

RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN
FALL 2020
NORTHERN LIGHTS SCHOOL
DIVISION#113
AUGUST 1, 2020

DIVISION PLAN WILL EVOLVE AS REQUIRED BY EMERGING HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENTS

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Overarching Thoughts:

- This is a living document, revised August 1, 2020. It will evolve as required by emerging health risk assessments.
- Education will continue in the fall. It will not be voluntary learning.
- Saskatchewan curriculum will be taught by teachers. Families are not responsible for providing curriculum learning opportunities; but, may support the learning opportunities provided by teachers. Partnership between the school and home is important for student success.
- The sector has transitioned from emergency remote learning to delivery of the provincial curriculum. Special considerations (such as increased special project credits available, all students progressing to the next grade and receiving a minimum 50% mark) implemented during the supplemental learning period from March 2020 to June 2020 are no longer in effect.
- We have a responsibility to leverage the professional and operational learning achieved during the supplemental learning period. The sector has a shared responsibility to provide support as teaching professionals continue to make significant shifts in their pedagogical practices.
- As a provincial education sector, we will be taking our cues and developing return to school plans based on the direction and phasing of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan and the Chief Medical Health Officer.
- While students are in the care of school divisions, physical distancing and other health precautions will be followed, according to the direction of the Chief Medical Health Officer and Re-Open Saskatchewan. Please refer to: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/re-open-saskatchewan-plan/guidelines/primary-and-secondary-educational-institution-guidelines> for further information about educational institution guidelines.
- PPE is not required at this point in time, except when caring for students who are ill.
- Student and staff health and well-being continue to be paramount. Consideration will be made for staff and students who have compromised immune systems, or other medical accommodations.
- NLSD will work with school staff to address their local contexts, ensuring equitable

learning opportunities at the school and community levels are provided to all students.

- Hygiene products, including soap and sanitizer, will be provided by NLSD and approved by Health Canada.
- NLSD schools will work with families to ensure students have necessary school supplies. Protocols for bringing supplies to school will be developed in consultation with the Chief Medical Health Officer.
- NLSD will develop and update administrative procedures for Student Illness in Care, COVID-19 and Infectious Diseases.

NLSD #113 Belief Statements:

The health and safety of students, staff and community members is our priority.

All students and staff must stay home if they are sick.

Adherence to numbers of students and staff permitted to gather and other health enhancing practices as outlined by the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Work collaboratively with our local medical health officers and follow the expert advice in response to our local context.

All students will have equitable access to provincial curriculum.

The focus will be on learning outcomes rather than the amount of time per subject area.

NLSD#113 Preparing for Reopening:

- School staff should review, discuss and consider their response locally to the Reopen NLSD#113 plan.
- School based administrators are encouraged to utilize Appendix D as part of their planning locally.
- Develop a communication plan to keep stakeholders apprised of school plans.
- School based administrators should share their plan with the school community council and discuss their communication plan moving forward.
- Schools should consider a Return to School and Re-engagement campaign for students and staff.

School Day and School Operations:

Students:

- All students are required to participate.
- NLSD staff will be physically present in the school, even for remote provision of learning.
- NLSD will work with families who decline to send their children to school. Students in grades one to nine will be provided the opportunity to view lessons live-streamed/synchronous in the Teams environment. IXL will also be used with students in grades one to nine and monitored by the teacher. High school students will participate in either a synchronous or asynchronous learning environment.

School Day Structure:

- Efforts will be undertaken for the development and implementation of preventative measures throughout the course of the day (i.e., during instruction, recess, nutrition programs, extra-curricular activities, etc.).

See: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/re-open-saskatchewan-plan/guidelines/primary-and-secondary-educational-institution-guidelines> for guidelines that will help when determining how to deliver nutrition programming, determine room configurations to promote physical distancing, limit physical contact, shared materials, equipment, etc. Any food supplied by the school must be delivered to classrooms by a staff member and must not be prepared by students unless they are participating in Commercial Cooking &/or Food Studies and are learning about safety and sanitation in the preparation, storage and service of food. Students must eat lunch in their own classrooms, not in cafeterias.

