



John de Graff Elementary

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August 31, 2020

John de Graff School Students Returning to School

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Our staff have been working to plan a safe and happy opening on September 8, 2020. The planning areas fall into the categories of safety during the COVID-19 pandemic; student wellbeing and mental health; learning, including recovery learning.

On the John de Graff School website you will find a link to our specific plans and the RETSD guidelines. In addition to this information we are providing some extra details for you. We hope this information provides more clarity and helps you feel comfortable with your child's return to school.

Please call if you have any questions.

School Access, Community Use and Entry Process

Restricting access to buildings is a strategy to reduce the probability of an infected person entering the school.

Our building is implementing a monitored access system for the start of school. This means all parents or visitors MUST call in to the office upon entering the school through the main doors. All parents or visitors are expected to use the self-screening tool prior to coming to the school. To help protect the health and safety of everyone, masks are mandatory for any parent or visitor who needs to enter the school. Physical distancing of 2 metres is also necessary.

Whenever possible, parents, visitors or caregivers are asked to email or call the teachers, school or administrator when wanting to discuss something with us as opposed to coming to the school. Parents and caregivers are asked not to enter the building to meet with us without a prearranged appointment.

Parents and caregivers are to wait outside at the student's assigned classroom entry and exit zones when dropping off or picking up students.

Everyone who enters an RETSD facility MUST monitor for symptoms and possible exposure to COVID-19. This responsibility resides with the person or a child's parent/caregiver. Monitoring is to be done using the COVID-19 Shared Health Screening Tool.



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Hand sanitizing stations will be set up at the main entrances of the school. Everyone entering the school are requested to sanitize their hands.

Any person who exhibits signs and symptoms of illness are asked not to enter the school and to seek applicable health testing. If a child becomes sick at school, we have identified spaces to isolate the child and we will monitor them and provide a mask until they are picked up. We ask that parents or caregivers immediately come to school if you are called about your child being sick. In the student verification forms (these are forms that go home annually from the school to have parents and caregivers update or confirm contact, address and other important information about your child), that will be going home during the first week of school, please provide **4 emergency contact phone numbers** so that you or a contact can be easily reached.

Classroom Transition, Cohorts, Student Movement Plans

It is critical to maintain physical distancing as much as possible. We have divided the classrooms into cohorts to reduce the interactions with other students in the school. Physical distancing within the cohort is still required. These cohorts will be in the gym together and will have recess at the same time. But the classrooms will be not interacting in other ways.

Cohorts – John de Graff - 2020-2021

“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. However, it is recognized that strict physical distancing at all times, particularly with young children, is not always possible 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 75 students.” (‘Welcoming Students Back, 2020-2021 Parent & Community Information’, RETSD)

At John de Graff, each grade level will be divided into 2 cohorts, except Kindergarten which will be 1 cohort. All of our cohorts have less than 75 students.

The classes in Cohorts 1 and Cohorts 2 will have staggered recess and lunch (eating/playing) times to reduce the number of students in the schoolyard at one time.

Each grade level will have a designated area to play outside, so that students do not intermingle with others from outside their own grade-level cohort during recesses and lunch times.



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Kindergarten is considered its own cohort and is not included in the cohort list, as Kindergarten follows an alternate day schedule, has separate recess and lunch plans, and Kindergarten grade numbers already meet expectations for cohort sizes.

Cohort 1 Grade 1

1A – Bargaen
1B – Mochnacz/Mazur

Cohort 1 Grade 2

2A – Beamish
2C – Rudd

Cohort 1 Grade 3

3C – Deroche
3D – Wong

Cohort 1 Grade 4

4B – Korb

Cohort 1 Grade 4/5 and 5

4/5S – Sywak
5A – Johnston

Cohort 2 Grade 1

1C – Ponce
1D – Boutang

Cohort 2 Grade 2

2B – Rennie
2D – Beauchamp

Cohort 2 Grade 3

3A – Dallmann
3B – Lachuta

Cohort 2 Grade 4

4A – Tuck
4C – Froese

Cohort 2 Grade 4/5 and 5

5B – Peltz (Meseman)
5C – Busch

Staggered Entry and Exits will be used

Before School:

Teachers will be outside at 8:50 to meet their class and keep them socially distanced. Students are asked to arrive no earlier than 8:45 a.m. and wait at their class designated area.

Students will enter the school in a staggered way, one class at a time, socially distanced. Students will proceed directly to their classroom with their teacher and will not stop to take off coats or backpacks, only shoes if it is a wet day. All belongings will be kept in the classrooms, in separated bins or containers.

