



# Welcoming Students Back

## 2021 Parent & Community Information

This plan is dynamic. The school will continue to re-work and make Adaptations as new information and guidelines become available.

# Message from the Administration

## Welcome Back

With the start of a new school year, we are looking forward to welcoming new and returning students to River East Collegiate. We understand you and your child may have questions pertaining to the changes necessary to ensure the safety of all students. We hope that this communication provides the answers to these questions.

On July 30, 2020 Manitoba Education announced the plans for the reopening schools in Manitoba:  
[https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset\\_library/en/covid/k-12-reopeningplan-stage-2.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/covid/k-12-reopeningplan-stage-2.pdf)

This plan reflects the importance of safety, health and wellbeing while ensuring reasonable plans are in place to minimize the risk of transmission and exposure to the virus in schools.

We are looking forward to welcoming our students September 8, 2020. Thank you for your understanding, co-operation, and patience as we, together, adapt to learning amidst the pandemic. We are committed to a safe return to school for all of our students and staff.

As this a changing landscape with the pandemic, please refer to the school website for continued updates.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school.

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Principal

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## SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS

### School Access, Community Use & Entry Process

Restricting access to buildings is a strategy to reduce the probability of an infected person entering the school. All RETSD buildings are implementing a monitored access system for the start of school. This means all **parents or visitors MUST report to the office upon entering the school**. 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 when physical distancing of two metres is not possible.

Whenever possible, parents, visitors or caregivers are asked to email or call the teachers, school or administrators when you need to talk as opposed to coming to the school.

Access to the school is limited. **Please call the school for an appointment (204.338.4611). Parents, visitors or caregivers will report to the front door at the appointment time and will then be escorted to the office. All visitors must wear a non-medical mask while in the school and practice social distancing.**

**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/>

Hand sanitizing stations will be set up at the main entrances of schools. Everyone entering the school should sanitize their hands.

Keeping potentially sick 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.

Given that Manitoba Education has made it clear that the community use of schools is to be suspended, all community programming is being reviewed. Most programming will be suspended at this time.

### 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. 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 at all times, 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 75 students.

**Each cohort will consist of 3 classes. Each class will be assigned a room. When students enter the school, they must directly report to their designated classroom and remain in the classroom. Students will not be permitted to socialize or congregate in the hallways. Staff assigned to the cohort will change rooms and students will remain in their assigned area. Students are permitted to arrive at school 10 minutes prior to class and must leave the school when the class has ended.**

**Each cohort will be assigned a specific door to enter and exit. Signage will be put on the door indicating the cohorts that are to use those entrances and exits. It is expected that students will enter and exit the school through their assigned door. Once in the school students are to follow the directional signage that will be visible in the hallways and stairs.**

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. Students are to enter the school upon arrival to ensure they are staggered and will be released in a similar manner at the end of the day.

## **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>

## **Transportation**

We understand that the provinces guidelines for school bus transportation will impact many families. RETSD will schedule bussing according to provincial guidelines while also ensuring physical distancing requirements are in place.

RETSD school buses will be operating at **less than full capacity due to physical distancing requirements.**

To meet our **obligations**, our plans include the following:

- Supporting transportation for students with additional needs who require individualized programming support
- Supporting transportation for students living outside the City of Winnipeg perimeter in the municipalities of East St. Paul and St. Clements as there is no access to public transportation
- Suspending our Fee-for-Service school bus transportation
- Extending the minimum walk zone boundary from 1.6 kilometres to 2.5 kilometres. Only students living outside the walk zone boundary will be eligible for school bus transportation until further notice. We may not be able to bus all students outside of their walk zone but will prioritize students in Grades K–3 and their siblings as long as the entire family fits on 1 seat.

All school bus passengers in Grade 4 and over, as well as the driver, are required to wear a non-medical mask. These masks should be put on before getting on the bus and taken off after exiting the bus, if removal is appropriate for the setting.

Non-medical masks are strongly recommended for students in lower grades.

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.

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 the school specific directions and consider having their child walk to school or ride a bike. Most schools in RETSD have bike racks. If you need to drive your child to school, please consider talking to your child about a regular pick up or drop off location that is two blocks away from the school.