- Principals, in consultation with their school superintendent, may reassign teachers who are not assigned to classrooms.
- Literacy/Numeracy Catalyst Teachers, Resource Teachers, TAs, etc may work with small groups of students from the same class. Handwashing must occur before and after groupwork.
- Recesses and lunch breaks will be staggered to facilitate physical distancing.
- Detailed plans for extra-curricular activities and other gatherings will be developed in consultation with the Chief Medical Health Officer once the group/gathering capacity

limits for fall 2020 are known.

- Prekindergarten and kindergarten school day structure will vary from one community to the next and will best meet the needs of the local community. Class sizes will not exceed 16 in prekindergarten and 20 in kindergarten. When classes exceed this size, a decision will be made to split students into smaller groups. Some schools will have students attend full days in lieu of half days in an effort to minimize the need for sanitizing in between groups. For additional information, please refer to **Appendix C: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Guidelines**.

Instruction:

- Full Saskatchewan curriculum will be delivered.
- Student-teacher contact time must be prioritized regardless of the delivery format.
- Differentiation of instruction will be important due to the supplemental learning that occurred.
- The focus will be on teaching of outcomes, rather than amount of time per subject (a cross- curricular approach is recommended).
- Focus on efficient learning opportunities and approaches that are conducive to flexible learning spaces and interaction time with teachers.
- Prekindergarten and kindergarten programs will continue to be of the highest quality with a focus on play and exploration. Materials available to students will be minimized as much as possible by draping areas of the room with shower curtains or fabric or by moving them out of the classroom. The room will be set up and students will be seated in such a way to promote physical distancing as much as possible. Students will be taught the importance of hygiene. Whenever possible, students should be brought outside to play, learn and explore. For additional information, please refer to **Appendix C: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Guidelines**.
- Teachers are encouraged to continue to explore options for blended learning. Students should be exposed to the Teams environment and IXL and get accustomed to it in case of a switch to full remote learning. Subjects impacted by the physical environment will be delivered if the curriculum is able to be delivered using an approach that allows for flexible learning spaces and considers safety (See **Appendix A** for suggestions).
- Physical distancing and other health precautions will be followed according to the Chief Medical Health Officer's direction.

- Signs will be posted throughout the school demonstrating how to properly wash hands and reminding everyone of physical distancing protocols.

Assessment:

- Teachers will use their professional discretion to determine the appropriate assessment practices within the current context.
- Teachers are encouraged to implement assessment strategies that do not require simultaneous full group participation.
- NLSD data collection (code, F&P, writing, numeracy, EYE and OurSchool Survey) will continue according to the 2020/21 assessment plan.

Reporting:

- Reporting will occur as per usual NLSD processes.

Transitions:

- Student registration and tracking attendance will be done as per usual. Schools will accommodate families as necessary to register students safely.
 - Plexi-glass may be installed in NLSD schools to create a barrier between office staff and the public. Preference is to keep the public out of the building whenever possible. This should be clearly indicated on the exterior of the school at all entrances. For additional information, please refer to page 9: Facilities and Cleaning/Sanitation.
- Existing procedures will be followed for non-attenders. There will be no attendance awards awarded in the 2020/21 school year. Attendance goals should not be included in the level 2 and 3 plans for the 2020/21 school year. Students eligible for an attendance award will be exempted from the 2020/21 school year.
- Protocols to move into and out of the learning environment should be created, considering local context to ensure safety of students and staff.
 - Students will remain in their classroom as much as possible. When a teacher change is unavoidable, the teacher will rotate classrooms, not students.
 - Entrances of schools will be designated in order to control congestion. Students will