Exiting the school:

Classroom teachers or Educational Assistants will walk students to their exit door, in a socially distanced manner and students will be dismissed. This will occur in a staggered way for all



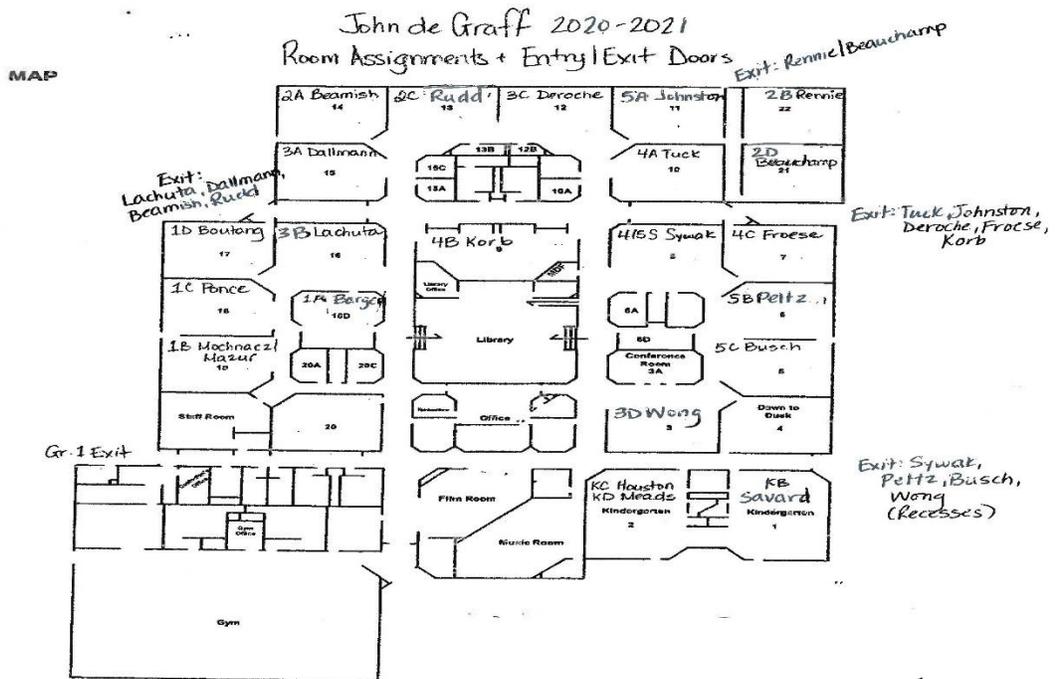
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classrooms at each door and classrooms will start this dismissal process at 3:25 P.M. For parents meeting their child after school, please stay away from the exit and stay socially distanced. Please communicate with your child about where you will be.

For bus lineups, teachers on this duty will be outside by the buses to organize lines that are socially distanced and in cohorts.

We have done some reorganizing of the allocated doors in the school to keep the number of students using doors divided up.

Please note the revised map of the school entry and exit doors. The front doors will not be used by students as an entry or exit point.





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Recess in A.M. and P.M.:

We are having a staggered recess schedule this year. The purpose is again to reduce the number of students in hallways at one time and reduce the number of students playing in areas of the playground.

Recess times will be:

10:00 to 10:15 Morning Recess 1

10:25 to 10:40 Morning Recess 2

1:45 to 2:00 Afternoon Recess 1

2:10 to 2:25 Afternoon Recess 2

At each recess, 2 classrooms (or 1 cohort) from a grade level will be outside. We already have our playground divided into areas, that the students rotate through according to days of the cycle so this is something familiar to our students. Students will have only equipment from their own classroom to take outside and the equipment will be cleaned daily. The soccer area will be separately monitored by the Phys. Ed. Teachers at morning recess. Soccer will not be played in afternoon recesses.

The entry and exit will be staggered and closely supervised by the teachers so that there is social distancing and the students in a classroom will stay together.

Students are to come dressed for outdoor recess, regardless of the weather, as it is a part of the school day. All students will be going outside, with the exception of very cold or rainy days, when we will follow Divisional guidelines to decide if recess should be indoors.

There are no specific requirements for cleaning play structures. All play structures and swing sets will be open during recess times, however, a reminder that immediately before school when students are waiting to enter the building or after school when they are waiting to be picked up by parents or school bus play structures and swings are not to be in use.

Once students enter their classroom, they will need to wash or sanitize their hands.



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Movement in hallways and to classes:

Arrows on the floor and signage will be in place to keep students moving in the correct direction and standing in line with a distance between them. Minimal movement will occur within the school.

Specialist teachers will go to the students' classrooms to meet the students and take them to the Music Room, Library or Gym/outside. This will allow us to have staggered movements of students and supervision for social distancing.

