



St. Maurice School Inc.

1639 Pembina Highway Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2G6
Phone: (204) 452-2873 or (204) 453-4020 Fax: (204) 452-4050
Internet: www.stmaurice.mb.ca Email: info@stmaurice.mb.ca

RE-OPENING PLANS FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

Version 2021.1.0, Current to September 1, 2021

The teachers and staff of St. Maurice School are eagerly looking forward to welcoming our returning students and those students new to our school **to in-school classroom learning** in September 2021! Although we may be all apprehensive about the re-opening of schools amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we also know that the education of our children is very important and needs to be timely; we cannot postpone or suspend indefinitely the learning opportunities which are best addressed at particular ages and stages of development and most successfully engaged in a classroom environment.

We will all have to work together to continue to find solutions in our return to classroom schooling. We will take direct guidance from Manitoba Education and Public Health and will implement the recommendations within the physical and practical context of St. Maurice School. This re-opening plans document will describe the most notable strategies and approaches which will be in place at St. Maurice School to minimize the risks of transmission of the coronavirus which causes COVID-19 among persons in our school community.

Manitoba Education has recently updated its online resource of information for parents, students and school staff. Please visit <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html> for a wealth of current and comprehensive information.

This St. Maurice School re-opening plans document will identify and describe some specifics for re-opening which are particular to St. Maurice School. Such specific considerations for implementation of the re-opening guidelines are caused by such factors as building and classroom configurations, courses and programs offered, situations unique to some grade levels in our K-12 school, and so on.

This St. Maurice School planning document, currently existing as Version 2021.1.0, will no doubt evolve as the COVID-19 situation changes, as consultations continue to occur with various governing bodies, and as implementations begin with teachers and staff before the start date for students. There may be questions not yet asked, and responses not yet developed which will need to be considered, researched and integrated into the return to school plans. *The most updated version of this school plans document will be posted to the website as changes or additions are made – check back frequently at the website for updates.* Should an unexpected significant change be made from an existing version, the Administration will also email that information to parents/guardians and school staff. All members of the St. Maurice School community are strongly encouraged to visit the school website regularly to check for updates to the school-specific plans, as these are all subject to change.

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS AS THEY APPLY TO SCHOOLS

Masks

- ALL persons entering the school for any amount of time MUST wear a face-covering mask over their mouth and nose. The mask may be of a fabric/re-useable or disposable material. ALL students will wear their mask at all times except when they are actively eating their lunch, seated in their desk.
- The mandated masks are a requirement announced by Manitoba Public Health and are required for all students, K-12, and all adults entering schools, including staff, casual staff, substitutes, invited guests and contractors.
- *Parents of students entering Kindergarten to Grade 4:* Please take note that students in this age category were not required to wear masks last school year. Masks are now required for all students, K-12. Please ensure that you have an ample supply of disposable masks and/or re-useable masks (to be washed after every use), as masks will be needed at the rate of at least 2 per day.
- Each student and staff member will be issued one new re-useable fabric mask in the early days of the school year. Medical grade disposable masks will be available from the school offices for students who accidentally forget their mask, or whose mask becomes un-wearable during the school day.
- All parents are expected to train their child in properly and safely putting on, wearing and removing a mask. Teachers will also be teaching and reinforcing the safe mask-wearing practices. The Province has produced a video “Wear It Well: A Mask How-To for Kids”; see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGhLwmFRyZY>
- Please ensure that your child comes to school each day with at least two masks for the day and that they have their mask on before arriving to the Before School Program or their waiting area outside the school building before the start of school.
- Students will keep their mask on for outdoor recesses. Although it is not strictly required that masks be worn outdoors, there is no appropriate and sanitary means of storing masks when off for the outdoor time (note that students exiting and entering the building for the recess have to keep their masks on as they transit through the halls).

Proof of Vaccination

- All adults entering the school will have to provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or undergo frequent COVID testing. Any school employees who are not or not yet considered fully vaccinated will have to undergo frequent testing for COVID-19 and show proof of negative test results, all in accordance with the mandated requirements of the prevailing Public Health Orders.
- Appropriate proof of vaccination will be the individual’s Manitoba Immunization QR code, whether in digital or the physical card format, which will be scanned by school personnel approving their entry. A form of photo ID bearing the name of the immunized individual will need to be shown at the time of scanning if the person is unknown to the school personnel scanning for admission.

