

# WELCOMING OUR STUDENTS BACK

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020





# Literacy, Equality, Integrity

## Fort La Bosse and Virden Collegiate Re-Opening Plans

The best place for students in September is in the classroom. Fort La Bosse's "Welcoming Our Students Back to School" Plan will support the return of students and staff to in class learning.

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 continues for all.

Manitoba will return to in-class learning on September 8<sup>th</sup> for all students while continuing to follow public health advice throughout the school year and for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Uncertainty around COVID-19 may have some families reluctant to send their children back to in-class learning. Building confidence and mitigating risk will be key to full participation. Remote learning will be in place for students who have been medically advised not to return to in-class learning due to COVID-related factors. Families who choose not to send their children to school will need to consider other education options such as homeschooling.

## Planning Considerations for All Response Levels

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 Principles

- 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 reopen for teachers and staff on September 2, 2020 with students returning on September 8, 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:

**Level 1 Response:** In-class learning resumes for all, with near normal conditions.

**Level 2 Response:** In-class learning resumes with additional public health measures.

**Level 3 Response:** Remote learning from home, with limited use of school facilities.

**Plan for All Response Levels** – Safety and preparedness are paramount. **The province confirmed that in-class learning will resume (Response Level 1), September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

**Public Health Orders and Guidance** – Current evidence indicates that staff and students can return to school while protecting individual health and minimizing risks from a public health perspective. Schools will follow up-to-date public health orders and guidance. Guidelines will be adjusted as necessary to reflect the latest public health information.

**Physical Distancing Measures** – Resuming in-class learning still requires physical distancing. Schools have considered strategies for how to manage foot traffic flow in entrances and hallways to avoid congregation. Schools will limit nonessential visitors and stagger drop-offs, pick-ups, class times and breaks to the greatest extent possible. Schools will also refrain from scheduling assemblies and gatherings that exceed public health advice.

**Cohorts** – In classrooms, on buses and during activities when physical distancing may not be possible, emphasis is put on other public health measures and limiting interaction between groups. It is important to limit potential exposures by keeping groups of students (e.g. classes) together and avoiding interactions with other groups. In the event that there is a case in a class, this practice can drastically reduce the potential number of exposed staff and students.

**Priorities for In-class Learning** – Schools are critical to the mental health and well-being of children. Planning has focused on returning as many students to in-class learning as possible while following public health advice and is subject to available physical space and resources. Their return to school also provides parents and caregivers with a greater ability to return to work.

**Specialty Programming** – Technology education programming will continue, provided public health measures such as daily symptom monitoring, physical distancing and/or cohorts can be maintained. For extracurricular activities, schools have assessed their ability to continue. Schools will ensure that they follow Manitoba’s Restoring Safe Services [Sports Guidelines](#) and [Guidelines for Vocalists and Instrumentalists](#).

**School Transportation** – Physical distancing and/or cohorts are also 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 K-12 education throughout the pandemic. Asynchronous (working independently on their own) and in-class and remote learning plans may need to be implemented on short notice. Remote learning plans may need to be developed for students with underlying health conditions that prohibit them from returning to in-class learning (before broad access to a vaccine) and students in 14-day quarantine or isolation. Some students will require support to obtain access to devices and Internet for participating in remote learning. Mechanisms to maintain ongoing contact with students who are participating in remote learning are critical to keeping students engaged. There has been planning for other factors that affect learning and the well-being of students, staff, and families.

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

**If public health results deteriorate or guidelines are not sufficient, new measures may be paused and previous measures may be re-introduced.**

Maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible, whenever possible.

## Getting Started Back to School at Virden Collegiate:

### Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>

- All Virden Collegiate Staff will return to work and will be reviewing this re-entry plan and applying it to their learning/classroom environments.

### Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>

- Grade 9 students are invited to stop in and refresh yourself with our school and the physical lay-out again, drop off any materials you would like to put in your locker and review your schedule familiarizing yourself with your homeroom and your classes.
  - Times: 9:30 – 11:30 (last name starts with letter A – L)  
1:15 – 3:15 (last name starts with M – Z)
- All VCI families will be contacted via phone call or email, clarifying any concerns and answering any questions as best we can.

### Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>

- VCI students will return to school on this date, with lots of time in the first couple of days reviewing expectations and practicing safety protocols to ensure our return is as safe as possible

***It has been determined that all Fort La Bosse grades 9-12 students will return full time, attendance is expected.***

## **Safety Requirements of all VCI Students, Staff, and Guests**

- Daily Screening – Everyone needs to self-screen each day before coming to VCI
  - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.
- If you are not feeling well or have symptoms, please stay home!!
- If an individual becomes ill at school, please notify the office immediately and we will arrange for you to go home.

**Public health guidance mandates that students, grades 4-12, staff and visitors wear non-medical masks in all schools when physical distancing is not possible.**

It is strongly recommended that all students, grades 4-12, wear non-medical masks at all times while attending Fort La Bosse Schools. When physical distancing cannot be achieved, masks are mandatory. When accessing divisional transportation, all students grades 4-12 and bus drivers are required to wear a mask.

It is strongly recommended that all staff in Fort La Bosse School Division when instructing or supporting student learning, with students grades 4-12, wear non-medical masks at all times. When physical distancing cannot be achieved, masks are mandatory.

Visitors will be requested to wear a mask when entering the school.

Non-medical masks will be made available for those that do not have their own.

