return to school, please provide the required medical documentation to the office.

**If you are planning to homeschool your child or have been directed by your health care provider that in-person learning is unadvised, please contact the school.**

Families who choose to educate their children at home can find more information about homeschooling by contacting:

<b>Homeschooling Office Manitoba Education and Training</b>	
1567 Dublin Ave. Winnipeg, MB R3E 3J5 Phone: 204.945.8138	Email: <a href="mailto:homeschooling@gov.mb.ca">homeschooling@gov.mb.ca</a>

### Arrival and Dismissal

#### Walking or Riding to School

**To assist in making student drop off and pick up as safe as possible, we are asking all parents/guardians to follow the school specific directions and consider having their child walk to school or ride a bike. Emerson School has bike racks located in the field for students to use. Students are reminded to bring a bike lock to secure their bikes.**

#### Dropping Off/Picking Up your Child

**If you will be driving your child to school, please arrive as close to your child’s designated start and dismissal times as possible and arrange for a meeting spot at the end of the day. For the safety of all students the Drop Zone located on Emerson Ave. will be clearly identified for a fluid stop, drop and go to support the flow of traffic. Staff will be outside to support this transition.**

### Bussing

- **A staff member will meet the bus and support the transition of our students to their designated area to meet their teacher.**
- **Once students arrive, they should go to their designated meeting area to meet their teacher. This will be reviewed with the students on the first day of school.**

### Timetable

**In order to ensure that we are aligned with the guidelines put out by the province and RETSD we have made some adjustments to our daily routine. Please see the table below:**

### Staggered Entrance and Exits

- Different cohorts will be assigned different entry and exit times, as well as meeting locations when arriving and dismissing from school.
- Classroom teachers will meet all students outside in their classroom’s designated meeting area.
- While we understand that siblings may have different start times, we appreciate your support in adhering to the designated times to allow all of students a safe transition to and from school. Staff will be outside to greet students between entry times.
- See chart below for further information:

Entry	Ms. Marten/Ms. Booth, Ms. Muzyk, Ms. Wilson, Ms. Haines  Enter at 9:20 am	Mrs. Bangart/Ms. Rollins, Ms. Campbell Mrs. Ingram/Ms. Nowak Mrs. Link and Mrs. Van de Vijzel  Enter at 9:25 am
9:40-10:10	Period 1	
10:10-10:40	Period 2	
10:40-10:55	Snack	Recess
10:55-11:10	Recess	Snack
11:10-11:40	Period 3	
11:40-12:10	Period 4	
12:15-12:40	Meal Period	Lunch Recess
12:40-1:10	Lunch Recess	Meal Period
1:10-1:45	Period 5	
1:45-2:15	Period 6	
2:15-2:30	Snack	Recess
2:30-2:45	Recess	Snack
2:45-3:15	Period 7	
3:15-3:45	Period 8	
Exit	Exit at 3:50 pm	Exit at 3:55 pm

### Entry/Exit Procedures – Start and End of School Day

Emerson School students are encouraged to arrive at their scheduled entrance time and head home immediately following dismissal. Once students arrive, they will wait with their peers and classroom

teacher in their designated areas. These designated spaces will be reviewed with students during the first day of school. The playground is off limits before entry to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.

The designated doors have been allocated to cohorts in order to reduce contact with other cohorts. Designated doors and meeting areas will be labelled for students with signage and pylons. Using spray paint, designated areas will be marked off, as well as lines will be marked for students to wait on to maintain physical distancing. We ask that all students use their designated doors when entering and exiting the building.

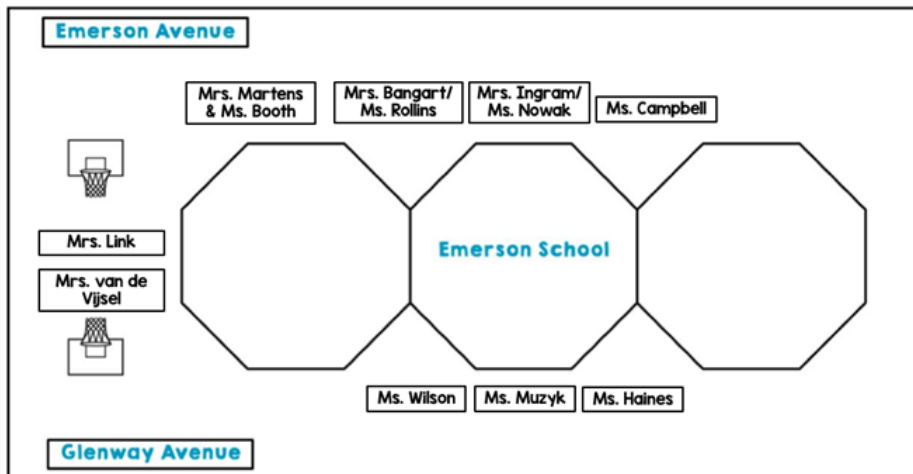
At the end of the day the students will be dismissed in cohorts out their designated doors as noted in the chart below.

