



Education and Early Childhood Learning

Deputy Minister

Room 162, Legislative Building, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 0V8
www.edu.gov.mb.ca

March 20, 2024

To: Board Chairs, School Divisions
Superintendents of School Divisions
Principals of Funded Independent Schools
Directors/Owners/Operators of Early Learning and Child Care Facilities
Boards of Directors of Early Learning and Care Centres

Dear Colleagues:

RE: Solar Eclipse – Monday, April 8, 2024

A total solar eclipse is set to occur on April 8, 2024, between approximately noon and 3 p.m. Central Standard Time, spanning from Southern Ontario to Newfoundland and Labrador, with the rest of Canada experiencing a partial eclipse. Manitoba will experience an approximate 50 percent occlusion eclipse.

This is an awe-inspiring event that will draw the gaze of people; however, there is a **risk of permanent vision damage** if proper precautions are not taken. Even a brief look at the partially eclipsed sun can result in permanent damage.

Children and students may need extra supervision during the eclipse, as they may not fully comprehend the risks involved. Early learning and child care facilities and schools are encouraged to have plans in place to keep children indoors during the afternoon to ensure they don't view the eclipse unless appropriate eye protection is available and worn. Note that anyone who may not understand the risk or have difficulty following safety instructions are at greater risk.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning has consulted and collaborated with Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, to develop the attached guidance on solar eclipses. This resource includes a general overview, risks, and information on how to view eclipses safely.

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Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning will continue to work in collaboration with its partners to ensure the health and safety of children, students, and staff. Thank you for your continued interest, engagement, and collaboration as we work together to create positive and thriving learning environments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. O'Leary".

Brian O'Leary
Deputy Minister
Education and
Early Childhood Learning

- c. Honourable Nello Altomare, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning
Rebecca Johnston, Director, Corporate Services