- be trained upon school re-entry how to line up and maintain physical distancing.
- Signs will be posted outside the school alerting visitors to only enter if necessary. Signs will be posted inside to remind all entering to immediately wash/sanitize their hands.
- Arrows will be placed on the floor to direct traffic in one direction only and facilitate physical distancing.
- NLSD students and staff who are sick should be advised to stay home. An appropriate isolation area should be identified for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms who are not able to immediately leave the facility. The parent or guardian should be notified to pick up the student immediately. If the student requires close contact and care, staff must wear a mask and eye protection. Transporting a sick child may only be considered in consultation with the school superintendent, following guidelines of the Chief Medical Health Officer. NLSD will implement trauma-informed practice to support students, staff and families. All schools will follow the “Guidelines for Re-entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic” produced by NACTATR.
- Remote learning platform will be Teams and other Office 365 tools or Moodle.

Communications:

- NLSD schools and teachers should employ multiple modes of ongoing communication as available to them in an effort to engage all families.
- Communication to families should include clarity on the full implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment in this learning environment.
- Family engagement continues to be a priority in NLSD. Teachers wishing to conduct home visits must conduct outdoor visits and keep a minimum two-meter distance from others at all times. Virtual family engagement opportunities are encouraged. Any exceptions that involve parents entering the school must be approved by the Director of Education.
- Prekindergarten, kindergarten and high school orientations may occur at the beginning of the 2020/21 school year. NOTE: Care must be taken to schedule students in a staggered fashion, one at a time, attending with one parent only. Hygiene and physical distancing protocols must be followed. Virtual orientations are strongly encouraged.

Facilities and Cleaning/Sanitation

- Follow provincial and SHA protocol regarding cleaning and disinfection frequency and high touch points. A school plan will be developed for enhanced cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensure adequate soap and paper towels and hand sanitizer is available in each school and facility near entrances.
- Spray bottles filled with disinfectant and rags will be available for wiping down frequently used surface areas.
- Review custodial staff roles and responsibilities:
 - Perform additional cleaning in areas as directed by supervisor.
 - Stagger breaks to reduce congestion.
 - Review safe work procedure and plan for facilities.
- Review maintenance staff roles and responsibilities:
 - Review requirements and controls for maintenance staff.
 - Review safe work procedure and plan for facilities.
- Review community use, shared use, joint use considerations for the upcoming school year.
- Collaborate with facilities department and custodial staff for scheduling and availability.
- Post signs reminding parents, guardians and visitors to not enter the school or facility if they are sick. Signs should be posted at entrances.
- Consider modifications to work environments to promote physical distancing.
- In some instances, physical barriers may be required - the facilities department will work with schools and departments to develop solutions.
- Establish procedures for cleaning shared spaces, shared equipment, devices and materials, cleaning food contact areas and eating locations.

Transportation of students:

- The school division will work with bus contractors to ensure the following:
 - Cleaning and sanitation of buses between each run.
 - Adjust routes to allow time for cleaning and sanitization.
 - Seating plans for all runs.
 - Communication with parents/caregivers regarding hygiene and behavior expectations.
 - Drivers have appropriate PPE and supplies.
- No field trips or extracurricular trips unless approved by the school division.

Students with Additional Needs:

- Updated assessments may be required.
- Appropriate goals based on time that has gone by/supplemental learning that occurred will be set.
- Staff should be deployed appropriately in order to ensure curricular needs/IIP needs are met.
- Chief Medical Health Officer safety orders must be in place for students who require a more hands-on approach and have personal care needs.
- Specialized places for instruction for students with compromised immunity should make every effort to ensure students feel included and safe.
- It may not be possible to support all students with intensive needs in-person due to health and safety guidelines. A decision to alter in-person service must be made as a team in conjunction with the school superintendent as well as student services at central office.

Should there be a direction from the Chief Medical Health Officer to move to full remote learning in one or all of our communities, the following will apply in NLS D schools:

Staff and Students:

- All students are required to participate.
- Staff will be physically present in the school, even for remote provision of learning.