COVID-19 Signage:

This signage will be placed throughout the school to remind staff and students about physical distancing, best handwashing practices, etc. Decals have also been placed throughout the building including physical distancing markers, directional arrows to direct hallway traffic as well as tape to mark off areas as a reminder of physical distancing. Teachers will be teaching and practicing these directions and the meaning of the signage with the students.

Transportation to and from School:

To assist in making student drop off and pick up as safe as possible when we welcome our students back in September, we are asking all parents to follow these specific directions.

- All school bus passengers in Grade 4 and Grade 5, as well as the driver, are required to wear a nonmedical mask. These masks should be put on before getting on the bus. Non-medical masks are strongly recommended for students in lower grades.
- Students are to move off and on buses in a socially distanced manner and will be supervised by the teachers on duty at school.
- Students must sit in their assigned seat on the bus and always follow the bus safety rules.
- Students will proceed to their school entry doors when they get off the bus.
- At the end of the day students will line up for the bus, in their cohort groups, and physically distance from each other.

There will be no parking in our parking lot for anyone but Divisional employees at this time.

We will see if it is possible to do a “Stop, Drop and Drive” for families to drop off their child or children. This will be looked at later in September, and information will be in the school newsletters if we develop a plan for this.



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School Routines and School Physical Setting:

Each classroom has been provided with necessary cleaning supplies to help ensure cleanliness throughout the day. Additionally, soap and water are readily available throughout the schools as well as hand sanitizer stations at the main entrances.

The entire school is regularly cleaned by the school custodial staff and common spaces are subject to more frequent cleaning, in order to help maximize safety.

As stated by the province, students in Grade 4 and 5, as well as teachers and staff, are mandated to wear a non-medical mask in common areas throughout schools. Younger students are also encouraged to wear masks.

Two metre physical distancing is required to the greatest extent possible. Seating needs to be a minimum of one metre apart.

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. Water filling stations can be used as they operate in a touchless way. Students are encouraged to bring a reusable, non breakable water bottle.

Regular timetabling is in effect, covering all curricular areas. A focus will be placed on literacy and numeracy and any recovery learning that is required.

Some times have been adjusted to accommodate our staggered recess and exits from the school.

Lunch Hour (11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.):

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 12:40 p.m. for afternoon classes, and wait by their entrance door.

Students who stay at school for lunch will eat lunch in their own classroom. Food must not be shared, and students are to supply their own food and utensils. Microwaves will not be available.

Hot lunches will be suspended until further notice.



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Milk will be for sale for lunches starting on September 10. Tickets will be sold in the classrooms. There will be a plan for students to pick up their milk without contact with others.

The lunch program Supervisor will be located in the Film Room to provide more space for discussions with staff or students.

Attendance:

Please call the school (204.669.1280) 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. Families who choose to educate their children at home can find more information about homeschooling by contacting: Homeschooling Office Manitoba Education and Training 1567 Dublin Ave. Winnipeg, MB R3E 3J5 Phone: 204.945.8138 Email: homeschooling@gov.mb.ca. Please contact administration if you have specific medical reasons pertaining to your family and your child's attendance at school.

Assemblies:

In order to ensure the additional physical distancing measures and cohorting that is required, assemblies and large gatherings are not permitted at this time. Field Trips will also not be planned for now.

Volunteers/Visitors:

In order to ensure our school is as safe as possible, the division is limiting access to the school building. In most situations, volunteers and guest presenters are not permitted to attend school in-person. For the most part, access is being prioritized to those supporting implementation of public health measures and activities that benefit student learning and well-being.

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. All visitors must sign in and out at the office so that we have a record of who has been in the building.

To help protect the health and safety of everyone masks are mandatory for any parent or visitor who needs to enter the school.

If you need to pick up your child during the school day, please call the school or send a note or email to the teacher and office ahead of time. When you arrive please wait outside the front doors and call the school (204.669.1280) and your child will meet you by the front door.



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Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Masks offer an added layer of protection. Students in Grade 4 and above, as well as teachers and staff, are mandated to wear a non-medical mask in common areas throughout schools and when physical distancing is not possible. Younger students are also encouraged to wear masks. Masks are mandated when on school buses for all students in Grade 4 and above. Masks are strongly recommended for students in lower grades on the bus. Extra masks will be made available throughout the school year for those who do not have their own. Parents are strongly encouraged to talk to their children about how to wear a non-medical mask and to practice this at home. Non-medical/reusable masks should be laundered daily.

The teachers at John de Graff School will also be showing students how to wear and remove masks safely and to keep their hands away from their faces.

For some students, enhanced Personal Protective Equipment will be used, such as face shields, gloves or gowns. For these children, parents will be contacted by the Student Services Team so that parents are informed.

