



Turtle River School Division

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March 11, 2020

COVID-19 - Information Update for Parents

As you may have seen in the media, efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) are ongoing globally including throughout Canada. While youth who are generally in good health seem to be more resilient to the effects of the virus, they can be carriers who can transmit the virus to others either directly or indirectly. The federal government has released recommendations for public schools, which can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/guidance-schools-childcare-programs.html> Within this document is the following statement: **There is currently no widespread transmission of COVID-19 in Canada; therefore, PHAC recommends that schools take standard respiratory illness precautions, the same precautions that are recommended every year for cold and influenza season.**

In addition, within Turtle River School Division, we do have a Pandemic Planning document, **Appendix B (i) Pandemic Preparedness Guidelines revised March 2020**, which can be found on our website with our other division policies located here: <http://www.trsd.ca/policy-manual.html>

Everyone, both in the home and at school, has a role to help prevent the spread of communicable illnesses. Below are some measures we are taking as a school division, as well as requests being made of parents/guardians/students:

1. For the time-being we will continue our cleaning/disinfecting protocols within schools, focusing on common "high touch" surfaces such as doorknobs, faucets, etc.
2. If students are displaying symptoms of illness, parents/guardians are asked to keep students home. Staff who are ill are asked to do the same.
3. Students need to be reminded to be diligent with good hygiene practices, including regular hand washing as well as the correct way to cover their mouths when coughing/sneezing. In addition, students should be discouraged from sharing food.
4. Please watch our website, www.trsd.ca to see the latest updates that we receive from the province. We will also post some helpful information that can be used to support you.
5. A communication will also be sent home to parents/guardians of all students, indicating all of the above.

"Learning today for tomorrow"

Attached is a letter from the Minister of Education, Kelvin Goertzen. He speaks about prevention measures, and travelling as we embark on this outbreak of COVID-19.

Lastly, I have attached the March 10, 2020 latest information from the Provincial Government as of March 10, 2020. However, as the information changes very fast, please see the the link below for the latest update from the Manitoba Provincial Government, click here <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/>

If there are further developments, we will communicate as needed on an ongoing basis. Please continue to check our website for continuous updates. www.trsd.ca

Thank you.

Bev Szymesko

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Superintendent

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As from the Province, the latest information - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/>

Current Risk Status

Updated: March 10, 2020

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve rapidly worldwide with more countries reporting cases and an overall increase in case numbers. To date, no laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases have been identified in Manitoba.

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living is recommending the following:

- If you have symptoms of a respiratory illness (regardless of travel), even if mild, stay home until your symptoms are gone.
- If you have upcoming travel plans consider the following:
- Review the latest [Government of Canada COVID-19 related travel advisories](#).
- Consider deferring travel if non-essential
- Be aware that health care services may be limited in some areas, and travel restrictions including quarantine, may be put in place with little notice.
- After traveling self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties) for 14 days after your return. Should you develop COVID-19 symptoms self-isolate immediately and call Health Links-Info Santé for more information.
- Employers should prepare workplace measures to minimize the potential spread of illness. For more information [click here](#).

"Learning today for tomorrow"

- Think ahead, plan and prepare for if COVID-19 becomes common in your community and/ or if you or someone you provide care (e.g., children) for becomes sick. More information is [available here](#).
- For more information on how to reduce your risk of infection see the [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) factsheet](#).

Advice for Travelers and Contacts of COVID-19 Cases

Self-isolation is recommended for the following groups for 14 days after departing the area, or since their last known contact or exposure.

travelers returning from the province of Hubei

travelers returning from Iran

contacts of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19

laboratory workers exposed during work

Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 is recommended for the following groups for 14 days after return to Manitoba, or since their last known contact or exposure.

All returning international travelers,

Close contacts (within 2 meters/6 feet) of individuals with flu-like symptoms who have traveled internationally within 14 days prior to becoming sick

International travelers who develop cold or flu-like symptoms within 14 days of returning to Manitoba should contact Health Links-Info Santé to determine if testing for COVID-19 should be considered. In cases where testing is not recommended, they should stay home (self-isolate) until they are well.