School Day Structure:

- School day will be scheduled as per usual and remote learning platform will be IXL, Teams and other Office 365 tools or Moodle.

Instruction:

- Full Saskatchewan curriculum will be delivered.
- Student-teacher contact time must be prioritized.
- Differentiation of instruction will be important.
- The focus will be on teaching of outcomes, rather than amount of time per subject (a cross-curricular approach is recommended).
- Focus on efficient learning opportunities (there is a real need for the highest quality teaching during these times, purposeful, strategic & intentional) and approaches that are conducive to flexible learning spaces and interaction time with teachers.
- Multiple modes of delivery may be considered at the discretion of the teacher to accommodate all students (i.e., pencil/paper, asynchronous delivery). Note: There may be a need to work as a team to provide access to technology, internet, etc.

Assessment:

- Teachers will use their professional discretion to determine the appropriate assessment practices within the current context.
- Division-wide data collection will pause.

Reporting:

- Reporting will occur as per NLSD processes.

Transitions:

- NLSD will use the usual processes for student registration and for tracking attendance. Schools will accommodate families as necessary to register students safely.
- Existing procedures will be followed for non-attenders.
- Support shall be provided for student and staff health and wellness.

Communications:

- As a means to engage all learners and families, NLSD schools and teachers should employ multiple modes of ongoing communication as available to them.
- Communication to families should include clarity on the full implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment in this learning environment.

Students with Additional Needs:

- Updated assessments may be required.
- Appropriate goals based on time that has gone by/supplemental learning that occurred will be set.
- Staff should be deployed appropriately in order to ensure curricular needs/IIP needs are met.
- Specialized therapies, professional assessments and unique transitions that can't be provided virtually may be provided face-to-face (See Appendix B).

Mental Health and Social-Emotional Supports:

- Supports for students and staff health and wellness will be provided, including helping students understand the importance of preventative measures that are in place and practicing proper hand hygiene and coughing/sneezing etiquette.

- NLSD will implement trauma-informed practice to support students, staff and families. All schools will follow the “Guidelines for Re-entry into the School Setting During the Pandemic” produced by NACTATR.

Reopening NLSD#113: Roles and Responsibilities:

NLSD#113 Schools:

- Teachers - regular duties following health and safety guidelines; identify potential accommodations, reasonable personal protective measures. Plan for students to return, but also plan for the potential of remote learning. Consider pre-assessment and appropriate interventions to remediate gaps in learning.
- School based administrators - regular duties following health and safety guidelines, supervise, monitor and support students and staff. Work with school and central office to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Lead and monitor scheduling and procedures for students and staff movement, track student and staff attendance.
- School secretaries – Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- Educational Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Librarians – Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- Nutrition Workers and Community School Coordinators – Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- Social Workers and Student Support Workers - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.

NLSD Central Office:

- **Curriculum** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines. Continue to support teachers and students in the areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment. Emphasis on ensuring that strategies to support learning gaps are prioritized.
- **Student Services** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines with emphasis on reconnecting with vulnerable students and families.
- **Payroll** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- **Accounting** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- **Facilities** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.

- **Information Communication and Technology Services** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- **Human Resources** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.
- **All other central office staff** - Regular duties following health and safety guidelines.

