

Sept. 1st, 2022

Welcome Back

Our staff are so excited to be welcoming students back into the building on September 6th, for the 2022-23 school year. We know that you have been eagerly awaiting news regarding how school is going to be organized and structured. Over the course of the last week, the government released a revised *Communicable Disease Plan*, which reflects the revisions we experienced in the Spring. At the District and school level, we are still working hard to ensure that we have strong health and safety protocols in place for students and staff, aligned with Provincial COVID-19 guidance for K-12 schools. Superintendent Arul-pragasam sent out a letter on August 31st addressing the key points. That information is also posted on the District website. Here is a brief recap:

Listed below are the key preventative health and safety measures that will continue from last year. Please note that the school district will continue to ensure that all infection prevention and exposure control measures are met or exceeded when students and staff return to school in September.

1. Cleaning/disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces once in 24 hours and when visibly dirty.
2. Continuing to ensure all mechanical heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems are operated and maintained.
3. Engaging in hand hygiene and good respiratory etiquette.
4. Staying home when sick – staff and students are aware that they should not come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities.
5. Ensuring individual choices for personal practices (e.g., choosing to wear a mask or face covering) are supported and treated with respect, recognizing varying personal comfort levels.

Hopefully this outline provides enough context for the moment. As we get back into the swing of things, you will no doubt have many questions. We will address these as they arise, and deal with any concerns or changes as needed.

The remainder of this newsletter is intended to provide direction for our students in Grades 1-5. For Kindergarten students, the gradual entry plan shared with you in your 'Welcome' package has not changed.

The Plan for Week One

For Grades 1-5 students, the following is what you can expect our first week back.

➤ Tuesday, Sept. 6th (8:15 am-10:15 am)

All students in Grades 1-3 are asked to assemble on the blacktop (basketball court/Gaga Ball area) when the warning bell rings at 8:10 am. All students in Grades 4 and 5 are to assemble on the playing field, just outside the library.

This is a short day for our students, a brief chance to reconnect with some classmates, and a chance to meet the teachers they will be learning with this year. This day is also our chance to confirm our student numbers, and ensure we have our classes configured in the best possible way. Over the first few days of

school, your child will have a chance to meet the various teachers at their grade level before we finalize our classes. We expect to have this process completed by Friday, September 9th at the latest. The teachers working with your child this week will clarify the arrival and dismissal expectations for each day, until classes are finalized. Your child will not need any supplies today, nor will they need a snack.

Please note: In an effort to reduce congestion and improve safety while the students are dismissing, we ask that parents remain by their vehicle or on the sidewalk, both at arrival and dismissal. We will have staff out to help direct students safely. Please be aware of your surroundings and do your best to respect the personal space of others. Once the buses have departed the congestion is relieved significantly and you will be able to move more freely.

➤ **Wednesday, Sept. 7th (8:15 am-2:15 pm)**

Upon arrival, Grades 1-5 students will report to their designated areas, as communicated yesterday. If your child is unsure where to report, they are to meet on the blacktop where they will be redirected by a staff member.

This is a full day in session. Your child will need a snack and a lunch today. A refillable water bottle would also be beneficial, although the water fountains will be open for use. Students are often hungrier than you might expect with this change of routine, so please pack a little extra food. Masks are not required but the personal choice to wear one will be respected. We have disposable masks at the office if your child would like one.

N.B. All students will wash their hands under the teacher's supervision prior to entry each day. In class, the teacher will regularly review the daily expectations in relation to our health and safety protocols, explaining why it is so important everyone adheres to these guidelines: proper handwashing, coughing/sneezing etiquette, and daily health checks. All students will wash their hands again prior to dismissal. We will continue with this regular hand-washing routine, as we did last year, including before and after eating and using the playground. Students will have access to sinks to use soap and water as often as possible, in addition to hand sanitizer.

➤ **Thursday, Sept. 8th (8:15 am-2:15 pm)**

Upon arrival, Grades 1-5 students will report to their designated areas, as communicated yesterday. If your child is unsure where to report, they are to meet on the blacktop where they will be redirected by a staff member. This is another full day in session.

➤ **Friday, Sept. 9th (8:15 am-2:15 pm)**

Upon arrival, Grades 1-5 students will report to their designated areas, as communicated yesterday. If your child is unsure where to report, they are to meet on the blacktop where they will be redirected by a staff member.

We expect to be able to finalize classes today. The students will be notified before they leave at the end of the day. You will also receive a brief email from your child's teacher, confirming which classroom they will be in this year.

Please note that we will correspond via the primary email address you have provided the school. If you do not receive an email, check your 'Junk Mail'. If you have received nothing, or you would like to add to or change the address on file, please contact the school.

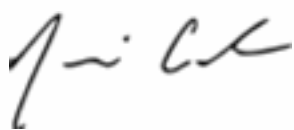
Closing Remarks

Over the course of the pandemic, our community has shown a high degree of cooperation, understanding, support, and most notably, patience. While life has pretty much returned to normal, we need to continue to be vigilant. It is so important that we continue to support each other and keep our kids healthy.

We are trusting that you continue to show caution, keeping your child home if they show signs of illness. We will also continue to show caution here at school, and if a child begins to exhibit symptoms of illness, we will contact you to ask that you come take them home. In the meantime, we will provide a safe place for your child to wait, away from others to help reduce the possibility of spreading illness.

We recognize how frustrating and inconvenient this can be. We also understand there are students that may exhibit signs of illness due to a variety of other factors, such as stress or anxiety, or perhaps related to allergies. As we settle into the school year, if this becomes a concern, you can discuss this further with your child's teacher, and we will work through this with you. We want our students to be at school as often as possible, so we will do all we can to mitigate disruptions to your child's education.

As we enter this school year, we will do all we can to ensure that our lines of communication are open. If you have questions about our plan, please reach out and connect over the phone (604.792.1416) or contact me by email: (iain_gardner@sd33.bc.ca).



Iain Gardner, Principal

Related Links:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>
- http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_public_guidance/Guidance-k-12-schools.pdf
- <https://immunizebc.ca/covid-19>