

May 7, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

The following frequently asked questions have been compiled to help address your concerns. Manitoba Education will continue to update this resource regularly as further information becomes available. This is a working resource for K to 12 public schools education in Manitoba. Check back often for the most up-to-date information.



Learning Expectations

Will schools reopen before the end of the school year?

Manitoba Education appreciates all of the work being done by school divisions, teachers, parents, and caregivers to ensure that students have the opportunity to continue learning during this difficult time. Ensuring the safety of our children is our priority. At this time, we are not expecting to reopen schools before the end of this school year; however, we will continue to follow the advice of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer.

Will students receive learning opportunities during the suspension of in-class instruction?

Yes. Families, schools and school divisions, educational partners, and Manitoba Education are working together to ensure student achievement and success, and they are planning for individual student needs and circumstances. Resources are being redirected to ensure that students actively engage in learning during the suspension of in-class instruction.

What are the expectations for students and teachers of all grades while classroom learning is suspended?

Students are expected to continue remote learning and complete assigned work. Students will have the opportunity to learn through hands-on activities, print materials, and online platforms.

Teachers will facilitate remote learning to support students with online platforms, printed materials, and outreach for students who are at risk. They will continue to set goals for students and assess progress. They will use their professional judgment to determine the format of these assessments.

Beyond delivering daily instructional materials and preparing for assessment, it is expected that teachers will have regular, personal communication with students, parents, and caregivers in support of student achievement. This connection will occur by phone, online platforms, email, and/or mail, so that students who may have limited access to technology do not find this to be a barrier to communication.

What are the specific expectations of Kindergarten to Grade 8 students and teachers?

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 will proceed to the next grade in September with the understanding that they will engage in recovery learning as needed.

It is recommended that teachers plan a minimum average of five hours per week of curriculum-based learning for students in Kindergarten to Grade 4 and 10 hours per week for students in Grades 5 to 8. Teacher-directed learning will focus on literacy and numeracy, with opportunities for science and social studies, physical education and health education, and the arts through cross-curricular planning.

What are the specific expectations of Grades 9 to 12 students and teachers?

Students in Grades 9 to 12 will receive, at minimum, the grades they achieved at the time of suspension of classes, with the expectation that they engage in remote learning. This will provide them the opportunity to continue their learning and improve their marks. Students who do not engage in remote learning may be required to undertake recovery learning next school year.

It is recommended that teachers plan for a minimum of three hours of curriculum-based learning per course, per week, for Grades 9 to 12 semestered courses. Teachers will prioritize learning outcomes and expectations, and plan specific curriculum-related tasks for students. Where feasible, teachers of multiple subjects may work together to develop cross-curricular learning experiences.

Teacher-directed learning could consist of existing strategies, print-based learning, online learning, or a blend of methods. Teachers can access web-based courses or print-based distance learning courses to support student learning. These can be found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/dl/index.html.



Learning Resources and Supports

What is the impact of remote learning on individual education plan (IEP) timelines and processes?

Educators who are delivering specialized programming will continue to follow the provincial standards for student services and school division policy. Parents/caregivers and teachers are encouraged to discuss the impact of remote learning on student-specific learning plans and develop collaborative ways to support students during this time. They are also encouraged to adjust goals, strategies, and timelines to meet students' current needs and home contexts. School teams can support remote learning by prioritizing IEP goals based on parent/caregiver expectations, providing baseline achievement levels and documenting parent/caregiver-reported progress. The classroom teacher, with support from other team members, will continue to link the student-specific plan to ongoing instruction.

In the context of remote learning, how are schools supporting students who are Blind or have low vision or who are Deaf or hard of hearing?

Access to augmentative/alternative communication devices and alternate format materials are critical for some students who rely on specialized equipment and supports to learn. Manitoba Education has created specific support documents for teachers that provide information on how to address these needs during this period of remote learning. See www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/index.html.

What additional resources are available for students to learn at home?

Everyday learning activities and online learning resources for a wide range of grades and subjects are posted for students on the *My Learning at Home* portal, which can be found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/index.html.

What is the role of parents and caregivers to support learning?

The role of parents and caregivers is to support their child's teacher to ensure that learning continues at home. Parents/caregivers can support learning at home by encouraging students to continue with their school learning plans and to look for opportunities to promote learning within the context of daily life. This provides students with authentic educational experiences.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to maintain ongoing communication with teachers. They should consult with their child's teacher to see what resources and tools they recommend to support student learning at home.

Supplemental online resources are available to assist families in enhancing their child's learning at all ages. This collection of resources, which is updated regularly, supports student learning and well-being, and encourages family-centred learning. Visit the *My Learning at Home* portal at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/index.html. This site offers information for all three school programs: English, *Français*, and French Immersion.

Are parents and caregivers able to contact their child's teacher, school administrators or superintendent while classroom learning is suspended?

Yes. Teachers, school administrators, and superintendents remain available if parents and caregivers have any questions or concerns. Parents and caregivers may connect with teachers about their child's progress. This may look different for each student and teacher.

How can students who have limited or no access to technology, or who have limited or no Internet connectivity, access learning resources?

School divisions, schools, and teachers are responsible for supporting students with limited or no access to technology, as well as those who are experiencing connectivity issues. Contact your child's teacher to discuss how best to support their learning at this time.

What supports are available for French Immersion and *Français* Program students, and for French courses for English Program students?

Activities and online learning resources are posted for French Immersion Program students on the *My Learning at Home (Immersion)* portal, found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning-imm/index.html.

Français Program students can access activities and online learning resources on the *Mon apprentissage chez moi* portal, found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/monapprentissage/index.html.