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:

- Facility and community use permits have been suspended to accommodate increased cleaning requirements
- Hand sanitizer has been provided at entrances
- John de School has received an additional 8 hours of custodial time
- Custodial staff will ensure an adequate supply of liquid soap and hand towels is available
- Disinfectant wipes will be available for IT equipment to ensure shared devices are cleaned in between users

Classroom teachers have access to cleaning products to clean high touch areas throughout the day.

Custodial staff will regularly clean washrooms.



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Students and staff 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

Public health orders are to be followed. 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 or soap and water are not available. If you choose, you may send unscented hand sanitizer for your child to use. There are signs placed throughout the school to remind students about good handwashing practices and cough/sneeze etiquette. Teachers will also reinforce this in classrooms.

Protocol for Students Who Exhibit Symptoms:

If a student develops symptoms while at school, they will be isolated in an isolation space in the office area. A mask will be provided for and worn by the child exhibiting symptoms. 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.

Music Classes:

Music programming is an important part of our learning. Music programming in RETSD will follow all public health and education advice. Singing is not presently permitted in school so there will be a focus on other musical elements and providing practice singing suggestions for home where appropriate. Students will be using some of the musical instruments, but instruments will not be shared, and will be cleaned after use.



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Physical Education:

Physical Education will continue for all students. Regular exercise and outdoor programming is very important during this time. When possible, classes will be held outdoors. Please ensure that your child is prepared for classes outside and has appropriate clothing. Change rooms will not be used. The Phys Ed teachers will lead classes to and from Phys Ed classes to supervise physical distancing practices.

Library and Books:

Students will continue to borrow books from the Library and take books home from their classroom libraries for Home Reading. Students will not be able to browse books on the shelves in the same way as before and the teachers will have display ways that they allow students to choose books. All books after use will be put away for 72 hours to stop any possible spread of the virus.

Student Specific Programming:

Students with additional needs will be receiving in-class learning as we have done in the past, with individual instruction and support being provided as needed for the student's goals. If students with additional needs are not able to physically distance, provincial and divisional protocols will guide the necessary next steps and extra Personal Protective Equipment may be necessary.

In-Class Learning:

As has been directed by Manitoba Education, in-class learning will occur with additional public health measures. We are planning to be outdoors as much as possible. Please send appropriate outdoor clothing (hats, sunscreen, an extra change of clothing, jackets etc.).

The Possibility of Remote Learning:

As it is possible that at some point during the school year we could return to remote learning, if directed by the Province of MB, we will be working in different ways with students to have them continue to be familiar with the use of technology and TEAMS.



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First Day of School:

**On the First Day of School – September 8, 2020
Grades 1 - 5**

School starts at 9:00 a.m. and teachers will be outside entry doors to welcome their classes and maintain distancing expectations between students.

Parents/Guardians can help your child find their teacher – but parents/guardians should not join the group of students.

Parents/Guardians will not be able to come into the school.

Students will need to bring a backpack, indoor shoes and their snacks and lunch (if staying for lunch).

All other supplies are being purchased by the teachers and students will receive a letter to take home on September 8 to let families know about the student supplies and student fee.

Please do not bring your child/ren to school if they are showing any signs of illness or if you have any indicators on the Manitoba Health Links list that are identifying a risk.

Students in Grades 4 and 5 must wear masks.

Please remind your child about social distancing, washing their hands/sanitizing their hands often and keeping their hands away from their faces.

You will be receiving a Student Information Verification letter being sent home from the school during the first week of school. It is very important that you complete this and return it to school promptly, including 4 emergency contact numbers – so that we have correct information about your family.

The parking lot is not available for parking or drop off at this point. Please use street parking (following street signage) or walk to school.

Specific Teaching during the period of COVID-19:

Starting on September 8, teachers will be specifically teaching, monitoring and practicing the following things with our students:

- The proper use and removal of masks



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- Keeping hands away from our faces
- Letting the teachers know about any concerns immediately
- Procedures for lining up outside and at dismissal time
- Hallway movement and classroom routines and movement
- Social distancing
- The individual use of all classroom supplies, equipment and books
- The use of our water filling station
- Hand sanitizing

Thank you to all of our parents and caregivers for reading all of our information and helping with teaching new protocols and safety measures.

We know that this is a particularly worrisome and unusual time for everyone. Please be assured that our staff is dedicated to providing the best possible environment for your child or children. If situations change, then we will also adapt plans as needed and will let parents know.

As mentioned, as well as the safety and cleaning protocols necessary, our staff will be focused on purposeful and engaging learning. If students need some recovery learning, we have planned to implement additional instruction and time in curricular areas to help students progress as fast as possible. We also are wanting students to feel happy and comfortable about this return to school. Supportive mental health and proactive behaviour learning strategies will be in place to support all students.

We are looking forward to September 8 and the start of the year.

Sincerely,

Margaret Fair, Principal

Rachel Reyes, Vice Principal