Guidelines for Transportation to Schools: <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/reopening/transportation.html>

**Students that use school bus transportation will be required to remain in their assigned class for the entire day. Supervision will be provided. Students who take the bus must enter and exit the school through their designated assigned cohort door.**

## River East Collegiate Parking

A limited number of student parking spaces are available through a lottery process at the start of the school year. All students submitting their names for a student parking spot will be required to show a valid drivers license. Parking spots obtained through the lottery are non-transferable. Please note that no student may park elsewhere on REC property (no parking in staff spots/visitor spots/turnaround loop/etc.). Unauthorized parking on Chief Peguis grounds is also prohibited. **Offenders will be towed away at the owner's expense from these locations.** Only students with a valid student parking pass may park in the designated student parking lot. Students pay annual parking fees. Any student who brings a car to school is expected to drive in a safe and responsible manner. Failure to do so will result in suspension of parking privileges.

**Ballots for the student parking lottery will be available from the office at the beginning of the school year (please listen for announcements). STUDENTS ARE NOT TO PARK IN THE STAFF PARKING LOT AT ANY TIME. Parking passes change from year to year. Students must hand in the previous year's pass to apply for parking privileges. Deadline: September 14, 2020**

## 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

<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.html>

## 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 of two metres is not possible. Masks are mandated when on school buses for all students in Grade 4 and above.

Extra masks will be made available at all schools 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.

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 may wear PPE as appropriate and where physical distancing can not be maintained in order to support additional student needs.

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/supports\\_non\\_distance.html](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/supports_non_distance.html)

## Protocol for Students Who Exhibit Symptoms

If a student develops symptoms while at school, they will be isolated in a predetermined isolation space. Where a separate room is not available, students will be kept at least two metres away from others. 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.

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. 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 confirmation of a 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, we are:

- Hiring additional custodial aides to ensure more frequent cleaning during the day when students are present
- Suspending facility and community use permits to accommodate increased cleaning requirements
- Providing hand sanitizer in all offices and entrances of school buildings
- 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

## **School ROUTINES**

### **School Physical Setting**

As per the messaging from the Chief Public Health Officer of Manitoba, schools are safe. 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. Common spaces are subject to more frequent cleaning by school custodial staff. In order to help maximize safety, water fountains that are not touchless are closed off or bagged so that they cannot be used. Bottle re-fill stations will continue to be available. Students must supply their own bottle, and these should not be shared.

All schools in RETSD, have completed a school specific RETSD COVID-19 Safety Plan document. This document supports school-specific plans for the safe return of students.

### **Student Attendance**

Students are expected to attend in-class learning and fully participate even if remote learning is required at some point. Each school will work collaboratively with parents/caregivers to support learning for students who are medically advised not to return to school and 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](mailto:homeschooling@gov.mb.ca)

### **Timetable**

The below noted timetable descriptions are general in nature. School specific information will be available from your child's school after August 28, 2020.



## Senior Years

The senior years timetable to reflect the provincial programming, curriculum, and safety guidelines. Students be scheduled in cohorts to maintain physical distancing measures. This approach will increase safe daily attendance and limit cohorts from mixing. Students, parents and caregivers must be aware that this approach will limit student course options. Learning will likely be extended through some remote/at-home work and, where possible, some courses may be offered online. Teachers will move classrooms while the students remain, in their designated room.

*Student initiated timetable changes will not be possible.*

Schools are planning to use different entry points for each grade/class. Different entry/exit times will be scheduled. Students should not arrive before scheduled classes and they should leave immediately following their last scheduled class. In the event students arrive at school prior to the designated entry time, they are to wait, using physical distancing, on the schoolyard in their cohort's assigned area.

**Timetables will be available on the parent portal. Student timetables will reflect a combination of in class and remote learning.**

**River East Collegiate has developed the following:**

**Day 1: Grade 9/12 in school for core subjects, remote electives**

**Day 2: Grade 9/12 remote learning all subjects**

**Day 2: Grade 10/11 in school for core subjects, remote electives**

**Day 1: Grade 10/11 remote learning all subjects.**

**All electives will be offered remotely. With remote learning students are expected to participate and attend at the designated time on their timetables. Teachers will be available to teach and support students. Continuous assessment will occur throughout the semester whether classes are in class or remote.**

## Locker Breaks

### Senior Years

Respecting the need to ensure additional physical distancing measures and cohorting, locker breaks, in the traditional sense, will not be permitted. Recognizing the importance of breaks to overall student well-being, schools will build in breaks which ensure students stay in their assigned cohorts or move directly to the next assigned class following the directional markings. Hallway traffic will be monitored to mitigate congestion. Students will not be permitted to linger in the halls or at lockers. Locker use will be discontinued. Students are strongly encouraged to keep all personal belongings with them as much as possible.

