

KOLA SCHOOL

Welcoming Our Students Back

August 27th, 2020

This past school year was a challenging time for students, families and educators. Manitobans will be living with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. We must adapt and learn to live safely amidst the pandemic. It is in the best interests of children to be in school, so we must mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on students and families to ensure that learning and assessment will continue for all.

Ultimately, decisions about the extent to which in-class learning resumes throughout the 2020-21 school year will be guided by public health advice and the extent of COVID-19 transmission in Manitoba's communities at any given time.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS:

- Safety, health, and well-being for all students, staff, and families is a priority.
- High quality learning and assessment continues for all students.
- Accessible, trauma-informed resources and supports for students, parents, and caregivers.
- Consistent, reliable, and appropriate connection to school learning and belonging, for every student.
- System-wide communication and collaboration will promote consistent approaches throughout the province.

THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

Schools will re-open for teachers and staff on September 2nd, 2020 with students returning on September 8th, 2020. Manitoba will return to in-class learning for all in the fall. School divisions and independent schools have prepared re-opening plans for different public health response levels as follows:

1. In-class learning resumes for all, with near normal conditions.
2. In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.
3. Remote learning from home, with limited use of school facilities.

On September 8th, 2020 students will be returning to LEVEL 1.

Planning Considerations for All Response Levels

Public Health Orders and Guidance – Kola School will follow up-to-date public health orders and guidance.

Physical Distancing Measures – Resuming in-class learning still requires physical distancing. Kola School will limit non-essential visitors, refrain from scheduling assemblies larger group gatherings, and will enforce strategies in reduce foot traffic in congested areas.

Cohorts – Due to our small school population, Kola School will be considered one large cohort.

Priorities for In-Class Learning – School is critical to the mental health and well-being of children and families. Kola School will plan and work as hard as possible to see the return to full in-school participation in order for students to gain the best education and caregivers can return to work.

School Transportation – Physical distancing is required on school transportation. Parents will be encouraged to transport their own children if at all possible.

Blended Learning – Teacher-directed remote learning may be an essential component of the 2020-21 school year. Remote learning plans may need to be implemented on short notice, or adapted for students with underlying health concerns. Kola School has already begun planning for these scenarios, and will be ready to implement them at any time.

Personal Risk Factors – Arrangements will be made for students and staff who may be at higher risk of COVID-19 due to underlying health concerns or other risk factors.

Recovery Learning – Some students have had lower participation in remote learning than others and educators have been creative in addressing the achievement/learning gap that may exist.

Mental Health – The mental health of students, staff, and families is of the upmost importance during these challenging times. Below are resources families can reach out to for support:

- Fort La Bosse School Division Counselors
 - Wendy Bancescu (204-851-1891)
 - Chelsea Braybrook (204-851-6422)
- Adult Mental Health Access Services (1-855-222-6011)
- Adolescent Mental Health Services (1-204-748-4346)
- Community Disorders Association of Manitoba – Brandon (1-204-578-2400)
- Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba (1-204-826-2773)
- Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868)

Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

In the event of confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with our school, public health will lead the response and provide guidance, including ensuring appropriate supports are in place to coordinate the response. Information regarding a confirmed case will be shared by the school, outbreaks are communicated through Manitoba media bulletins and handled by public health.

Public Health may:

- Request records that identify cohorts/groups of staff, students, volunteers and visitors in the school for a specific timeframe;
- Offer testing following established guidelines to staff, students, volunteers and visitors that may have been exposed to a positive case; and
- Assess the need for the school to be closed for a period of time.

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

At this time, public health guidelines mandate that all students and staff, grades 4-12, must wear non-medical masks in all school when physical distancing is not possible. Masks may be removed during outdoor class learning/instruction and play to provide a mask-free break while continuing to practice social-distancing measures. Please note, grade K-3 students may wear a mask if they wish, but it is not a requirement. Visitors will be required to wear a mask when entering the school. Back-up masks will be available for students who fail to bring theirs to school.

Hand Hygiene

Staff and students will wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at the following times:

- At the start of the day and before going home.
- After going to the washroom.
- Before preparing food and before and after eating.
- After getting dirty, wiping noses or handling dirty tissues.
- Before and after wearing a mask.
- Before and after being on the bus.
- After contact with other people.

Return to In-Class Learning for Students and Families

LEVEL 1: The following will be in place for Tuesday, September 8th, 2020.

Institutional (Operations)

- Arrows and signage posted to direct traffic flow.
- Increased and proper hand hygiene.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation.
- Physical distancing of 2m (1m when not possible) at all times.
- All students and staff grades 4 and higher must wear a mask while riding the bus.
- We would request that parents who are able to bring their children to school do so on a volunteer basis.

Learning

- ALL students are expected to attend in-school classes when physically possible. There will be no blended learning during this response level.
- All professional staff have reviewed transition plans for incoming students.
- Schedules have been adapted to facilitate hygiene and hand washing time.
- Dismissal and re-entry formats have been addressed and will be enforced to reduce times of close contact.

Students and Families

- For students with disabilities or underlying health issues, strategies will be put in place to ensure these students can attend in-class sessions full time.
- Communication will be paramount. If students are sick or present COVID symptoms it must be reported to the school. This can be done via telephone or email. Likewise, any changes to school guidelines will immediately be relayed to families via phone, email, website, and/or social media.
- Please use the COVID-19 screening tool (found on the Manitoba Government website) to ensure your child(ren) are safe to come to school.
- It is encouraged that all families have a back-up plan in the event of illness.

LEVEL 2: All requirements from Level 1 will remain in place, plus:

Institutional (Operational)

- All extra-curricular activities will be cancelled if physical distancing requirements cannot be accommodated.
- Increased personal hygiene protocols may be put in place.
- Access to school buildings by non-essential visitors will require an appointment and/or calling ahead.
- Out of province and international travel will remain subject to public health direction.
- High-touch surface areas will be cleaned at a higher frequency.

Learning

- Lunch will be eaten in homerooms.
- Blending learning is a possibility. If so, individualized home learning plans will be developed and administered.

Students and Families

- Blended learning is a possibility during Level 2. It is expected that students attend class when instructed to and complete work at home when instructed to. Remote learning plans will be made at this stage to accommodate those with COVID-19 related health risk factors.

LEVEL 3: All requirements from Levels 1 and 2, plus:

Institutional (Operations)

- Limitations of school use for students and the public.

Learning

- Blended learning, or full remote learning may be put in place. This could look like staggered groupings coming to school.
- Staggered dismissal and recess times could be implemented.
- Due to staffing conflicts, teacher timetables would need to be adapted.

Students and Families

- Continued communication and support for students and staff. Remote learning would ask families to accommodate to make student success a possibility.