Non-medical masks can be removed during outdoor class learning/instruction and play to provide a mask-free break. Physical distancing should be maintained to the best extent possible.

Please note, younger students may wear a mask, but it is not a requirement. Any staff or students that are not able to wear masks due to medical conditions are asked to provide a medical note.

## 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 and helping children with washroom routines;
  - Before preparing food and before and after eating;
  - After getting hands dirty;
  - Before and after being on a bus;
  - After coughing, sneezing, or blowing nose; and
  - After cleaning tasks (staff).

## **Doing our best to keep everyone safe!**

**(Below are some guidelines/processes we have in place to try and keep everyone as safe as possible. They will only be effective if everyone does their part – Thanks!)**

Note: This is our starting point – these may change at any time if required!

### **▪ Arrival / Departure from School:**

- All bus students will be dropped off and picked up at VCI one bus at a time – allowing for physical distancing. The bus pick-up rotation will be clarified as we work through the first couple of days – it will be staggered to reduce congestion. There is no K – 8 shuttle process occurring at VCI.
- All entrance ways have hand sanitizing dispensers available – please use them!
- We would like students to please use the Kent street entrance to enter and exit the building whenever possible as we will have it open from 8:30 – 9:00 every morning and 12:30 – 1:15 every lunch hour.
- There will be traffic indicators on the floors when you are moving throughout the building please respect this flow.
- Please be patient and remain 2 meters apart whenever possible!!
- All guests will be required to sign-in and sign-out of the school, and the same expectation of signing in and signing out still exists for students.

### **▪ Breaks / Lunch / Open Campus Privileges:**

- Students will be able to use their lockers at this time, but students please try and reduce your use by carrying your binders with you. (backpacks will be encouraged during these times.) As well, be patient waiting for neighboring students to use their locker. Please wash your hands after contact.
- Students will need to remain physically distanced so please use all available floor space during your breaks and follow the flow arrows.
- There will be multiple locations designated as lunchrooms, but students are welcome to leave the building at lunch hour. (just make sure you are back on time) Students are also encouraged to eat your lunches outside if the weather permits.
- Our canteen will be open with all health guidelines being followed and traffic flow will be monitored so once again – be patient! Microwaves will not be available – please pack your lunches accordingly.
- Please bring your own water bottle to school, we have installed more automatic bottle filling stations, but the fountain portion of these machines will not be working at this time.
- Open Campus privileges are still available for Grade 11 and 12 students but you must always sign-in or sign out. (Like Always)
- Washrooms will need to be limited to one user at a time – please use all of the washroom facilities available. And don't forget to wash your hands!

## ▪ **Classroom Instruction**

- Classrooms will be set-up to enable students to remain 2 meters apart while in class. When classrooms are unable to support 2 meters of social distancing, a nearby second location will be assigned to manage the total number of students in each class. This secondary location will be supervised by fellow staff and the main subject teacher will flow between classes providing instruction and support to all students. Other larger spaces, outside settings and the utilization of technology will be used whenever possible to keep classes progressing together as a group.
- All classroom teachers will be spending time early on setting up an online connection for students and parents using Google classroom to support the in-class learning, but to also prepare for any blended learning that may be required moving forward.
- An awareness of Zoom will also be introduced to enhance students in-class learning but also to prepare for instruction beyond the classroom if and when required.
- Teachers will be prioritizing the essential learning outcomes in all subjects to ensure students are progressing on the essential components of each course.
- All teachers will be provided with cleaning products to wipe down and clean any surfaces or items that will be shared between classes or students in an effort to try and keep everyone as safe as possible.
- Use of change rooms at this time: Students will not be able to use our PE change rooms at this time so please plan according for PE classes, whenever possible.

## ▪ **Athletics and Extra-curricular activities**

- VCI will only be offering non-contact sports at this time, such as golf. MHSAA has laid out “return to play” guidelines for high school sports, and we are reviewing and monitoring the progress of these as we move forward.

<http://www.mhsaa.ca/assets/content/MHSAA%20Return%20to%20School%20Sport%20V2%2008.24.20.pdf>

- There will be no other extra-curricular activities or intramurals at this time.
- VCI is not allowing any outside users groups to use our facility at this time.



## ▪ Support for Students and Families

- Virden Collegiate will have increased access to all of our Mental Health supports during this re-entry time. Staff will be taking the time to check with students to see how they are managing, and connect them to support personnel if needed or requested.
- We will attempt to keep you as families informed as much as possible during these very unusual and ever changing times. (email, VCI website, phone conversations)
- Please if you have any questions or concerns make sure you contact me at 204-748-2205 or [mkeown@flbsd.mb.ca](mailto:mkeown@flbsd.mb.ca)
- There is going to be increased stressors during this return to school but together we can and will get through it!

## Contact Tracing and Outbreak Management

In the event of confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with a 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 specified 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.

### **For all 3 Response Levels:**

If symptoms (even mild symptoms) of the Covid-19 virus persist **beyond 24 Hours** please be tested.

Results will be back in 2-3 days.  
Health Links: 1-888-315-9257

## Information and Resources

More information on Manitoba Education's COVID-19 response, including resources, planning documents, and Frequently Asked Questions, can be found at Latest [COVID-19 Education News](#).

[My Learning at Home](#) is a resource to assist families to support their children in remote learning from home.

Current information about COVID-19 in Manitoba can be found at [Province of Manitoba | COVID-19](#)

The government of Manitoba COVID-19 support document [workplace guidance for business owners](#) may also be useful.