## Lunch Hour

Students who normally go home for lunch will continue to do so. Upon returning to school, students will follow the appropriate school guidelines for accessing the schoolyard, designated areas, and school entry.

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

Students are strongly discouraged from going off site at lunchtime and congregating at local establishments. Parents are encouraged to speak with their child about this important precaution.

## **Hot Lunch Programs/Canteens/Cafeterias**

Hot lunch programs, as well as cafeteria use/sales, is suspended until further notice. These changes are being made to support the additional physical distancing measures and cohorting that is required while also reducing congregation and access to shared materials/supplies.

## **Breakfast & Snack Programs**

Recognizing the important role that schools play in the overall health and well being of students, where possible, breakfast and snack programs will continue. Schools will not have outside organizations or volunteers coming in to assist with food preparation or distribution. School staff could distribute prepackaged food or fruit provided. (One person from the external group can drop off items provided they are use the self-screening tool prior to coming to the school).

## **School Pictures**

Professional photographers will take school pictures on September 10 & 11, 2020. **All students** will have their pictures taken at this time for the yearbook and for a student transit I.D. card (as per divisional policy JRD). This card is required for Library and Internet access and there is no fee for this service. If you wish to purchase photo packages you must pay for them at the time the photographs are taken.

## **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**

While educational **day** field trips can take place providing that public health guidelines can be met, given the logistical complications (distancing, transportation and the unknown variables off-site) the division is strongly recommending that day field trips not proceed at this time.

Any day field trips that cannot accommodate physical distancing must be cancelled. Physical distancing requirements must also be maintained on transportation. Cohorts can not mix while on a field trip.

Overnight camps or stays are not permitted until further notice.

## **Out-of-School Education Excursions**

Beginning in September 2020, the division is directing the cancellation of all international and interprovincial travel up to December 31, 2020. This may be extended for the foreseeable future.

If your child was scheduled to take part in an international or interprovincial out of school excursion during the first half of this school year, the school will be in contact with you.

## **Volunteers**

In order to ensure schools are 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. Schools will keep a list of all visitors. To help protect the health and safety of everyone masks are mandatory for any parent or visitor who needs to enter the school consider when physical distancing of two metres is not possible.

## **TEACHING, LEARNING & WELL-BEING**

### **In-Class Learning**

As has been 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:

- Group work, group projects: Teachers will continue to prioritize collaboration between students. This will include using digital platforms to maintain social distancing
- Limiting shared resources
- Maintaining social distance and hygiene within the classrooms
- Cohorting students where possible

### **Recovery Learning**

Recognizing that students are returning to school with more varied learning experiences than usual, all schools are planning to support students with recovery learning as needed.

Recovery learning is not a one-time event. It will be viewed as an ongoing process throughout the school year. Learning gaps will be identified and monitored. To support recovery learning, your child's teacher will employ the following approaches:

- Initial assessments will be conducted to provide a starting point for teachers; however information will continue to be collected
- Teachers will plan for instruction using this information
- Students will be provided with a variety of opportunities to learn and to demonstrate understanding
- Teaching will be focused on goals of building independence and self-motivation so that students have the skills to move to remote learning if required
- Recognizing the uncertainty of the situation, teaching will be planned to ensure that learning continuity is in place for students should further disruptions arise
- The focus of recovery learning will be on understanding, not assignments

## The Possibility of Remote Learning

Students and families need to be prepared for a blended 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.retsdb.ca/yourretsdb/Policies/Documents/IKAB.pdf>

<https://www.retsdb.ca/yourretsdb/Policies/Documents/IKA-R.pdf>

<https://www.retsdb.ca/yourretsdb/Policies/Documents/IKAF.pdf>

<https://www.retsdb.ca/yourretsdb/Policies/Documents/IKAG.pdf>

## Subject Areas & Specialist Classes

All curriculum areas are important and build students' literacy and numeracy knowledge. Schools will continue to offer all subjects, to the greatest extent possible.

Electives will be scheduled remotely and maintaining cohorts of students. In senior years, students and caregivers need to be aware that there might be fewer electives and graduation plans will need to be revisited.

After reviewing the Manitoba High School Athletics Association return to School Sport Plan, the division is delaying the start of **all** extra-curricular sport. We have made the decision based on the on the following:

1. Our focus is on ensuring that schools are open and students, staff, and families are feeling confident with our new routines.
2. We need to insure that all sport can adhere to our health expectations including cohorting, the use of volunteer coaches, the use of changerooms, and the extension of the school day.