Street patrols will be in place during the first week of classes to support our students. There will be no Kindergarten patrols at this time.

### Designated Doors

Emerson Ave - Main doors	Emerson Ave. – Kindergarten doors (East)	Glenway Ave – West Doors	Glenway Ave – East Doors
Mrs. Bangart/Ms. Rollins Ms. Campbell Mrs. Ingram/Ms. Nowak	Ms. Martens/Ms. Booth	Ms. Wilson Ms. Muzyk Ms. Haines	Mrs. Link Mrs. van de Vijssel

### Designated Meeting Spaces



### Picking Students Up During the School Day

If you need to pick up your child during the school day, please call the school or send a note or email to your child's teacher. When you arrive, please wait outside the Emerson Avenue doors and call the school (204-669-4430) and your child will meet you outside with the support from an adult.

### Recess Breaks

- Recess is an important part of child development. Play, structured and unstructured, is central to student well-being. To ensure the additional physical distancing measures and cohorting are supported, a recess and snack schedule has been built into the timetable as noted in the table above.
- Students will use the play structures and recess equipment will be provided for each classroom.
- We are asking that all toys, trading cards and sporting equipment be kept at home.



### Lunch Hour

- Similar to the recess schedule, we have divided the lunch hour into a meal period and recess period.
- Please refer to the schedule for the lunch time.
- Students who stay at school for lunch will eat lunch in their classroom. Food must not be shared, and students are to supply their own food and utensils. Hand sanitizing will take place before the meal period and when entering and exiting the building for recess.
- Students who normally go home for lunch will continue to do so. Due to the staggered schedule of cohort groups these students are asked not to return to school until 1:10pm for afternoon classes. Upon return students are to go to their meeting area to be welcomed by their teachers.
- At this time Hot Lunch will be on hold at Emerson School.

### Assemblies

In order to ensure physical distancing measures and cohorting are obtained, assemblies and large gatherings are not permitted at this time. **School wide morning announcements will continue, and virtual whole school assemblies will take place.**

**Smaller assemblies may take place in designated cohorts.**

### Field Trips

All field trips/out of school excursions are permitted as long as the activities follow current public health recommendations and orders at the time.

**Emerson School will make great use of the outdoor spaces we have in our community while adhering to the recommendations put out by the province and RETSD.**

### Volunteers/Visitors

Since we are in the early stages of re-opening, volunteers will not be permitted. Guest speakers and presenters are encouraged to be accessed electronically. If this is not feasible, providing all Public Health guidelines are adhered to, and the presenter is directly linked to curriculum (this is inclusive of student-specific programming and well-being supports), they can attend the site. All visitors and volunteers must adhere to self-screening, physical distancing, and recommended hygiene practices. Visitors or volunteers with any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should not enter the school. Schools will keep a list of all visitors. To help protect the health and safety of everyone masks are mandatory for everyone in RETSD schools, buildings and buses.

**Volunteers have always been instrumental in so many ways at Emerson School. While we so greatly appreciate our volunteers, at this time we will not be having volunteers in person.**

## TEACHING, LEARNING & WELL-BEING

RESPONSE LEVEL YELLOW—CAUTION—Given that to the greatest extent possible a two-metre distancing requirement is desirable and encouraged within the parameters of all students engaged in in-school learning, schools will be aggressively ensuring that excess furniture is removed from classrooms to support the distancing. The division has provided schools and maintenance staff with detailed instructions to achieve this.