Here are some of the specific details as these Restoring Safe Schools guidelines, recommendations and suggestions are planned for and implemented at St. Maurice School:

Re-Opening Timeline

- Students in Grades 1 to 12 will begin in-school classes on Wednesday, September 8, 2021.
- Parents of students entering Kindergarten will have already booked an appointment with their child's teacher for a brief discussion between the teacher, the parent(s) and the child on September 8 or 9. St. Maurice School begins the Kindergarten year with a staggered start, where half of the class attends school on alternate days until the whole class sessions begin on September 17th.

Attendance at School

- Manitoba Education and St. Maurice School expects that all students, K-12, attend at school for classroom instruction beginning in September 2021.
- Remote learning is **not** an option which can be requested as choice.
- Exceptional medical circumstances may warrant that a child stay home and remote learning be provided in some fashion. Parents with a medically advised request and doctor's note for remote learning are asked to contact a St. Maurice School Administrator. The Administrator will provide the referral to the Manitoba Remote Learning Resource Centre for K-8, and to the InformNet or Teacher-Mediated Course online programs for students in Grades 9 to 12. St. Maurice School will not be providing simultaneous remote learning for students required to stay out of the school environment for medical reasons this school year.
- All parents will be expected to screen their child for symptoms of COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms each day before bringing them to school. Please use the Province of Manitoba's screening tool, available online at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>, OR see a single-page version of the screening tool included on the school website Click on "Covid-19": then click for the "*Screening Questionnaire*".
- Parents and caregivers are responsible for their own child's self-screening before they come to school. School staff may conduct screening for children while they are at school. Parents will be advised of any observed symptoms, and the parents will be contacted to pick up their child should there be any cause for concern per the screening tool. Parents picking up a child displaying symptoms are expected to call Health Links at 204-788-8200 for medical advice on COVID testing, self-isolation requirements, timelines and treatment.

School Hours

- K to 6 classes will run from 8:30 am to 3:15 pm. Students will enter and exit the school using assigned doors designated for their grade level.
- Grade 7 to 12 classes will run from 9:00 am to 3:40 pm. The new school periods schedule of times will appear in the updated student handbook, and will be posted throughout the 7-12 classrooms.
- Opening exercises for the main campus (grades 1-12) will be held over the PA at 9:00 am. We will play (but not sing) O Canada, read the morning announcements (including regular COVID safety reminders), and join as community in the morning prayer.

Before and After School Time

- Students will not be permitted to loiter in the school buildings at all or to wait long before school opens or for their ride home after school.
- Parents MUST make timely arrangements to have their child/ren arrive not more than a few minutes before their designated entry time (8:30 for K-6 and 8:45 for 7-12), and they must ensure that their child/ren are picked up very soon after the end of the school day (3:15 pm for K-6 and 3:40 pm for 7-12).
- The School intends to have the high school parking lot volunteers working before and after school to assist in the safe movement of students and vehicles; however, the parking lot volunteers will not be able to assist children into/out of their vehicle, as their interactions must be contactless and from a 2 metre distance. Please cooperate with their instructions.
- Parents of K-6 children wanting information about the Before&After School program operated by St. Maurice Daycare must contact the director of that program, Soraya Bader at 204-284-0881 or schage@stmaurice.mb.ca.
- Students in Grade 7 and 8 will have access to the morning and after school study halls, scheduled to begin on September 13th. Until September 13th, the school doors will only be opened for 7&8 students at 8:45 am.
- The Grade 7&8 morning study hall will run from 7:30 am until 9:00 am. Students entering for study hall must use their assigned entry door and will proceed to their assigned desk for their Period 1 class.
 - Students in Student Advisory Group 8A, who have their period 1 class in the high school area, will use room 7B for their morning study hall on Days 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6; and room 8A on Day 3.
- The after school study hall for 7&8 will run from 3:40 pm until 5:00 pm. Students will be required to sit as assigned in the Cafeteria. Students must be promptly picked up as they will be ushered outdoors at 5:00 pm.
- The Educational Assistant assigned to the 7&8 study halls will supervise all needed spaces and will not be as available as ordinarily for individual student questions, etc.
- Students in Grades 9 to 12 who arrive before the 9:00 am start time may enter by their assigned entrance door upon arrival and proceed to their desk for their Period 1 class.
 - Note for Physics 40S students: morning study hall will be in room 103 for all school days in which Physics 40S is the period 1 class
 - Note for students in 9B: morning study hall on Day 3 will be in room 103.
- High school students waiting after 3:40 for their ride will be required to remain in a desk in the Cafeteria until they depart using their designated exit.