Information on self-monitoring, self-isolation, and what to do while waiting for COVID-19 test results can be found at:

[Novel Coronavirus Fact Sheet](#) (Contains Advice for Self-monitoring) 

[Self-Isolation Fact Sheet](#) 

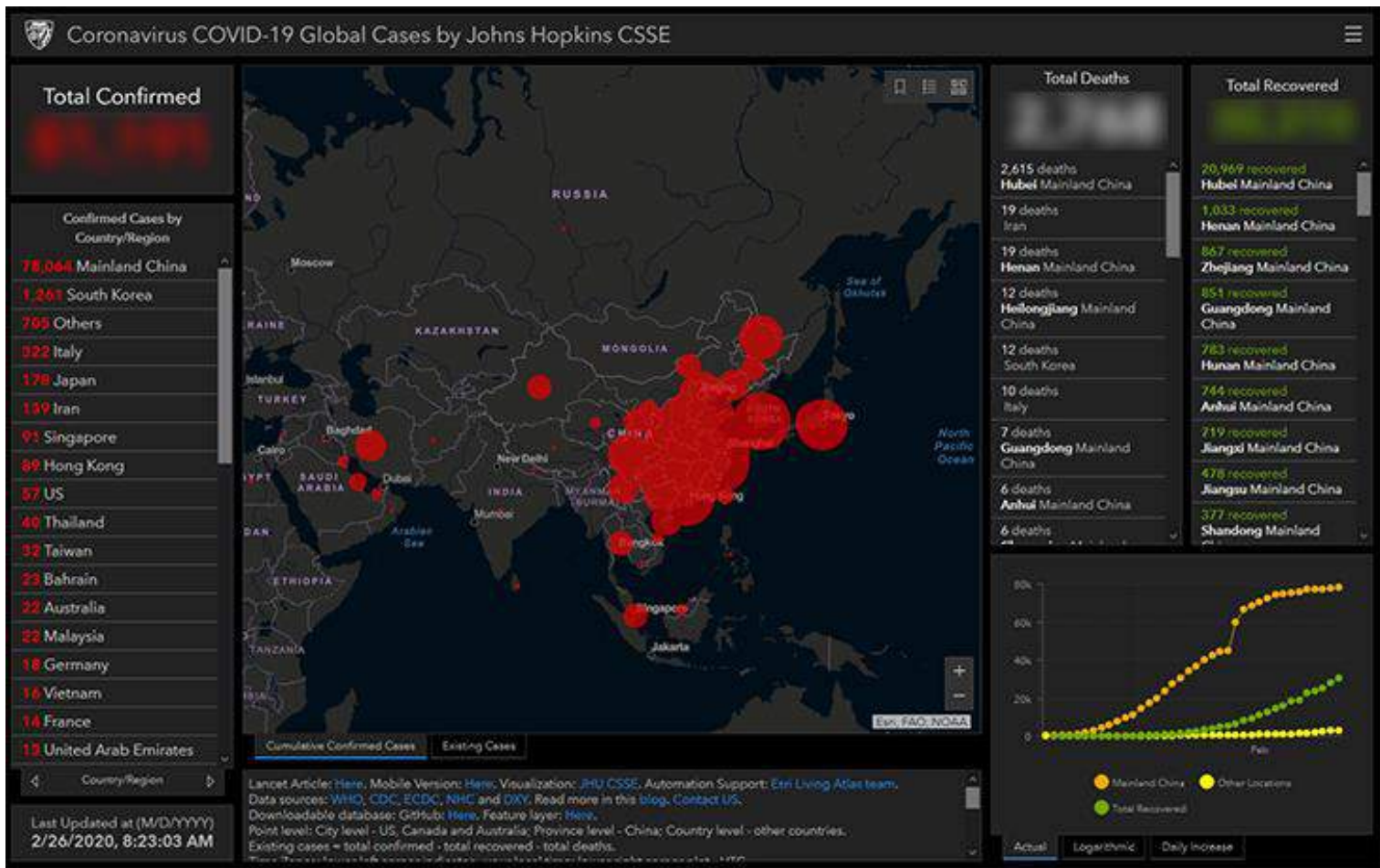
[What Do I Do While Waiting for My \(COVID-19\) Test Results?](#) 

Canadian Situation

As of March 9, 2020, 77 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Canada. Cases have been reported in Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. For the most current numbers, see the [Public Health Agency of Canada's COVID-19: Outbreak update website](#).

For a complete list of countries reporting COVID-19 cases see the most current [WHO Coronavirus Disease situation report](#) or click on the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Case map dashboard.

(click on map image below for most current case numbers)



Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living - Total Number of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Completed Lab Tests and Results:

Date (as of)	Number of People with Completed Tests	Number of People Confirmed Positive
March 5, 2020	97	0

Communicable Disease Control (CDC)
Public Health
Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living
 4th Floor - 300 Carlton St.
 Winnipeg MB R3B 3M9 CANADA
Health Links – Info Santé
 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257



**MINISTER
OF EDUCATION**

Room 168
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Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
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MAR 10 2020

To: Superintendents of School Divisions
Directors of First Nations Education Authorities
Student Services Administrators
Principals of First Nations Schools
Principals of Funded Independent Schools

Dear Colleagues:

As you are aware, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak of a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) in January 2020. Our top priority is always planning for the safety of all students and staff.

COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to other viruses. As such, I encourage schools to continue to take measures to help prevent the spread of viruses. Best practices for the prevention of viral illness include regular and thorough handwashing with warm water and soap, coughing and sneezing into an arm or tissue, encouraging people to stay home from school or work when they are sick, and ensuring that surfaces and objects are wiped with disinfectant regularly.

For students and staff traveling abroad, the risk associated with COVID-19 will vary depending on the destination. If your schools are planning out-of-country trips, please review the attached insert from Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and ensure that students and parents/guardians are aware of the potential risks. For current travel advice and health notices about COVID-19, please visit the Government of Canada's Travel Advice and Advisories website at: www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice.

Manitoba Education will continue to work closely with local health officials, school divisions and other partners to monitor, gather information, assess risk and respond as new information becomes available. For up-to-date information and resources, please visit the following websites:

- www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus
- www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kelvin Goertzen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kelvin Goertzen

Attachment

c. Chairs of School Boards

Provincial Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information and Resources for Schools and Educators

In December 2019, COVID-19 (previously referred to as 2019-nCoV), was identified in Wuhan, China, caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. The situation continues to evolve rapidly and a growing number of countries are reporting COVID-19 cases. **To date Manitoba has no laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases. Manitoba public health officials continue to prepare for the virus in the province.**

Provincial health officials continue to work with national (the Public Health Agency of Canada) and international (World Health Organization) partners to monitor, gather information, assess risk and respond to the evolving COVID-19 situation.

COVID-19 can spread through close contact with an infected person who is coughing or sneezing as well as by objects contaminated with the virus. Recommended prevention measures for common viruses such as seasonal influenza are also effective for COVID-19.

Prevention measures include:

- Washing your hands regularly with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds. If soap and water are unavailable, and if your hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol based hand cleanser may be used.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
- Avoiding close contact (within two meters/ six feet) with anyone showing symptoms of a respiratory illness such as coughing or sneezing.
- **Staying home when you are sick, regardless of recent travel.**

Please visit the Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) website (www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html) for updated information including factsheets, commonly asked questions and answers, posters encouraging proper hand hygiene and coughing tips and workplace resources. These materials and resources are updated regularly as new information/ evidence becomes available. **You are encouraged to print, post and share these materials and ensure a process is in place to replace them as information changes.**

Travel

While China remains the epicenter of the outbreak, more and more countries continue to report COVID-19 cases. Evidence of local transmission of COVID-19 cases is being reported in a growing number of countries, many of which are located in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. For a current list of countries with local transmission, go to www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html.

Public health officials strongly recommend reviewing the current Government of Canada travel advisories (www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-

[infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html](#)) before planning any trips outside of the country. While prevention measures can minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19, given the evolving situation, individuals and groups should consider their response to the following:

- Limited healthcare services in some areas, as authorities respond/ prepare to the evolving COVID-19 outbreak.
- What to do if a trip leader/ teacher/ student becomes sick while abroad.
- What to do if a trip leader/ teacher/ student or group is ordered to self-isolate while abroad, either due to illness or close contact with a case of COVID-19.
- What to do if travel restrictions, such as a community level quarantine, are implemented while travelling.
- Ensure everyone is informed of the need to:
 - self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days upon return to Canada.
 - self-isolate for up to 14 days at home upon return, in the event that you develop COVID-19 symptoms, or if Public Health guidance changes.
- Travellers returning from Iran or Hubei province (China) must self-isolate for 14 days upon their return to Canada.
 - Other countries may be added to this category at any time.

To self-monitor symptoms, you should take your temperature twice a day, in the morning and at nighttime, using a digital thermometer by mouth (oral). Do not eat, drink, smoke and/or chew gum 30 minutes before taking your temperature. Do not take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g. Advil®) during the 14-day self-monitoring period UNLESS your health care provider advises otherwise. A Temperature Self-Monitoring Form is available on the MHSAL coronavirus website (www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/providers.html).

Self-isolation means avoiding situations where you could infect other people. This can help prevent the spread of infections. DO NOT attend activities or gatherings where you may come in close contact with other people. This includes work, school and university, public transport (plane/bus/taxi/carpool), health-care facilities, faith-based facilities (church), grocery stores or restaurants, shopping malls, sporting events, concerts and birthday parties. For more information, visit: https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/factsheets/coronavirus_selfisolation.pdf.

Translation of materials to languages in addition to English and French is underway and will be posted on the MHSAL website as available.

Please direct any questions or concerns to PH-EPR@gov.mb.ca