### In-Class Learning

As directed by Manitoba Education, in-class learning will occur with additional public health measures. While the educational programming will continue to be best practice, some logistical changes may be necessary. These changes will include:

- Requiring masks. Mask wearing will be especially important any time students are not seated or are engaged in group work or one-on-one interactions with a staff member. RETSD views mask wearing as an important strategy to support health and safety of all as well as a key to the re-introduction of collaborative group learning experiences that have been impacted by the pandemic.
- Maintaining social distance and hygiene within the classrooms
- Cohorting students in kindergarten to Grade 8

## The Possibility of Remote Learning

Students and families need to be prepared for a blended or fully remote learning model that allows transition of teaching and learning from in-class to remote with as little disruption as possible. Should this arise, schools will be in contact with parents to communicate next steps.

## Assessment & Reporting

Students' learning will be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that next steps are being appropriately planned for. Learning that occurs in classrooms or remotely will be assessed using good assessment practices that focus on the essential understandings of the curriculum. Additionally, students and parents/caregivers need to be aware that reporting continues to follow the guidelines and policies established by Manitoba Education and reflected in the following RETSD policies:

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/IKAB.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/IKA-R.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/IKAF.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/IKAG.pdf>

## Subject Areas & Specialist Classes

All curriculum areas are important and build students' literacy and numeracy knowledge. Emerson School will continue to offer all subjects.

## Music

Music programming is an important part of a well-rounded education. Music programming will include:

In K–5, where students are not yet eligible to be vaccinated and instrument PPE is not available, RETSD is expecting that there will be no indoor singing or wind instrument use. Outdoor singing is promoted and acceptable when complimented by distancing.

**Mr. Kowalik will be teaching music in the music room at the start of the year. He will share his passion for music with our students. Recorders will not be needed at this time.**

## Physical Education

**Physical Education will continue for all students as regular exercise and outdoor programming are very important. When possible, classes will be held outdoors. Mr. Zajac will come to classrooms to support the transition outside. Please ensure that your child is prepared for the weather and has appropriate clothing. If classes are held in the gym, students will use separate doors to enter and exit the gym and change rooms will not be used. School staff will lead classes to and from the gym to supervise physical distancing practices.**

## Library

**Students will be heading to the library to see Mrs. Debruyne for book exchanges. We all enjoy Mrs. Debruyne's read-alouds. At the start of the year, Mrs. Klausen will be focusing on setting all students up on TEAMS so that we can continue to embed technology into our learning. Inquiry will continue to be a strong focus throughout the year. Home Reading will continue in all classrooms.**

## Student Specific Programming

As is the case for all students, students with additional needs from K-12 will be receiving in-class learning as prescribed by the province. Programming for students with additional needs may include a student specific plan, such as an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or an Adapted Education Plan (AEP). This collaborative planning will be led by the school team and as needed, supported by divisional staff. If students with additional needs are not able to physically distance, provincial and divisional protocols will guide the necessary next steps.

## Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

To support the use of technology in teaching and learning, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) guidelines will be in place for all students.

Encouraging students to use personal devices in classrooms:

- Supports the transition between in-class and remote learning
- Extends teaching and learning opportunities using technology
- Provides opportunity for modeling and teaching digital literacy practices that will be required for in-class and remote learning
- Limits the use of shared technology resources

Teachers, students, and parents should be aware of the BYOD guidelines and the related RETSD policies. This DOES NOT mean that student must have their own device. This approach allows students who have their own device to leverage its use in-class under the direction of the teacher.

**Additional information will be sent home during the first couple of weeks outlining this process for Emerson School.**

RETSD BYOD Parent Guidelines:

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/BYOD%20Parent%20FAQ%20Aug%202020.pdf>

RETSD BYOD Student Guidelines:

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/BYOD%20Student%20guidelines%20Nov%202017.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourrets/Policies/Documents/IJND.pdf>

## Student Access to Devices & the Internet

To ensure all students are ready for a possible move to remote learning, based on need, each school will identify students who would benefit from being provided with loaner devices that would be returned at the end of the school year or before.

Students who were provided with a loaner device are given the opportunity to purchase the device at the end of the school year.

To ensure all students are ready for a possible move to remote learning, based on need, each school will identify students who would benefit from the opportunity to have the school division provide home internet access through BELL/MTS.

Parents/caregivers are advised to contact the school for support.



## Protocol for Shared Equipment

Students can share equipment as needed however, it is imperative to ensure hand hygiene before and after use.