Additionally, at this time, in RETSD there will be:

- No cross cohort practices or activity
- No practices or competition outside of the school day

Please know that we value the physical, mental and emotional health benefits of sport and will work diligently to ensure that our students can have access to those benefits. Schools will be working to build physical activity into the school day.

Music programming is an important part of a well rounded education. Music programming in RETSD will follow all public health and education advice. Singing is not presently permitted in school. Taking this into account music programming will continue with consideration given to physical distancing, proper hygiene, reducing shared supplies and proper cleaning and sanitation. Band programming will look different with students being asked to do more instrumental practice at home while in class learning focuses on the many other aspects of music education. When instruments are used, teachers will ensure that health precautions are adhered to. Since public health advice does not permit singing, choral programs will be focusing on other musical elements and providing practice opportunities for home where appropriate.

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/music-guidelines.html>

## 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. These can be found at:

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/supports\\_non\\_distance.html](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/supports_non_distance.html)

## 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.

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/yourretsd/Policies/Documents/GBEE.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsd/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 are to 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 loaner 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

Wherever possible, schools will limit the use of shared resources. When this is not possible, adequate, and appropriate cleaning will be required. To support these practices, your child's teacher will:

- Carefully assess the classroom layout and shared spaces
- Remove materials that are harder to clean and sanitize
- Consider how to offer materials for individual use
- Have students bring their own equipment if possible
- Have a system for returning materials that allows additional time out of circulation
- Create schedules that allow for social distancing and cleaning between use
- Clean following specific disinfecting guidelines

## 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. To this end, RETSD schools will utilize the expertise of parents/caregivers as it relates to their own children. 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:

UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/supporting-your-childs-mental-health-during-covid-19-school-return>

World Health Organization: [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1\\_8](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1_8)

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. Parent information on supporting your child with Teams is forthcoming and will be shared shortly.

### Stay Informed

RETSD and River East Collegiate 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/retsdsd>

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
- School letters
- School telephone dialers
- School email blasts
- Teacher/family communication

## Concern Protocol

Your child's school will 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:

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 204.338.4611.

If talking to the teacher doesn't resolve the issue, talk to the principal 204.338.4611.

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).

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>

## RIVER EAST TRANSCONA SCHOOL DIVISION CODE OF CONDUCT (refer to RETSD Policy manual)

RETSD's Code of Conduct revised - RETSD's Code of Conduct is central to the division's commitment to fostering safe, caring and inclusive schools. Originally created in 2008, the code was recently revised to more closely align it with the new Code of Conduct produced by Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning. The main changes include a revised definition of bullying and the addition of new technology terms. The code has been included in this mailing and will also be included in our School Handbook. The code can also be found on the division website at

[http://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/code\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.retsd.mb.ca/Lists/Publications/code_conduct.pdf)

## MISSION STATEMENT

To fulfil our purpose and in our journey toward our vision, River East Transcona School Division is committed to providing relevant, progressive educational programming and supportive services in a safe, stimulating learning environment.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the code of conduct is to promote a safe and inclusive school culture where high levels of achievement occur within a positive school environment. River East Transcona School Division believes that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

River East Transcona School Division staff, students, parents/guardians and community members will promote the development of beliefs and attitudes that foster a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment. Staff, students, parents/guardians and community members are to behave in a respectful manner and comply with the code of conduct.

- An active student voice will be encouraged in all schools.
- Community-school initiatives will be encouraged.
- A continuum of supports and services will be utilized to address the unique academic and behavioural needs of students.
- Problem-solving and conflict management skills will be developed.
- Parents/guardians will initiate dialogue regarding their child through the classroom teacher or school administration.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The division believes that all staff, students, and parents/guardians have a responsibility to maintain a safe, caring and inclusive environment.

*Principals will:*

- act as the disciplinary authority over the conduct of students while they are at school, on their way to and from school, and while being transported via school bus.
- address unacceptable student conduct including bullying, cyberbullying and abuse of another student.
- notify the parents/guardians of a student as soon as reasonably possible when it's believed that the student has been harmed as a consequence of unacceptable behaviour.



### *Staff will:*

- provide relevant learning experiences based on the diverse needs of students.
- approach the education of students in a respectful manner.
- provide a classroom environment that is safe, caring and inclusive.
- participate in creating a positive school culture.
- communicate information about student progress, attendance and behaviour to students, parents/guardians and administration.
- respect and demonstrate consideration for other cultures.
- respect confidential information about students and staff.
- support and implement proactive and reactive intervention strategies offered through a continuum of supports and services.

