

August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Parents:

Yesterday the Government of Saskatchewan held another press conference related to school reopening, so we wanted to connect with you today. At the press conference, the Chief Medical Health Officer recommended that school divisions consider broader masking for staff and students as school restarts. Although this decision was left to individual school divisions, Dr. Shahab confirmed advice from other reliable sources related to mask use.

It is unlikely that we will need widespread mask use in all of our schools for the entire year. Even so, Prairie South has decided to implement Dr. Shahab’s recommendation division-wide for one month in September as staff and students become familiar with procedures related to hygiene and limited physical contact in schools. At the end of September we will reevaluate mask protocols on a school by school basis.

Parents of all Grades 4-12 students will need to ensure that their child has a reusable mask on the first day of school. Parents of Grades PreK to 3 students may choose to provide masks for their children, and school staff will support this choice when it is practical to do so. Students with a medical condition that makes mask use unsafe or inappropriate will be exempt. Please contact your school principal if this is the case for your child.

Please note that students/parents/staff who prefer not to wear a mask will not be exempt. The mask protocol is a safety measure for all students and staff, so only medical exemptions will be available.

We expect that there will be additional changes as the medical situation in Saskatchewan evolves; we are committed to providing timely communication as these occur. Parents who wish to review the information provided by the Saskatchewan Health Authority regarding current cases in Prairie South may do so at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/cases-and-risk-of-covid-19-in-saskatchewan>. The SHA’s South Central region is a very close match to Prairie South’s boundary.

Thank you for your continued patience as we prepare to restart school in September. See you soon,



Anthony D. (Tony) Baldwin  
Director of Education



Robert Bachmann  
Chair, Board of Education

Protocol

Group	Mask Protocol
Grades PreK to 3 Students	Masks are not required. Parents may choose to provide masks for their children and school staff will support their use as practical during school hours.
Grades 4-12 Students	Masks are required during indoor transitions (hallways, bathroom visits, etc.) and on the school bus. Masks are required in classrooms where 15 or more staff and students are present.
Grades PreK to 3 Classroom Staff	Masks are not required in the classroom. Staff may choose to wear a mask. Masks are required during indoor transitions (hallways, bathroom visits, etc.)
Grades 4-12 Classroom Staff	Masks are required during indoor transitions (hallways, bathroom visits, etc.). Masks are required in classrooms where 15 or more staff and students are present.
Non-classroom staff and visitors to the school	Masks are required when students are present in common areas and during indoor transitions. Masks are required in classrooms when visiting multiple student cohorts. Staff may choose to mask at other times.

Exemptions

1. In circumstances where students of any age require physical support, PPE (including masks) may be used at the discretion of the student support team planning for that student.
2. Students and staff with a medical condition that makes mask use inappropriate or unsafe are exempt from this protocol.