



Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School

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Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School Re-Entry Plan

August 18, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are very excited to welcome our students back to school. We thank you for your patience as we have been working to finalize the details of our learning programs and protocols for a safe and successful school start-up. My goal with this communication is to provide you with a reasonable amount of pertinent information that is currently available, along with insight into our decision-making process. The amount of ever-changing information that is coming at all of us can quickly become overwhelming. Families will receive more information as it becomes available.

We have been planning our In-School and At-Home learning educational programming based on the parent survey information that the Division has received as well as the Alberta Health Services (AHS) guidelines. We continue to plan for school routines and protocols around student movement, lunch, sanitizing, and masks to ensure we are doing the best we can in these areas. There will be more detailed information that will be provided before the start of school. Please note that many fine details are being worked out over these final two weeks. I thank you in advance for understanding that there is still work to be done in these areas.

Thank you to all the parents who completed our District survey. After follow-up emails and calls, we have heard from almost all of our families. If we did not hear from you, your child has been placed in the At-School learning program. It was necessary to know the numbers so that our staffing assignments, timetable, and class groupings could be re-shaped to meet the reality of both types of learning. I would like to thank my staff for their flexibility in stepping up to take on new assignments and think outside the box to create learning new opportunities for our students. I would like to highlight the main features of each type of learning program below to give you a sense of what it will look like. I know there will be questions about the finer details and again we appreciate your patience as we finalize these when all staff gather next week.

Guiding Principles for Planning

- Our main priority is the health and safety of students and staff.
- We will attend to the protocols established by AHS.
- Parents are the primary decision makers with respect to what they believe is in the best interest of their children.

- Children and staff who are vulnerable will require attention and accommodations.
- Students will have quality learning opportunities that are guided by Alberta Learning mandates and the provincial Programs of Study.
- Staff will have access to professional learning, collaboration, and support.

Supporting Documents

- 2020-2021 SCHOOL RE-ENTRY PLAN Parent Guide
<http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/283103>
- Lethbridge School Division Covid-19 Updates
<https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/our-district/pandemic-planning/division-communication>

In-School Learning

- We will be having a staggered entry for In-School learning for the first day. Grade 6 ONLY will be attending on **Tuesday Sept. 1**. Grade 7/8 students will have their first day on **Wednesday Sept. 2**. More details about the structure of these days will be coming.
- Students will have a 6 block day that consists of the 4 core classes, an Activity class, and a PE/Movement/Health class in a cohort group that they will be with all day to limit contact.
- There are no regular options in middle school across the Division to start the year. Each school is developing Activity blocks with different option-type experiences at each grade level for cohorts based on their own specific school situation.
- There are no after-school activities or sports in-school across the Division to start the school year.
- Staffing of grade levels is done with the cohort model in mind to keep teacher contacts to the smallest groups of students possible.
- Proper hand washing and hand sanitation will be exercised upon entering and exiting classrooms and frequently throughout the day.
- Everyone will be required to wear a mask while entering, while inside and while exiting the school until they are able to maintain social distancing protocols. Due to class sizes, proper social distancing in classrooms will not be possible.
- Students will be expected to follow social distancing protocols while waiting, entering, and exiting the busses.
- Student cohorts will stay together for lunch, eat in their classroom and have specific areas for outside activity. **Students will need to bring a lunch that is self-contained and does not require a microwave.** We will not have any cafeteria services. Please have your child bring a full water bottle or two; water bottle refilling stations will be operational.
- Lockers will not be used. Students will keep their jacket, backpack, lunch and learning materials at their desk. As a result, they are asked to just bring essential materials – please see the shortened supply list on our website. Gym strip will not be used.

- Protocols will be in place for use of common materials such as library books, computers, PE equipment that include sanitizing and frequent cleaning.
- School doors will be opened to students 15 minutes prior to the bell (8:35 a.m.)
- Students will proceed directly to their assigned desk once they enter the school.
- Grade 8s will use the North doors nearest the baseball diamond.
- Grade 7s will use the South-West doors nearest the soccer fields.
- Grade 6s will use the South doors by the bus lanes.
- Late students will enter via the main doors by the flagpole.
- If you are dropping off or picking up, please park nearest the assigned door and do not block the bus lanes.
- Please conduct the AHS daily screening prior to leaving home each day.
- In order to keep everyone safe, it is critical that your child stays home if possible symptoms are exhibited.
- Please ensure that you child is dressed for the weather as we plan to take classes outside frequently. In order to maintain school cohorts, we are planning to start the year with very little social contact amongst students outside of their homeroom. This allows us to have accurate contact tracing information.
- In preparation for the new school year, please have a conversation with your child/ren about how school will look differently this year. We know this will be difficult at times as they cannot freely connect with all of their classmates. Having your child get used to wearing a mask for extended periods of time before the start of the school year will certainly make their first few school days easier.

At-Home Learning

- For those families who have chosen At-Home learning to start the school year; please expect a detailed summary of our program next week.
- During the first week of regular classes, our At-Home Team will be reaching out to families to establish routines and expectations.
- Students have been placed in a grade level learning group and will have teachers from our school delivering the core classes.
- Students will have scheduled class times for each subject and attendance will be taken.
- Students will be expected to utilize Microsoft Teams for their learning platform and have the required access to technology and internet.
- Structure will include teacher lessons through Teams and videos as well as opportunities to chat with teachers through Teams.
- Students will not be able to access teachers outside of prescribed class hours.
- Students will be assessed through project work and testing where appropriate, and grades will be assigned.
- A PE/Health component will be offered with some flexibility– details to follow.
- Students have committed to this program until the first pivot point in November.

I would also like to remind you of the AHS directive to wear masks in common areas and anywhere else where social distancing is not possible. There will be a common message coming from the Division regarding the specifics of mask protocol. I realize that it is an area that carries many opinions and emotions. I want to stress that we will follow all AHS guidelines and that we are a community whose main priority will be to reinforce the ways in which we take care of each other and the responsibilities that come with that. We know the challenges that are in front of all of us with our new normal but we will treat everyone with care and respect as we develop our routines and expectations of safety. As you know, Alberta Learning has indicated that they will supply two re-usable masks for all staff and students. We have not received these yet and as the start of school approaches, we ask that you make sure your child has a cloth or disposable mask for the first day.

Our office opens August 19th for inquiries and registrations by phone only. We are happy to take your call or email if you need to talk with us. We also ask that you understand we are planning and preparing and may not be able to return a call immediately. As I stated earlier, we will be sending out more detailed information starting next week. I know there are more questions that people will have and we appreciate your patience. The start up has had its challenges and we continue to adjust to the changes that it brings. One thing that doesn't change is the excitement and joy we feel in seeing our students and families again and building the connections with our community. Lastly, enjoy the final moments of summer and all they bring – be well.

Sincerely,

Bill Bartlett
Principal