

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers,

We are writing to inform you of a significant change that will be occurring this fall with our Student Information System (SIS). The SIS is the data backbone of the school division. It houses a wide array of student information that the division and parent access on a regular basis (e.g., report cards, attendance data, student specific plans).

**What is happening? Why is it taking place? When will it occur?**

The division needs to change our SIS because our current provider, Tyler Technologies, is exiting the industry, leaving us with no choice but to find a new provider. As a result, RETSD has been working for almost a year to transition to a new SIS called PowerSchool. PowerSchool is a popular SIS that offers many upgraded contemporary features and is used in the majority of other school divisions in Manitoba.

**What is the impact of this change on parents, guardians, and caregivers?**

1. Parent portal:

- The most notable and immediate impact will be the parent portal. **As of July 31, 2024, the Tyler parent portal will be closed.**
- No student data will be lost, as the division will still have access to all student data that are in the pupil files. This ensures programming continuance.
- **Parents who want to keep hard copies of any data in their child’s Tyler portal account should download the files and save them to their own computer. After July 31, they will not be accessible.**
- The launching of the PowerSchool parent portal will not take place until mid- to late fall 2024. The division expects the new portal to be ready for the first reporting period.
- Once our new PowerSchool portal is up and running, we will be in communication with all families to guide them through the steps to access it.

2. Home rooms and student schedules for the 2024-2025 school year:

Early Years (going into Grades 1–5)	Same as last year—In the learning behaviours section of the final report card.
Middle Years (going into Grades 6–7)	New this year—In the learning behaviours section of the final report card.
Middle Years (going into Grade 8)	New this year—In the comment attached to English Language Arts.
Senior Years (going into Grades 9–12)	New this year—Student schedules will be published to the current Tyler portal on June 19. Additionally, schedules will be emailed to students and the primary contact.

- **Please note:** Due to the necessity of having our data clean and stable for the move from Tyler to PowerSchool, we are unable to entertain any home room or schedule changes. Please do not call your child's school or the division office to request a change in June or July. If necessary, schools may be able to consider requests when they reopen in August. We know that this may be a challenge for some; however, as noted above, we need to stabilize our data in early July and any changes to student schedules and home rooms increases the likelihood of unnecessary problems related to the massive migration of data from the old system to the new one. Thank you for your understanding.
    - **Most early and middle years schools reopen on August 26 and most senior years schools reopen on August 19.**
3. Transportation and bus routes for fall 2024:
- If your children are transported to school by RETSD, you will receive information about your child's transportation schedule by email. Due to the change in our SIS, this information will not be on the portal.
  - The division expects this communication to take place in mid-August.
  - In mid-June, families of bused students will receive a letter from the transportation department describing a new app that will be available for student transportation information.
  - If you are unable to download the app for whatever reason, families will receive the transportation schedule via email, as mentioned above.
4. Fees and billing:
- The soonest we expect online fee payment to be available in PowerSchool is after spring break 2025. In the meantime, schools will accept cash or cheques. If you are looking to pay any outstanding fees, you can do this on the Tyler portal until July 12. After that date, outstanding fees will need to be paid by cash or cheque at the school.

Anytime an organization or business changes their information system, challenges can occur. Having said that, the team at RETSD has been working on this transition for over a year and we are feeling very good about our position. Our current SIS is like a well-worn, comfortable pair of shoes that we have had the luxury of adjusting to meet our needs over time. Our new SIS, PowerSchool, is a new pair of shoes that will require some breaking in.

During that break-in time, we will all need to learn how to "walk before we run." This is an important message! As we learn to "walk" with our new SIS, it will be critical for everyone in the whole of the RETSD community to demonstrate kindness, patience, and gratitude, as these will be the dispositions that will guide us through this change.

As has always been the case, we deeply appreciate your understanding and support.

Please look for more communication in the fall, as we launch the new PowerSchool parent portal.

Wishing you a joyous and rejuvenating summer!