Appendix A: Curriculum Suggestions

- *Online simulations (e.g., atomic structure modeling, conservation of energy) address many science outcomes and may be used remotely.*
- *Arts education classes may be taught remotely or in physically distant environments (please note that online safety must be employed if using technology). Examples include:*
 - *Dance - select or create grade appropriate online dance sessions (gr.1-9 LIVE Arts streaming videos on ROVER). Learn various dance styles (e.g., hip hop, Bhangra) with video conferencing and online resources. Create own solos or collaborate remotely on small group pieces and share virtually. Rotate choreographer role. Interview a dancer, research choreographers/styles/history and respond critically to online performances.*
 - *Drama - share dramatic character readings, create monologues, devise small group episodes, individual and small group improvisation, storytelling, spoken word performances and virtual exchanges using video conferencing and breakout rooms. Collaborate on plays or scripts designed for virtual settings. Critique online readings and performances by professional theatre groups.*
 - *Music – learn individual parts and record, listen and critique, participate in small group and individual instrumental and singing instruction using video conferencing and virtual breakout rooms, choose repertoire for small ensemble or sectional rehearsals, practice singing individually with audio accompaniment tracks, play or sing along with teacher- created or student-created videos. Participate in digital music making using composition and editing tools and online recording sessions. Record individual parts and edit for whole group performance.*
 - *Visual Art – respond to stories and events visually, practice art making techniques (e.g., drawing, mixed media, photography) using readily available art materials or found objects, use the local environment, daily life or social issues as inspiration for art works, collaborate remotely to discuss sources of inspiration and ways to transform ideas into visual form. Take photos of hands-on art works, explore digital art making tools and share in virtual gallery space. Research Saskatchewan art, art history and critique online images.*
- *Consider selecting PAA Pure courses (e.g., Financial Literacy, Accounting, Photography, Life Transitions, Robotics and Automation and Graphic Arts) which may be more conducive to remote and physically distant options.*
- *Should schools choose to offer PAA courses such as welding, then safety protocols and*

hygiene practices need to be planned. For example, if welding equipment is shared, then cleaning protocols would need to be established and monitored.

- *Choose optional modules from PAA Pure courses that are more suitable for remote learning and physically distant options, in addition to the required core modules. Schools could choose to offer PAA Survey courses rather than Pure courses to select modules that are most conducive to online learning or physically distant scenarios.*

Appendix B: Specialized Support for Students with Intensive Needs

Preamble:

- *Specialized support for students with intensive needs during the COVID-19 pandemic must continue to be based on existing Inclusion and Intervention Plans (IIPs) with considerations to the directions from the Chief Medical Health Officer.*
- *This support for students with intensive needs is grounded in Saskatchewan's inclusionary model and is for students who require specialized therapies, professional assessment and unique transitions. It is not to replace supplemental learning already occurring and is not intended to direct staff to complete everything in the existing IIP.*

Purpose:

- *Some students with intensive needs depend on face-to-face interaction with education support workers and specialized life skills programs.*
- *For students with intensive needs, the connection with school division staff can serve to lower anxiety and potentially reduce the development of other symptoms.*
- *Specialized therapies (such as speech-language pathologists, psychologists, social workers/counsellors and occupational/physical therapists), professional assessments and unique transitions that can't be provided virtually may be provided face-to-face.*

Who:

- *This direction is intended for the student services team that provides specialized support to the students. It is not intended for general classroom teachers who are providing supplemental learning.*

Principles:

- *NLSD is committed to providing all students an opportunity to learn and to support well-being.*
- *Optional in-person specialized therapies, professional assessments and unique*

transitions may be provided only for select students who have intensive needs and currently have IIPs in place.

- *For personal interactions, conditions must be created to allow for provision of supports within a safe and secure environment, which may include the school setting or other appropriate spaces.*
- *This service is designed to meet specific programming needs and not to replace supplemental learning already in place. Both may occur and the programming will be guided by individual student need.*
- *It might not be possible to support all students with intensive needs in-person due to health and safety guidelines*

Identifying Students:

The student services team, in consultation with school-based administrators and senior division staff are in the best position to identify students who would most benefit from optional, additional in-person specialized support. Factors to consider in identifying students may include, but are not limited to, students who currently have an IIP in place and:

- *require specialized therapy using professional staff (such as speech-language pathologists, psychologists, social workers/counsellors and occupational/physical therapists) or require a professional assessment that cannot be provided virtually.*
- *require unique transitions and/or professional assessments that cannot be provided virtually.*

Students who are currently being considered for an IIP and/or students in Grade 12 who do not have an IIP, but require a professional assessment prior to entering post-secondary institutions in order to access adaptations/accommodations, may be considered for specialized therapy, professional assessment and unique transitions.