Entrances and Exits

- With the exception of Kindergarten, parents/guardians will NOT be permitted to enter the school to drop off or pick up their child. All business with a school office, teacher or administrator must be conducted via telephone or email wherever possible.
- Visitors will not be permitted to enter the school unless they have pre-arranged and have been pre-authorized for entry by school personnel. All approved visitors will have to show proof of vaccination prior to entry and must be masked at all times.
- Should the instance absolutely require an in-person meeting, the parent will be required to contact the appropriate school personnel by email in advance and a specific meeting date, time

and location will be set by consultation with the Administration, with instructions for entry into the school.

- Please send all notes and forms to the school with your child, who will hand them in to their homeroom teacher (K-6) or Period 1 teacher (7-12).
- Should a parent need to drop off paperwork or payment which cannot be delivered via their child, they may place their envelope into the locked black mailbox outside the school's white doors. Parents, please clearly mark the name of the person or office to receive the envelope and your name on the front of the envelope; this mailbox will be checked regularly and at least once per weekday.
- Kindergarten students will be brought by their parent up to the Kindergarten floor, where the child will be dropped off to the teacher. Parents are asked to have only one caregiver accompany the K child up to their room. The child's caregiver will not be allowed to enter the classroom, and to only hand over the student to the school staff at the classroom door. Please maintain a social distance of 2 metres from all other families while travelling up to the K classroom. Use only the right side of the stairwell and hallway. Once full-day classes begin for Kindergarten students, class time will run from 8:30 am to 3:15 pm.
- Grade 1 to 3 students will enter and exit using the playground doors. In the morning, one parent or caregiver should walk them from the parking lot through the gate on the west side of the school and onto the playground. The parent and child/ren must keep a 2 metre separation distance from other family groupings.
- Grade 4 and 5 students will enter and exit using the white doors and use the entire parking lot safety zone as their waiting area (except immediately in front of the blue doors, which will need to be kept clear for the passage of grade 11 and 12 students). Grade 6 students will wait in the area just outside the parking lot safety fence adjacent to the garage (the staff assigned those parking spaces will not be using them). The children must keep a 2 metre distance from others.
- Grade 7&8 students will enter and exit using the brown doors of the parish. If not attending the before/after study hall, they are expected to wait, socially-distanced, along the parish garage doors and, if needed, on the public sidewalk of Manahan Avenue. Students must stay out of the traffic lanes of the parking lot and street.
- Grade 9 and 10 students will enter and exit the school using the south stairwell doors of the high school area. They will transit from the parking lot along the west side of the school to enter the "back stairwell" doors so as to go directly up to the second floor where all of their classes will be held. All students are expected to maintain the 2 metre social distance.
- Grade 11 and 12 students will enter using the blue doors to the high school and will go directly to the main floor of the high school where their classes will be held.
- Every student and staff member will be required to use school-supplied hand sanitizer every time they enter the school. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at all designated entrances.

Student Clothing

- All students will be expected to wear their full St. Maurice School uniform at all times they are in the school, including lunch, before/after study halls and senior spares. It is required that we minimize the use of the washrooms as changerooms.

- All students are urged to come to school already dressed in their student uniform and change to casual clothes only after they return home.
- Casual days and Loonie Tuesdays will continue to occur as scheduled on the monthly calendar. (Remember that all proceeds from Loonie Tuesdays are donated to Rossbrook House, a neighbourhood drop-in centre for children, youth, and young adults in the innercity area of Winnipeg. These children continue to need our help!)
- Students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 will not change for physical education (gym) classes until further notice.
- Students in Grades 9 to 12 will change for Phys Ed this year, with their Student Advisory Group divided into the two bathrooms for each gender available in the high school. Students are to change in the washroom on the high school floor where their assigned locker is located.

Face Shields / Frames-with-Lenses worn by some staff

- Please advise your children that some school staff, especially those who must work in close proximity to individual students, will be wearing a mask, but may also be wearing a face shield or frames-with-lenses (which look like eyeglasses). It is important that children, especially younger ones, are taught that the face shield is an added layer of protection for both the student and staff person, and that they need not be afraid because someone is wearing a face shield (it doesn't mean they're sick).

