

# MTS RESPONSE AND POSITION

PHASE 2 Draft

2020-2021 School Year



The Society has received numerous concerns expressed by members about the Government's recent announcement to reopen schools on June 1<sup>st</sup> as well as the possibility of commencing the 2020/21 school year on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The Society recognizes these concerns as both valid and serious. We have and will continue to take every opportunity to advocate strongly on behalf of members to raise these concerns with both the government and school divisions, and we will pursue these matters directly over the next few days.

Please continue to consult [www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org) for ongoing and current updates on these important matters.

## PHASE 2 SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN AS REPORTED TO DATE:

- Classroom learning is suspended for the remainder of the school year.
- Remote learning continues but will wind down throughout June as student assessment and transition planning begins. Schools and school divisions will have discretion around the timing of this shift.
- Schools can reopen for limited use. Teachers may be asked to return as early as June 1.
- Schools will be open for staff and for specific programs.
- Teachers will be able to meet one-on-one or with small groups of students for the purpose of assessment, clinical supports, and planning for the resumption of classes in September.
- Schools must follow public health guidelines for use of school facilities to ensure the safety of all those involved. Some of the key guidelines include occupancy limits, use of separate exits, staggered drop off schedules, food handling, self-screening at the start of each day using Shared Health's online tool.
- Schools must follow Child Care centre sanitation and infection prevention guidelines.
- As of right now, there is no indication that teachers will be required to wear personal protective equipment. This is in line with the PPE requirements for childcare workers.

## MTS RESPONSE/POSITION ON PHASE 2 SCHOOL REOPENING

- The Society's priority is the safety and well being of our members and the students they teach.
- Teachers should have the opportunity to continue to work remotely when their physical presence is not required in the building because there is no directive from the Manitoba Government that all staff must return to schools.
- School divisions must comply with the government directives on **Restoring Services: Phase 2 - DRAFT PLAN** and continue to comply with all relevant Workplace Safety and Health legislation.
- Appropriate hygiene protocols and safety procedures must be in place and communicated at school locations prior to teachers being required to be in attendance. Sanitation resources must be available.
- Teachers should follow the direction from their school division regarding the return to school sites.
- Teachers should not be required to conduct remote teaching while also being required to attend to in-school duties.

- School divisions need to account for the unique circumstances that surround child care for teachers. Until a full reopening of schools and daycares occurs, accommodations may be necessary.
- School divisions need to accommodate teachers with medical conditions that prevent them from returning to their school work site.
- Members requiring advice or assistance on specific concerns should contact MTS to speak with a Teacher Welfare Staff Officer 204-888-7961 or 1-800-262-8803.

## 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR AS REPORTED TO DATE

The government has proposed additional teaching days for the upcoming school year by starting school on August 31, 2020 and re-purposing PD days as instructional days. This is a proposal. The government will be consulting with MTS, school divisions and other education stakeholders. No decision has been made.

## MTS RESPONSE/POSITION ON 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR

- The Society's long-standing position has been that a post Labour Day start to the school year is in the best interest of students, teachers and their families as well as the local communities and their economy. The school year calendar should not be changed.
- The Manitoba Teachers' Society understands the critical importance of teacher Professional Development to enhancing the learning of all students. We will continue to advocate for the protection of these valuable days.
- Administration days provide teachers with valuable time to complete critical tasks such as reporting student progress to parents as well as developing student programming that best meets the individualized needs of our students. MTS has and will continue to make the protection of teacher time a priority so that we can continue to best serve our school communities.



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