

August 24th, 2020

Dear Parents:

As you know, the first day of school throughout the province is September 8th, 2020. With the start of school approaching, we wanted to provide some information that will make the transition back to school easier for Prairie South students and families. Please review the information below and discuss it with your child(ren).

1. **Supplies:** Please ensure your child has a filled water bottle, a small personal bottle of hand sanitizer, a reusable mask (grades 4-12 required; grades PreK-3 optional) and their lunch if they will be staying at school over the noon hour. Other supplies will be provided by the school.
2. **Transportation:** Students from grades 4-12 require masks when they ride the bus. The bus will have a seating plan so that students know which seats are theirs. The bus will be cleaned after every run, so your child(ren) will always be getting on a freshly cleaned bus. Please do not use the bus unless you are unable to drive your child(ren) to school.
3. **Arrival At and Departure From School:** Each school will have procedures in place for what happens as students arrive and leave. In the next couple of weeks, a staff member at your school will call you to talk about how this will work.
4. **Groups of Students Called Cohorts:** Elementary students will be staying in their classroom group as much as possible. High school students in larger high schools will have one cohort in the morning and another in the afternoon. When cohorts are mixing in the hallways, grades 4-12 students will require masks.
5. **Lunchtime:** If your student can come home for lunch, please make these arrangements. If they can't, they will eat with their cohort at school. If students are eating at school, they require their own cutlery – disposable or taken home daily. Please talk with your child(ren) about the importance of physical distancing at noon hour. Let's keep everyone safe out there!
6. **Remote Learning:** Our teachers will have a daily classroom Zoom or Google Meet feed that allows students to join their classmates remotely if they are not able to be at school. While this won't be quite as effective as face-to-face instruction, it will mean that students can learn with their peers and a familiar teacher even when they aren't at school. Strategies will be in place to ensure student privacy.
7. **Cleaning:** We will be doing additional cleaning in every school to ensure that requirements of the Saskatchewan Health Authority are met. In addition to this, teachers will be incorporating procedures in every classroom to ensure that student spaces are clean after and during use. Your child(ren) can expect to be wiping their personal workspace regularly.
8. **Hygiene:** Our Medical Health Officers have reinforced good hand hygiene as the most important means of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Each classroom will have a large supply of hygiene products available for students and staff and every teacher will incorporate regular hand hygiene into their classroom routines.

9. **Illness:** Students or staff who have any of the following symptoms may not come to school. If they have these symptoms at school, they will be isolated from others and parents/caregivers will need to pick them up immediately. **If your child has any of these symptoms because of something different, (allergies, hay fever, etc.) please call Healthline at 811 today to request a COVID-19 test.** Once your child has a negative test, please contact the school to let them know that your child has had a negative test and why they were tested (what symptoms they were displaying)– this will prevent your child from being sent home on the first day of school for the same symptoms.

Fever	Cough	Loss of Appetite	Sore Throat	Chills
Muscle and/or joint aches		Runny Nose	Nasal Congestion	Dizziness
Fatigue	Headache	Nausea/vomiting	Diarrhea	Difficulty Breathing
Shortness of Breath		Loss of sense of taste or smell		Conjunctivitis

10. **Student Emotional Support:** As part of the curriculum in every Prairie South classroom, teachers will be leading conversations designed to assist children with the transition back to school. These conversations are designed to identify children who require additional support, and school staff will assist parents to access this support when needed. If you notice your child struggling with the transition, let us know – we can help!

11. **Contact Tracing:** When students are in the classroom, they will be assigned seats so that we can track which students are in close contact with others. Non-essential visitors will not be allowed in the school, and we will maintain a log of any essential visitors in each building. In the event that we need it, we will be able to provide immediate information to the Saskatchewan Health Authority for the purposes of contact tracing.

SIMPLE and SAFE

All of our preparations at Prairie South are intended to provide a simple and safe start-up in September. Later this fall, once we have mastered the basics, we will be revisiting our mask protocol, examining extra-curricular opportunities, and thinking about how we can get back to all of the other things that make our schools fun and engaging places to learn and work. Your feedback will be critical to this planning, so be sure to let us know what you're thinking. While there is some feedback that we're not ready to implement yet, we read every word and value your perspectives! We're in this together, we're #learningtogether and together we're going to be okay!

Please visit <https://youtu.be/uSsauXdyWTY> to view a 5 minute clip of Tony talking about return to school. This is a great video to watch with your children as you prepare them to return to school on September 8th. We are excited about having school up and running again, and we can't wait to see your kids! School staff will be back in schools tomorrow and will be in contact with you in the next few days. Be sure to let them know how we can make the transition easier for your child(ren) and your family.

See you soon,



Anthony D. (Tony) Baldwin
Director of Education



Robert Bachmann
Chair, Board of Education