



COMMUNICATION

ISSUE: Year-End Graduation Events

Schools wishing to host modified graduation ceremonies must adhere to the public health orders and guidelines in effect at the time the ceremonies take place.

As you plan for graduation, please be prepared to:

- follow applicable current public health orders and guidelines
- consider virtual ceremonies, “drive-up” vehicle ceremonies, or “drive-in” vehicle ceremonies
- use creative ways to honour graduating students such as lawn signs and video keepsakes
- minimize interactions between school staff and graduates and plan for a zero contact event by:
 - pre-recording messages—If staff or volunteers are required to have contact with any equipment (e.g., speaker), the equipment must be cleaned and disinfected after each use
 - placing diplomas on a table for the graduate to retrieve
 - involving the minimum number of school employees required to host the event
- ensure two metres of physical distancing at all times
- ensure photographers and videographers adhere to public health orders:
 - provide outdoor services to the individual person (graduate) and the person’s household members
 - ensure there is no mingling in groups or waiting in lines

Schools planning to distribute diplomas at in-school events will follow all current guidance and public health measures for schools. Schools in remote learning can follow the current guidance regarding small groups (no more than five or six students) attending the in-school event (during the school day) to receive their diploma. Schools not in remote learning can have their Grade 12 instructional classes attend (one class at a time) to receive their diploma. Schools must follow all current public health measures for schools, including the following:

- ensuring two metres of physical distancing at all times
- ensuring students wear a mask at all times, except for when posing for a photograph, if fully distanced from the photographer and others
- ensuring staff wear a mask, unless facilitating the event and fully distanced from others
- do not have more than one graduate at a time on the stage or at the staging area
- ensure only graduates and required staff attend

Additionally, no guests can be present at the in-school event. Where additional groups are required due to the number of graduates, plan adequate time between groups to allow for cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and to avoid the crossing-over of groups.

Schools may consider postponing the graduation celebrations until the fall.

Additional Guidance on “Drive-In” and “Drive-Up” Vehicle Events

A “drive-up” vehicle event is characterized as having attendees drive to a designated area where the graduates receive their diplomas and then leave the designated area.

A “drive-in” vehicle event is characterized as having attendees drive to a designated location large enough to hold the required number of vehicles, which are spaced a minimum of two metres. While ensuring that all applicable public health orders are followed, attendees observe the ceremony, which may be projected onto a large screen, streamed to their electronic device, and so on.

For “drive-in” and “drive-up” vehicle events, the following guidelines apply:

- vehicles must be separated by a minimum of two metres
- windows and sunroofs may be open, but doors and trunks are to remain closed
- only participants from the same household may occupy the same vehicle
- participants may stay immediately outside their vehicles in a manner that ensures that they are able to maintain a separation of at least two metres from other persons attending the gathering or event who arrived in another vehicle
- graduates may leave their vehicles to collect their diplomas
- provide washroom access only if necessary and capacity should be limited, with frequent cleaning and disinfecting before, during, and after the service
- no serving of food is allowed and all other services must be suspended, including the use of picnic and play areas
- a list of attendees should be kept for 21 days for contact tracing purposes

Please forward questions and inquiries to educovid19@gov.mb.ca.

Additional information is available on the Manitoba Education COVID-19 website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/latest.html.