School divisions may use their current impact assessments to prioritize students and coordinate services.

Process:

- *All actions must align with the current direction of the Chief Medical Health Officer and are subject to frequent change. Consideration must be given to recommended COVID-19 restrictions and current Public Health Orders.*
- *Upon identification of a student, a formal plan must be developed that:*
 - *ensures staff and student safety;*
 - *details the specialized therapies, professional assessments and/or unique transitions proposed;*
 - *identifies the lead staff member;*
 - *clearly identifies the staff required and their role;*
 - *identifies location, time and appropriate lengths of time for engagement;*
 - *outlines family and student requirements; and,*
 - *summarizes a follow-up strategy.*
- *All measures should be in place and communicated with the relevant staff and the family prior to the provision of optional service.*
- *All engagements will occur in a supervised setting, which may include the school or other appropriate spaces, and staff will not enter into private residences or provide personal transportation.*
- *No individual with compromised immunity will be involved - staff or student. If at any time there is concern, the process will be reviewed, and service must be stopped.*
- *Consideration will be given to the directions given by the professional governing body of the staff providing supports.*

Appendix C: Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to support Early Learning educators in establishing provincial health and safety recommendations with reference to the Provincial Response Team Plan and Northern Lights School Division Reopening Plan 2020-21 while continuing to implement quality practices and responsive learning opportunities for children in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten programs.

It is anticipated that the guidelines outlined below will likely change as the school year progresses.

Mindset and Perspective

- Use a strengths-based, growth mindset and believe in the capabilities and competencies of children and what they bring to the classroom:
 - Dr. Jean Clinton: Capable, Competent Children.
 - Margaret Henningsen: Young Children are Competent.
 - Rita Pearson: Every Child Needs a Champion.
- Be aware of your own personal energy and what you are bringing into the classroom; children are intuitive and energy and thoughts that we bring determines how we respond.
- Try to remain calm and try to find joy and learning through everyday interactions.
- Slow down and savor patience - routines take time to be established; scaffold the year to increase in complexity and expectations as children experience success and gain confidence.
- Be flexible and accept that you will not get as much accomplished in a day; value the relationships and connections you are making with children.

Developing Successful Transitions and Connecting with Families

Orientation to School

- During the first week of school, host virtual sessions with families to allow them to tour the classroom briefly (20 minutes). In person orientations need to be approved by the Director of Education.
- After the first week, ask families to drop children off outside at the school entrance to be picked up by the teacher or TA.
- For further ideas and suggestions on ways to successfully transition children to school that focus on building relationships and developing positive school experiences, please refer to the Planning for Transitions in Early Learning document.
- Throughout the month of September to December, begin regularly contacting families through telephone, emails, or on-line video meetings/teleconference calls.
- Host tutorials virtually with families to help them with using the technology that is integrated in classroom practices (e.g. Teams Meetings for Family Days).

Home Visits and Family Days

- For Prekindergarten home visits, conduct outdoor visits with families in the local school playground, a nearby park or on the front lawns in September to begin building a relationship with parents/caregivers.
- Family Days can be hosted virtually on one day a month for October, November and December.
- Duration and occurrence of Family Days for the rest of the school year, will be determined at the school level by the administrator and educator.

Daily Hygiene and Safety Practices

- Educate and establish consistent routines for proper hygiene practices and follow handwashing guidelines as outlined in the provincial health regulations and as explained in the ECERS-3 rating scale:
 - Children wash their hands when they enter the classroom.
 - Before and after eating.