The *Direction des ressources éducatives françaises* (DREF) has many resources for French Immersion and *Français* Program students. These resources can be found at www.dref.mb.ca. For French courses for English Program students, resources can be found at <https://dref.mb.ca/french-english-program>.

Additional French-language supports and resources continue to be developed.

What supports are available for English as an additional language (EAL) learners?

School divisions, schools, and teachers are responsible for supporting EAL learners. Your child's teacher will be able to help with how best to support their learning at this time.

What supports are available for students with special needs?

School divisions, school leaders, and teachers are responsible for supporting students with special needs. Contact your child's teacher and assigned case manager (where applicable) to discuss how best to support their learning at this time.



Assessment and Graduation

How will students enrolled in Applied Family Studies 40S complete the course if they are unable to complete the 40-hour practicum requirement due to the suspension of classes?

Teachers may use a project-based learning assignment in lieu of the practicum to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate the application of knowledge they have gained throughout the course. For example, video clips can provide an opportunity for students to observe children and to design experiences to support early childhood learning. Resources are available on the Manitoba Professional Learning Environment (Maple) at www.mapleforem.ca. Replacing the practicum with a project this year will allow the course to meet the 40-hour course requirement for childcare assistants (CCAs) within their first year of employment.

Will students have the opportunity to increase their mark?

Yes. Students will have the opportunity to increase their mark from the mark they had achieved at the time of suspension of classes. Teachers will continue to set goals for students and assess progress. They will use their professional judgment to determine suitable formats for collecting evidence of student learning.

Why is it important for teachers to assess student learning during the suspension of in-class instruction?

Teachers need to monitor and assess students who are engaged in remote learning in order to assign a final grade on the June report card and to identify future learning needs. This needs to be done in a fair, authentic, and transparent way so the feedback communicated will enhance student learning and provide necessary information for reporting in June. Specific communication about the report card is forthcoming.

Will students be able to graduate or advance to the next grade?

Yes. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 will proceed to the next grade in September, with the understanding that they will engage in recovery learning as needed.

Students in Grades 9 to 12 will receive, at minimum, the grades they achieved at the time of suspension of classes. For Grades 9 to 11, they may be required to undertake recovery learning in the next school year.

Students on track for graduating in June 2020 will receive their diplomas, despite the suspension of in-school learning. Specific planning will take place to ensure these students obtain sufficient credits to graduate.

Teachers will make special efforts for Grades 11 and 12 students to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for their post-graduation goals. Manitoba Education continues to work with post-secondary institutions to ensure no student's graduation or transition to post-secondary is jeopardized as a result of the school suspension.

What does "on track to graduate" mean?

On track to graduate applies to students who are on track to obtain the required number of credits this school year and obtain a passing grade for those credits, as of March 20, 2020, or students who improve their grade to passing through continued learning during suspension of classes.

Will students be expected to write the Grade 12 provincial tests scheduled for May and June 2020?

No. The Grade 12 provincial tests scheduled for May and June 2020 are cancelled. It is the school's responsibility to assess students and assign a final grade.

Will Grade 12 provincial test marks from January 2020 still count toward Semester 1 final course marks?

Yes. Marks will stand as they are for Semester 1, including provincial test scores for applicable Grade 12 courses.

Will students receive report cards at the end of this school year?

Yes. All students will receive final grades and a report card in June. Reporting of final grades will follow Manitoba Provincial Report Card Policy and Guidelines, found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/docs/report_card/index.html.

Report cards will also indicate whether the student will require recovery learning. A provincial directive is forthcoming to provide greater clarity on expectations for teachers and implications for the next school year. If you have any questions about your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher directly.

How are baseline marks determined?

Baseline marks are the marks that the student had at the time in-class learning was suspended (March 20, 2020).

What if students who have a passing grade as of March 20, 2020, choose not to engage in learning?

Students who do not engage in remote learning may be required to undertake recovery learning in the next school year.

Students on track for graduating in June 2020 will receive their diplomas, despite the suspension of in-school learning. Specific planning will take place to ensure these students obtain sufficient credits to graduate.

Teachers will make special efforts for Grades 11 and 12 students to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for their post-graduation goals. Manitoba Education continues to work with post-secondary institutions to ensure no student's graduation or transition to post-secondary is jeopardized as a result of the school suspension period.



Mental Health and Well-Being

What resources are available to support mental well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic?

We understand that families across the province may feel varying degrees of anxiety over the suspension of classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- AbilitiCBT is a new virtual therapy program that is now available to Manitobans aged 16 and older. This digital program provides mental health support to those struggling with mild to moderate anxiety due to COVID-19. The program is accessible from home and can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/bewell/virtualtherapy.html.

A partner toolkit to help organizations better understand the AbilitiCBT program is available at www.manitoba.ca/covid19/bewell/toolkit.html. Manitobans are encouraged to share this information widely to ensure as many individuals as possible can access this support.

For more information, see www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/bewell/virtualtherapy.html.

- Kids Help Phone is a resource available to all students looking for support during these trying times. Counsellors may be reached via telephone at 1-800-668-6868 or by texting CONNECT to 686868. More information regarding Kids Help Phone and other local youth programs can be found at <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>.

- The Manitoba government also provides information regarding mental health and well-being, which can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/bewell/index.html.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact their child's school or school division to discuss other resources that may be available.



Public Health and Safety

Is it safe for students to pick up learning packages and personal items from schools?

Yes. If appropriate social distancing measures are in place both inside and outside of the building, arrangements can be made at the school level for pick-up of student learning packages and personal items.

Is it safe to distribute and collect print-based learning materials?

Yes. Manitoba Public Health recommends washing hands often with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after the handling of any material.

Where can I find the most current public health information on COVID-19?

Up-to-date public health information about COVID-19 can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html.