If possible, staff should limit the use of shared resources. When this is not possible, adequate, and appropriate cleaning must be available.

## Well-Being, Wellness & Supports Checks

Student mental health and well-being is a core element of the re-opening planning. It is foundational in ensuring a return to a welcoming environment that supports learning. RETSD schools will utilize the expertise of parents/caregivers as it relates to their own children, as parents and caregivers know their children the best. To support all the adults supporting children, schools will consider these points:

- Communicate that no one has all of the answers about the impact of the pandemic, but that as a team, we can steer through the pandemic together
- Acknowledge that we need collaboration from adults to support the social-emotional impact of the pandemic on students
- Be open to the concept that students are returning to school with the weight of experiences that they might not have shared yet
- Understand that students will only be as healthy as the adults around them
- Collaborate with parents/caregivers as a coordinated system that gives students hope

As adults we need to remember that children want to be heard. They do not need detailed information about events, but they do need to talk about their feelings. Let them know they can ask questions. We should answer questions honestly, but make sure that the information is suitable for their age level. If answers are not known, it is okay to say so and to look for resources together that can answer their questions.

Remember that children are often listening when others are talking about COVID-19. Adults should consider this and minimize discussions of COVID-19 that are not related to the specific setting. It is important for adults to correct any misinformation as they become aware of it.

We all need to reassure children that our schools are safe for children when they are consistently following preventative practices, including environmental cleaning, frequent hand hygiene, and routine screening.

Parent and student resources can be found at:

Taking Care of Yourself: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mpsg\\_taking\\_care.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mpsg_taking_care.pdf)

Resources for Students and Adults: [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mpsg\\_resources.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mpsg_resources.pdf)

Kids Help Phone: <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>

Stress Hacks at: <https://stresshacks.ca/>

## COMMUNICATION



## Microsoft Teams

All RETSD schools use Microsoft Teams as our teaching, learning and communication platform. Your child's teacher will be working, in the first weeks, to ensure that your child can access Teams so that should schools move to remote learning, your child is positioned to continue their learning.

A parent support document for Teams can be found here:

[https://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/Family%20and%20Guardian%20Guide%20to%20Microsoft%20Teams%20\(2\)%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/Family%20and%20Guardian%20Guide%20to%20Microsoft%20Teams%20(2)%20(1).pdf)

## Stay Informed

RETSD and Emerson School are committed to keeping the community informed and engaged. At a divisional level, several structures have been established to support this communication:

**Divisional Website**—The RETSD divisional website has a section for COVID-19 updates that is clearly visible and regularly updated with any communication and documents. Parents are referred to the website through school communication.

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca>

**Divisional Social Media Accounts**—Current information is provided in a timely manner through Twitter and Facebook.

<https://twitter.com/RETSDschools>

<https://www.facebook.com/retsdb>

**Divisional Letters**—Regular information is provided to all families through letters that are branded with the divisional letterhead and signed by the Superintendent. These letters are distributed through the schools electronically or hard copies can be provided to families who request/require them.

**Two-way communication** – Parents and Community members can provide feedback/questions/comments through the division or school websites Contact Us feature, Twitter and Facebook comments, regular surveys, through the school administrator and/or their elected school trustee.

At a school level, the following structures support communication:

- School websites [www.emer.retsd.mb.ca](http://www.emer.retsd.mb.ca)
- School emails/letters
- Teacher/family communication

## Concern Protocol

We value your partnership and always try to make the learning experience a positive, safe and happy one for its students. However, if you have a concern or an issue, please don't hesitate to let the school know. Open communication between home and school is very important to us. In the event you have a concern, please follow the process below:

- a. Talk to the person most directly involved—your child's teacher. If you must leave a message, provide a day and evening phone number where the teacher can reach you.

- b. If talking to the teacher doesn't resolve the issue, talk to the principal.
- c. If you've talked to the principal, but the issue has not been resolved over a period of time, call the superintendent's department at 204.667.7130 or email [communications@retsd.mb.ca](mailto:communications@retsd.mb.ca).
- d. If you disagree with the decision of the superintendent's department, you can make an appeal in writing to the board of trustees.

Policy KE–Concern Protocol: <https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/KE.pdf>

Policy KE-R–Concerns and Complaints Process:

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/KE-R.pdf>