

# Welcoming Students Back

## 2020–21 Parent & Community Information



# 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 Transcona 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 beginning September 8 or 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, depending on their cohorted timetables. 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 our students and staff.

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

Mrs. C. Anderson  
Principal

Mr. R. Hadath  
Vice Principal

Ms. M. Moore & Mr. Filippo Zimarino  
Vice Principal/Acting Vice 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. School access for parents or visitors will be at the main entrance doors on Winona Street. The exterior doors will be locked once our a.m. & p.m. student cohorts are in the building. Students must not arrive early to school. If a student is late for their designated entry time, they will need to report to main entrance on Winona Street and call the school main office at 204-958-6440 to gain entrance.

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.

With access to the school is limited, it is strongly recommended that appointments are made in advance of school arrival. **Please call the school for an appointment (204-958-6440). Parents, visitors, or caregivers will report to the school main entrance Winona at their appointment time and will be escorted to a meeting space. To help protect the health and safety of everyone, 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 is required to 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. 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 always 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 75 students. Each cohort will not be larger than 75 students. All the cohorts will be divided into small class sizes and receive both in class and remote learning. **Each class will be assigned a room. When students enter the school at their designated class time, they must enter at their designated entrance and report directly to their designated classroom and remain in the classroom. Students will not be permitted to socialize or congregate in hallways. Staff assigned to the cohort will change rooms and students will remain in their assigned area. Students are permitted to arrive at school no more than 10 minutes prior to class and must leave the school when their designated learning time has**

ended. Each cohort will be assigned a specific door to enter and exit from. 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, regardless of closer proximity to their home or vehicle. 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 start and exits times to ensure controlled movement. 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 their designated learning period.

### **Transcona Collegiate Student Parking**

Student parking fees will be reduced by half for the school year and are non-transferable nor refundable. Parking spaces will be available through the school main office. All students requesting a parking spot will be required to show a valid driver’s license. Please note that no student may park in areas not designated as student use including visitor spots. Offenders will be towed away at the owner’s expense. Only students with a valid student parking pass may park in the designated student parking lot. The reduced fee will be \$50.00 per semester. 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. Students are required to call the school office to arrange a designated time to pay for and pick up the parking pass.

### **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.

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>

## **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. Younger students can wear masks too. 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 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 cannot 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)

### **Senior Years**

The senior years' timetable is designed to reflect the provincial programming, curriculum, and safety guidelines. Students will need to 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 be extended through some remote/at-home work and, where possible, some courses may be offered online. For the 2020-2021 school year, many of the electives that we can offer will be taught remotely. Teachers will move classrooms while the students remain, for the most part, in their designated learning space.

*Due to the complexity of scheduling cohorts, student-initiated timetable changes will not be possible for the 2020-2021 school year.*

We are planning to use different entry points for each grade level cohort group. 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.

## Timetable

The noted timetable descriptions are general in nature.

Transcona Collegiate has developed the following timetables to reflect a combination of in class and remote learning. Grade 9 will be coming for in class learning either day 1 or day 2 and will receive remote learning on the alternate day dependant on their cohort schedule. All grade 9 in class learning will take place 8:45 – 1:15.

Grade 10 will be coming for in class learning either day 1 or day 2 and will receive remote learning on the alternate day dependant on their cohort schedule. All grade 10 in class learning will take place between 9:55 – 2:20.

Grade 11 will be coming for in class learning either day 1 or day 2 and will receive remote learning on the alternate day dependant on their cohort schedule. All grade 11 in class learning will take place between 11:05 – 3:30.

Grade 12 will be coming for in class learning either day 1 or day 2 and will receive remote learning on the alternate day dependant on their cohort schedule. The start time and end time is dependant on their cohort.

Additionally, most of our elective classes will be offered remotely. With remote learning students are expected to engage, 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.

You will be made aware when student timetables will be available on the student portal. Student timetables will reflect a combination of in class and remote learning.

## 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. For the 2020-2021 school year, there will be no locker use. 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. Students are strongly encouraged to keep all personal belongings with them and to only bring what is necessary each day to support their in-class learning.

## Lunch Hour

At Transcona Collegiate we have altered our school day so that there is no defined lunch period. Students must leave the building at the completion of their designated in class learning. All students must remain in their cohort classrooms for nutrition breaks. Students are to supply their own food and utensils. Microwaves will not be available. Snacks that will be at school should be “ready to eat” and sharing of food will not be permitted. Please bring your own water bottles filled.

## Canteens/Cafeterias

During this school year, we will have no cafeteria services. 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.

## School Pictures

Professional photographers will take school pictures on September 10 & 11, 2020. All students will have their photos taken at this time practicing social distancing within student cohorts. The photos taken are 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. Information will be forthcoming from the provider should you wish to order photo packages. Ordered photo packages must be paid for at the time of the photographs are taken.

## **Assemblies**

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) field trips will not proceed at this time. 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.

## **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.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsdpolicies/Documents/IKAB.pdf>

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsdpolicies/Documents/IKAR.pdf>

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

<https://www.retsd.mb.ca/yourretsdpolicies/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 may be scheduled when possible and maintaining cohorts of students. In senior years, students and caregivers need to be aware that there might be fewer electives.

For students in Technical Vocational programs, courses will be planned to maximize hands-on learning when students are in class and move theoretical learning to digital platforms where possible.

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 ensure 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 remotely at Transcona Collegiate. Band programming will look different with students being asked to do instrumental practice at home. Many of our band classes will be held remotely and focus on the many other aspects of music education. The Band Teacher will ensure that health precautions are adhered to during all in class learning when instruments are used. 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 students 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 Transcona 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/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
- School social media
- School letters

- School telephone dialers
- 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 do not 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 does not 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>

## 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.