Student Cohorts

- Students in K to 6 will be organized into specific cohorts (groupings) of not more than 75 children. The students in a cohort will not intermix with children from other cohorts. Contact between the cohorts will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. At St. Maurice School, this means that each grade level in K-6 will be designated as a separate cohort, with each group assigned to specific classrooms for their entire school day.
- All 3 Kindergarten classes will form one cohort; Grades 1 to 6 have two homerooms, which will together form a grade-level cohort.
- The grouping by cohorts helps reduce the risk of transmission among the school population and would assist Public Health in contact tracing should a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 be detected in a student or staff member.
- Students in Grades 7 to 12 are not to be placed into cohorts per the most recent Public Health requirements, but must be mindful to maintain the greatest social distancing possible at all times.

Movement through the School

- All persons moving through the school when required will be required to walk on the right side of all hallways and stairwells, and must minimize their contact with walls, lockers, etc.
- The use of the stairwell handrails is still permitted to ensure physical safety; the handrails will be sanitized regularly through the day.

Recesses

- Recesses for K-8 students will be staggered for times, with specific areas of the playground assigned to the different student cohorts on rotating days to minimize the contact between cohorts, while still allowing students to have scheduled rotating access to the asphalted area, play structure and artificial turf field.

Lunch

- All food, snack and drinks must be brought from home each school day.
- Students at all levels, K-12, will eat lunch in their seat in their designated classroom. The cafeteria will not be used as an eating space for students.
- Although it is permissible per Public Health for the school cafeteria to re-open, the food service will remain closed at St. Maurice School until further notice. We anticipate re-opening the cafeteria food sales to 7-12 and the healthy lunch program for K-6 at some point this fall.
- Each student must bring a water bottle filled from home and taken home daily to wash and refill (some water fountains will not be available; the school only has two touchless water fountain units, which)

Lockers

- Students will need to be organized well into their backpack, as locker visit times will be decreased and the opportunities for a locker change will be as scheduled under the direction of the teachers.
- Students must not bring any materials to school other than what they actually need to have for successful school learning.
- K-6 Teachers will make arrangements for locker access times which permit the separation of students from each other to the greatest extent possible.

Grade K-6 Classes

- The majority of the school day and subjects will be taught by the homeroom teacher (as usual).
- Music and French classes will be held in the homeroom classroom (classes will not be held in the Music Room)
- Grade 6 students will remain in their homeroom for all subjects; their subject specialist teachers (Math/Science, ELA) will move to their homeroom according to the usual schedule. This practice may be revisited as the COVID situation evolves.
- Essentially, students will spend their entire school day in their assigned desk in their homeroom such as to maintain as much physical distance from others for as much of the day as possible.
- K-6 Physical Education classes will be adapted to be held in the homeroom, outdoors, or in the gymnasium. Best practices and alternatives for safe physical education are continually being developed for schools. Parents are encouraged to keep their child physically active during home times as well.
- Where the classroom is furnished with tables (as opposed to desks), clear plastic shields may be emplaced to separate the students. Masks must continue to be worn even if such shields are in place.

Grade 7-12 Classes

- The small timetable for high school at St. Maurice and the fact that most grades do not intermix for their option courses permits us to allow in-class sessions for all grade 7-12 students on all school days.
- This year, the 7-12 students do not need to be kept in specific cohorts, and so the students will move from room to room according to their schedule of classes.

- Where the classroom is furnished with tables (as opposed to desks), clear plastic shields may be emplaced if multiple students will be seated at a table. Masks must continue to be worn even if such shields are in place.

Disinfection Routines

- Our custodial staff will continue with an increased cleaning and disinfecting regimen, with more frequent cleaning of washrooms and high touch surfaces.
- High touch/high contact surfaces will be regularly disinfected throughout the day (e.g stairwell handrails, exterior door handles, light switches, etc.)
- Interior doors (excluding fire doors) will be left open wherever possible to avoid the need to use the door handle.
- Student desks and chairs will be disinfected daily.