### *Students will:*

- be polite, respectful and co-operative to all people within the school community.
- develop self-discipline.
- resolve interpersonal conflicts and difficulties through discussions or by seeking assistance from school staff.
- demonstrate and support a safe, caring and inclusive school environment.
- respect that fellow students have a right to a school environment that is free from violence.
- respect school property and the personal property of others.
- dress appropriately according to the RETSD dress code policy.

### *Parents/guardians will:*

- recognize the authority of the school staff to provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment.
- communicate regularly with the school staff and advocate for their child's success.
- ensure regular, punctual attendance and contact the school staff when their child is absent.
- support and work collaboratively with school staff to ensure their child's success and appropriate behaviour.
- encourage the peaceful resolution of conflict and discourage disrespectful, violent or aggressive behaviour to solve a problem.

## **PROACTIVE STRATEGIES**

The teaching and learning of expected student behaviour forms the cornerstone of a proactive, preventative approach. School plans will reflect outcomes related to a positive school culture and staff and parents/guardians will encourage participation in activities that promote a safe, caring and inclusive environment.

The following are the key components in promoting a positive school climate. School staff will:

- participate in creating a positive school culture.
- implement a continuum of school wide behavioural supports.
- develop, maintain and strengthen their working relationships with parents/guardians, community members and organizations.
- employ active supervision.
- implement validated prevention and intervention programs.

## **INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

The division believes that effective student management teaches students appropriate behaviour and incorporates an appropriate range of consequences.

The division will apply a wide range of consequences for behaviour that interferes with safety, learning and work. Which consequences are applied will depend on the severity of the incident, the diverse needs of the student and the frequency of the behaviour. The following is a list of some options available when working with students regarding their behaviour:

**Informal interview** - School staff talk with the student to reach an agreement regarding the student's behaviour. The parents/guardians will be contacted as required.

**Parental involvement** - Contact might be made with the parents/guardians to discuss the specific behaviour of the student and steps that are necessary to change the behaviour, unless directed otherwise by police. The nature of contact could vary from a telephone conversation to a formal conference at the school with the parents/ guardians, the student and school staff.

**Student involvement** - Students who are 18 years of age or older must give their consent before parents are informed of the student's misconduct.

**Formal interview** - A conference is held with the student, the school team and the parents/guardians to develop a plan for changing the student's behaviour.

**School based student services personnel involvement** - School based student services personnel may consult with divisional support staff when developing a behaviour intervention plan (BIP). Parents/guardians will be involved.

**Detention** - The student is detained at school for inappropriate behaviour. When such detention exceeds 15 minutes beyond the regular school hours or causes a student to miss a school bus, the parents/guardians will be informed.

**Withdrawal from classroom setting** - The student is temporarily removed to an alternate, supervised location to complete his/her assignments when inappropriate behaviour is deemed to have a negative impact on the classroom environment.

**Removal of privileges** - The student's privileges are removed under certain circumstances. This removal can include access to the library, cafeteria or lunchroom, or participation in extracurricular activities.

**Restitution** - The student and/or parents/guardians are required to compensate for damages caused by the student.

**Behavioural/performance contract** - In some instances, the student may be required to meet specific behavioural outcomes that are identified in a written contract. Such expectations are developed and agreed upon by the school, the parent/guardian and the student. Such an agreement is documented, with copies provided to all concerned parties.

**Divisional based student services staff involvement** - Division based student services staff might become involved to assist in developing appropriate proactive and reactive approaches for unacceptable behaviour. This plan might include a level of counselling or supports for the student that is beyond the school staff's capabilities. Parental/guardian permission will be obtained for assessments and/or interventions.

**Outside agency involvement** - In some circumstances, the student's behaviour may involve violation of the law (e.g., drugs, theft or assault) and police involvement will be required; parents/guardians will be informed immediately of any such action unless police direct otherwise. Other circumstances may require a referral to Manitoba Child and Family Services, or other community based programs/agencies. In all circumstances, the safety of the student and others will be the key factor for determining such action.

**Suspension** - Suspension is the temporary stopping of a student's right to attend school. When a student's conduct is deemed injurious to the welfare of the school or injurious to the school's educational purpose, suspension is sometimes necessary to ensure the safety of other students in the school. Suspensions are applied when other disciplinary measures have been found to be ineffective or when the student's behaviour disrupts the learning of others, endangers fellow students, teachers or school officials, or damages property.

