



April 11, 2021

Dear Parents:

After responding this week to feedback from parents and staff, we met again today with two Medical Health Officers to ensure we are operating on the **most current risk assessment for the Moose Jaw community**. After that discussion we are writing to confirm our previous decision that Moose Jaw Holy Trinity and Prairie South schools will return to face-to-face learning on Monday, April 12th.

Student and staff safety remains our priority. Our Public Health partners shared again that the risk of transmission in the school setting in Moose Jaw is low with safety measures in place. School staff are committed to continued vigilance in enacting these measures and students have demonstrated excellent compliance as they do their part connected to school safety processes.

However, our medical advisors wish to stress that school-based measures cannot compensate for what happens in the community. As such, they have asked us to reinforce through this communication the importance of a shared imperative that extends to community and household activity as critical in the battle against the virus. Do not gather with people from outside your bubble. Do not send your child to school if they have any symptoms whatsoever or if they are deemed close contacts by Public Health. Follow all public health guidelines. We make this request together with our staff to ensure our collective safety.

Key points provided today:

- We continue to support maintaining schools open for the duration of this academic year, and in the future, as long as we can control community rates of COVID-19.
- Schools play a crucial role in the overall well-being of our children and we have and will continue to provide support to community for schools to stay open. Schools have implemented strict protocols with many protective layers to prevent transmission.
- However, to prevent Covid-19 from spreading in schools, it's vital to stop the transmission of the virus in the community. Schools operate within communities and the safest way to prevent outbreaks is to make sure the virus never gets into schools in the first place.
- There's evidence from Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) modelling reports on how transmission is impacted by number of contacts and how low transmission needs to be in order to control VOCs. We need to keep community transmission low enough to be able to identify and control all transmission chains.

Joint meetings of the two school divisions and Public Health will be ongoing. As communicated in our earlier messages, we will not hesitate to transition to Level 4 should the risk assessment change and require such a move. We look forward to welcoming your children back to school tomorrow. Thank you.

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