- After encountering bodily fluids: after they blow their nose, cough or sneeze.
 - After using the washroom; and,
 - Before and after using sand/water/sensory bins and painting centers.
 - Additional option: have children wash their hands before and after learning center times.
- Look for learning/teaching opportunities within the extra cleaning and hygiene routines (e.g., practice counting, singing rhymes and songs, following a sequence of steps/directions).
 - Schedule in time within each instructional day for the cleaning of frequently shared items.
 - Schedule weekly cleaning of materials in learning centers on Fridays or as required throughout the week.
 - Wear gloves when disinfecting tables and materials.
 - Designate cleaning materials (e.g., bucket/pail, gloves, disinfectant, dish soap) to a space in the classroom (e.g., on a shelf by the sink, in a cupboard) out of the way of children.
 - Wash tables before and after snack and lunch times.
 - Sweep or vacuum floors after snack and lunch times.
 - Stay within classrooms as much as possible and avoid having to go into other areas of the school.
 - Stagger outdoor times.
 - Ensure all staff are aware of the hygiene and cleaning procedures and understand the adaptations to routines and instructional practices.

School Supplies and Personal Belongings

- If students don't each have their own basket of individual supplies, have one class set of pencils, one box (basic 8 colors) of both markers and crayons that can be shared by four children at a time. This would be the same with scissors and glue - 1 per 4 children. Store school supplies in containers to keep them contained and help with cleaning
- Limit borrowing books from the library – books are not easily cleaned; allow children

to use books from classroom libraries and continue to update/rotate books on a bi-monthly basis to keep children's interests.

- If needed library books can be borrowed but would have to be limited to school use only and allow exchanging books once a month.
- Sets of library books can be assigned to classrooms and exchanged on a monthly basis.

Considerations for Play-based Learning Practices and Learning Materials

- Create spaces that surround the children with hope and possibility; inspire innovation and curiosity.
- While considering the elements of space – materials, physical and aesthetic as interdependent and interconnected to go beyond “an environment” to assist with teaching curricular outcomes, strive to maintain a home-like, cozy, safe and culturally responsive environment.
- Wash all learning materials before offering the materials to children and placing in learning centers.
- Put away materials that may be hard to clean or cannot be washed in a washing machine.
- Ensure everything is well organized, labelled and in containers (e.g., take photos of the items to and include the names of materials).
- Provide individual buckets or materials/mini invitations for learning for children to use through the week (e.g., I Spy bins).
 - Include closed and open-ended materials to keep their interests.
 - Assign to a child for the week then clean at the end of the week and rotate invitations to another child the following week.
- Limit the amount of materials in learning centers – less is more.
 - How can one material or group of materials offer numerous opportunities as opposed to having numerous materials?
 - Quality over quantity.
 - See the complexity of simplicity.
 - Give reason for children to communicate with adults, ask and wait

(Hanan LLLI strategy).

- Use open-ended materials in learning centers that can be used in many ways and repurposed throughout the day.
 - Boxes, cardboard tubing, gems, rocks, sticks, recycled materials can be used for several things throughout the day, in play and through inquiry-based learning.
- Extend materials to include things that can't necessarily be touched – exploring light and shadows, exploring sound, color (e.g. use the smart board, overhead, projector, flashlights, prisms, crystals, water and food coloring, paint).
- Offer materials that keep the children's interests, allow them to work with their favorite materials.
 - Look for opportunities to use the materials in a variety of ways (e.g., Lego can be used for building, for counting, shape, size, patterning/Math, for print making/Art, for exploring properties, designing structures/Science).
 - Allow the potential of materials to be explored in-depth.
- Pay attention to how the materials are set up to invite the children to play and explore so that it keeps their interest and offers possibilities for them to discover rather than telling them how to play with the materials.
 - We can accidentally restrict how we use materials based upon how it is set up.
- Interchange materials and rotate items to keep interest; add complex materials as the year progresses.
- Change the context of space that the materials are being offered in – take the materials outside, closer to a window, move to a different shelf or in another part of the room.
- Look for ways to open or close off areas in the classroom space or outdoor environment (e.g., shower curtain to block an area that is off limits, pylons to map out a space for big body play).
- Engage and interact with the children to model inquiry/exploring materials; "Have similar materials the children have so you can:
 - Imitate what they are doing.
 - Expand on what they are doing by doing something different using the

same materials.