Student or Staff Illness / Outbreak Management

- “Stay home, Go home” if experiencing or exhibiting any symptoms per the COVID-19 screening tool. Contact Health Links at 204-788-8200 or your child’s doctor to seek medical advice; please follow all measures and recommendations for the well-being of your child and the whole school community. Contact the school office with any information provided from Health Links which may impact your child’s attendance at school.
- If the child is already at school when symptoms are observed, the office will contact the parents to pick up their child immediately; parents are expected to contact Health Links or their child’s doctor as above. The student will be moved to a quarantine room and provided with a Level 3 disposable medical mask to wear (in place of their own re-useable or disposable mask). The parent is asked to call the school office from the parking lot when they arrive and school staff will then escort their child to them in the safety zone of the parking lot. A sick child must be picked up as immediately as possible.
- A sick student’s desk, chair, etc. will be sanitized immediately and their departure due to illness/symptoms. The observed symptoms will be recorded should this information be required for their doctor or public health. The quarantine room will be sanitized immediately after the child is picked up.
- Be aware that different personnel may be arranged as required to cover the unexpected illness of school staff members, for those who may need to self-isolate, or for those who have a medically advised situation which prevents them from attending at work. This may involve the re-assignment of St. Maurice School administrators, teachers, campus ministers and/or EAs, as well as substitute teachers and/or EAs from the pool of Manitoba Catholic Schools substitutes.
- In the event of the confirmation of a case of COVID-19 connected with the school, Public Health will lead the response and ensure appropriate direction and supports are in place to coordinate the response. Parents will be alerted by email from the school administrator(s) with the relevant information from the Public Health Nurse advising on the situation at our school.

Education on Safe Practices

- Teacher and Parents must work consistently together to reinforce with the children the importance of the safe practices: hand sanitizer use upon entry into the school, hand washing for 20 seconds with soap and water when directed by their teacher (or as needed after sneezing or coughing), sneezing/coughing into your elbow, identifying to the teacher/parent if they are feeling unwell or have any symptoms to be checked, no sharing of items or foods, etc.

- Parents and teachers will need to provide education and support on the proper wearing of masks, especially for the younger students.
- Especially important will be the education of children on the importance of socially distancing and remaining only with their grade cohort (K-6). All persons must maintain a significant distance from others whenever possible. No hugs or handshakes; these should be replaced with a wave, nod or smile!
- Hand sanitizer and a surface spray disinfectant will be provided to each classroom teacher for their use in the instance of a person sneezing or coughing without effectively cover with their sleeve.

Mental Health

- Homeroom teachers will be open to holding opportunities for their students to talk about their experiences during the pandemic, and if comfortable, about their fears, concerns and strategies for adjusting to the “new normal”.
- Our school counsellor, administrators and campus minister will visit individual classes as well as provide opportunities for students to connect individually with them for guidance and support.
- St. Maurice School has made our school counsellor’s position full time to permit for more ready access for students (Mrs. Lantin was teaching part time for the past few school years)
- Parents are also asked to watch for stress/anxiety in their children, with parents and the teacher/counsellor/administrator to be in contact by email or phone to identify and address any noted concerns.
- Parents and staff are advised to consult with the excellent resources indicated in Manitoba’s general re-opening plans document. See the section titled “Mental Health and Well-Being” at: <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html>

Attitudes and Role Modelling

- All persons in the school community are called to be good citizens, to become enablers of social justice and to care for each other during these difficult times.
- “Book learning” about the coronavirus, COVID-19, the pandemic and prevention strategies are important, and will be introduced in school in age appropriate ways at all levels.
- However, it will be equally, if not more important, that everyone make efforts to teach by example and gentle correction some of the virtues which will help us all get through the challenges ... patience, kindness, empathy, collaboration, prayer, consideration, and love.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has brought challenges, restrictions, fears, and disappointments, but we should try to focus on a great number of other things which have also arisen from this crisis. Please reflect on your own meaning of the following, which have also become realities in our COVID experience: adaptability, flexibility, strength, resilience, creativity, teamwork, inspiration, lifelong learning, charity, compassion, faith and family. Be sure to work some of these positives into your regular conversations with your children, our students.

Prayers

- Rest assured of the school and parish staff’s prayers for your children and families as we return to classes in September.
- Please see the reflection article *A Faith Response to the Coronavirus* on the school website at: https://5df2b469-f3ce-4765-8ef2-4f35f284dd6d.filesusr.com/ugd/7eb69d_29d92f7ad44e42a6b1e7deca83f051fc.pdf

- Please remember the school staff in your prayers as well as the administrators, teachers and staff continue to develop and enact plans to keep us all safe when we return to the all-important provision of an excellent Catholic education for your children!

Prayers for everyone in our school community and in the world in these challenging times.

God bless,
Mr. Bryan Doiron
Principal
St. Maurice Parochial School
of St. Vital Roman Catholic Church