**In-school suspension** - School administrators might assign a student to an in-school suspension. Teachers will provide students with appropriate work during the in-school suspension. Parents/guardians will be contacted when such action is taken.

**Out-of-school suspension** - The following staff may approve an out of school suspension:

A teacher may suspend a student from class for not more than two days.

A principal may suspend a student from school for not more than five days.

A superintendent may suspend a student from school for no more than six weeks.

**Expulsion** - Expulsion is applied when a student's behaviour has been a serious danger to other students, teachers, school officials or school property, or when the behaviour has been shown to be habitual. Expulsion is a function of the board of trustees.

**Threat assessment** - The purpose of the threat assessment process is to use the best knowledge, skill and experience available to assess high-risk threatening behaviours so that appropriate interventions can be identified to protect individuals from harm and ensure a climate of safety in schools and the community.

All high-risk behaviours will be taken seriously and high-risk students will be assessed accordingly. When a high-risk threat to self-harm or to harm others occurs, it is essential to assess safety, put in place the required interventions to ensure safety, analyze appropriate next steps and determine appropriate consequences.

No student who has posed a threat of harm to him/herself or to others will be permitted to attend school until safety is assured.

## APPEAL PROCESS

River East Transcona School Division recognizes that on occasion, concerns may arise. Parents/guardians of students may raise their concerns, or appeal decisions, as follows:

**Appeals of Disciplinary Decisions** - Students and parents/guardians must follow the school board's established appeal process:

- a) The decision of a teacher is first to be discussed with the teacher. If the parties are unable to come up with an agreeable solution, this decision may be appealed to the principal.
- b) The decision of the principal may be appealed to the assistant superintendent.
- c) The decision of the assistant superintendent may be appealed to the superintendent.
- d) The decision of the superintendent may be appealed to the board of trustees. A letter outlining the concerns should be sent to the board of trustees in care of the board chairperson.
- e) Exceptions are suspensions in excess of five days and expulsions. In these cases, the appeal goes directly to the board of trustees. These are explained below.

### **Appeals of suspensions or expulsions**

For suspensions over five days, the parent/legal guardian has the right to make representations to the board of trustees. The board of trustees has the authority to confirm or modify the suspension, or reinstate the student.

The Parent/legal guardian has the right to appeal a student expulsion to the board of trustees.

### **SAFE AND CARING SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

As citizens, we share a responsibility to work together to provide school environments where all students feel safe and respected, thereby allowing them to reach their full potential. River East Transcona School Division is committed to fostering inclusion for all people.

The RETSD Code of Conduct is consistent with the Safe Schools Charter of Manitoba. The Safe Schools Charter (Province of Manitoba, S.M. 2004. c. 24) sets forth guidelines that apply to students and staff regarding behaviour. Behaviours that will not be tolerated in schools and that will be dealt with immediately include, but are not limited to, the following:

- bullying: a behaviour that is intended to cause, or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation, or property. It is also behaviour that is intended to create, or should be known to create, a negative school environment for another person.
- cyberbullying: bullying by means of any form of electronic communication, including social media, text messaging, instant messaging, websites, or email.
- abusing physically, sexually or psychologically, in writing, verbally or otherwise.
- inappropriate use of electronic mail, the Internet, digital cameras, cell phones, cell phones equipped with digital cameras, text messaging sent by cell phone or pager, and other personal electronic communication devices including accessing, uploading, downloading or distributing material that the school has determined objectionable, students taking photos, video recordings, audio recordings and images of staff or students on school property without the permission of authorized school personnel.
- discriminating unreasonably on the basis of any characteristic set out in subsection 9(2) of the Manitoba Human Rights Code.
- using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs at school.
- gang involvement on school property.
- possessing a weapon as "weapon" is defined in Section 2 of Canada's Criminal Code.

### **SEARCH (Refer to RETSD Policy JIH)**

The River East Transcona School Division supports its teaching and administrative staff in the maintenance of proper order, discipline and decorum on school premises, within divisional facilities, and also during the course of any divisional or school-approved activity, on or away from the school campus.

Further, the River East Transcona School Division recognizes that students are entitled to privacy. However, it is acknowledged that school administration may consider a search necessary to maintain the integrity of the school environment and to protect students.

To this end, the River East Transcona School Division empowers the principal (or designate) to conduct reasonable searches of students' clothing, personal effects, lockers and vehicles. The school division will publicize its search policy annually. Please refer to the REC School Handbook or the divisional website to view the SEARCH PROCEDURES document. (RETSD Policy JIH-R)

# River East Collegiate

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