- Extend the topic when appropriate by making a comment or asking questions that encourages children to think more deeply” (Hanen Center, Balancing Precautions While Building Interactions, 2020).
- Use open-ended questions to further the children’s learning with the materials.
- At the end of the week, materials can be washed and left to dry for the weekend. When the students return, they can help put the items back into the containers and in the learning centers.

Physical Distancing and Interactions that Build in Conversations

- While maintaining physical distancing aim to be at the child’s level so that they can read non-verbal cues and engage in interactions/conversations.
- Use OWL – observe, wait and listen (Hanen LLLI strategy) to see what children are interested in and to begin conversations.
- Follow the child’s lead when involved in an activity; incorporate activities that allow builds on language and interactions without materials (e.g., I spy, Simon Says, 20 Questions).
- Look for opportunities to have incidental conversations: talk about what you are doing, make interesting comments, ask questions to invite conversations, change routines into games.
- Label children’s emotions.
- Give children roles to take on and lead” (Hanen Centre, Balancing Precautions While Building Interactions, 2020).
- Physical distancing ideas for hosting whole group discussions/Morning Meetings:
 - Use shapes made of cloth to define personal space and where children can sit during discussions.
 - Use carpet samples to define personal space and assigning seating.
 - Use stickers or painters' tape on floors to mark off spots (be mindful that it doesn’t become a distraction).
- Physical distancing ideas for hosting small group discussions/group work/focused stations:

- Keep children in the same groups for a month at a time and develop a tracking system.
- Always wash before having groups come together.
- Provide materials for each child to avoid too much sharing of materials.
- Keep materials contained and sorted.
- Rotate materials on a weekly basis and clean at the end of the week.

Considerations for Whole Group Discussions/Small Group Activities

- “Balance individual learning activities with small group interactions; using creativity to mix individual and group interactions (for example, individual reflection/work, followed by “turn and show your neighbor”).
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the developmental levels of the children and their ability to participate in small groups to plan activities and keep them engaged for extended periods of time (refer to the Prekindergarten Essentials – Developmental Milestones chart).
- Focus on including imaginative play, physical games that can respect some social distancing, singing, individual art projects.
- Include times that offer activities, games and projects where each child can contribute individually (e.g., shared writing experiences: whole group writes a story).
- Provide shared reading experiences to encourage whole group engagement through puppetry, storytelling, singing new songs, interactive read aloud/big book, turn and talks, think, pair, share (SK Ministry of Education Early Literacy: A Resource for Teachers, 2000; UNICEF Guidance for Re-opening of Preschools and Kindergartens Post Covid-19, 2020).
- For further information on ways to maintain quality interactions and supporting children with emerging literacy and language development refer to The Hanen Centre: Balancing Precautions While Building Interactions document.

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Appendix D: Sample Return to School Staff Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome back!
2. Where are people at? What do you need? What are you feeling?
3. Teamwork – What will be required as we prepare to reopen?
4. Fall school reopening and contingency plan discussion.
5. Review Reopening NLSD#113.
6. Student transitions: What things remain the same? What things may be different? What will easing transitions look like?
7. What things are on and what are off in your school?
8. What additional things do you need to be comfortable and safe?
9. Supplemental learning reflections: What worked and did not work? How might we prepare contingency if it were to happen again?
10. Questions, concerns, other:

School division department related (HR, Information Communication and Technology Services, Facilities, Curriculum, Student Services, etc.,).

School related (supervision, PPE, student refusal to return to school, transitions, transportation).