

# RESTORING SAFE SCHOOLS



## Pandemic Response System Levels for K–12 Schools

### Preparedness for the Fourth Wave – Additional Preventative Measures

Updated October 1, 2021



### K–12 Schools across the Province – Caution Level (Yellow)

Public health officials announced new public health orders that will come into effect on October 5, 2021. While the province will move to the restricted (orange) level of the Pandemic Response System, schools will remain at caution (yellow). Public health officials will continue to recommend school-specific approaches if increasing risk is identified.

To ensure students remain in school as much as possible, current provincial guidelines for public and independent schools will continue to be followed (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prs/index.html#provinciallevel>).

All schools will implement the following measures:

- For assemblies, events and community use of schools, schools must adhere to updated public health orders for gathering size.
- Schools are to ensure mask compliance. Masks are required for use in all indoor public spaces, including schools for all Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. Masks may be removed indoors where there is physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) for the purpose of eating, drinking, and for short, infrequent mask breaks. Mask use during extracurricular school sports should follow public health guidance for sports in place at the time. Masks can be removed when outside.
- Review mask exemptions to ensure alignment with the current guidance. [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask\\_exemption.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask_exemption.pdf). A note from a health care provider is not required; however, the school division or independent school has the discretion to request a note be provided by a parent/guardian/caregiver from a health care provider.
- Continue to monitor and identify schools with higher than normal absenteeism rates. Connect with regional/local public health or through the [casesinschools@gov.mb.ca](mailto:casesinschools@gov.mb.ca) if there are concerns.

- If there are high-absenteeism rates or cases associated with a school, enhance distancing within schools and classrooms to the greatest extent possible (e.g., avoiding group work within classrooms and avoiding assemblies and gatherings).
- Reinforce proper hand hygiene requirements, including hand hygiene before and after eating.
- Increase outdoor activity and learning, where possible.
- Reinforce screening for symptoms and enforce the public health requirements for students who are symptomatic to be tested for COVID-19. If students are not tested, they are to isolate at home for 10 days at which time they can return to school.
- Follow public health advice on isolation requirements for household members/siblings.
- Schools are strongly recommended to begin testing of school personnel who have not provided proof of vaccination, if not already underway.

Schools located in regions/communities with lower vaccination rates should be attentive to ensuring preventive measures are in place and consistently followed. For more information on vaccination rates, see [www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/reports.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/reports.html)