

Hello families,

Happy New Year! On Mon., Jan 10 is when schools re-open from the Winter Break Holiday and we look forward to seeing you all then. We hope you have been well and enjoyed a fun-filled and safe holiday.

Things to know coming back to school:

- Student Daily health checks at home before coming to school remain essential – healthy students (and staff) and welcome
- Masks remain required – re-usable masks are most comfortable for students, we have some disposable masks at each office if your child does not have a re-usable mask or forgot the re-usable mask
- Physical distancing will be required to give people space so each feels comfortable – desks will be re-arranged to have all students facing in the same direction to minimize cross contamination
- Handwashing remains essential (or hand sanitizing, especially before / after eating, and coughing / sneezing)
- Attendance – as you have likely heard from the PHO (provincial health officer) school attendance will be monitored by regional health boards to track how much it deviates from what is “normal” at each particular time of the year. As always, it will be important that parents report in absences via the school messenger app or by calling into our school office - AND be clear about reason for absence (appointment, sick, taking a home day...) so we can be effectively tracked.

H&S Protocol review:

- During the staff's first week back last week, health & safety protocols were reviewed to ensure all are up to speed with what is required each day
- Guests are restricted again – must be expected, must sign in / out – we are reducing optional adult population in the schools
- Sports games – will proceed at this time, BUT without an audience (of parents / guests) – great for the students to play but we understand it is unfortunate for the parents who either drove or just wish to support their student – thank you for your support from afar.

Preparing for “what if”:

- Staff have been asked to prepare our (CCS) strategies for continuity of learning if there are temporary closures required for learning to continue (due to staffing shortages, due to health compromise for a particular group or a short term, temporary closure of the entire system)
- Intervention will vary depending on how affected your child's class is – from online learning to in class learning. We are not offering choice / options at this time – our goal is to keep schools open and functioning as long as safely possible as it is best for all
- Questions that may be asked by your teacher are about computer access (does your family have it? – not one device per child, but do you have home based computer access that could be used to communicate with the class / teacher via Microsoft Teams? Does your computer have a microphone / camera (optimal but not essential)? If not please let your teacher or the office know so we can put you on the lending list if need be.

- Each teacher will prepare different learning for home / online options and has been asked to be compassionate to siblings' demand on home technology and parents time. We also heard very clearly last time that parents are not teachers, and we will do our best to consider work intensity
- Our "continuity of learning" plan and communicable disease mitigation plan will be posted to the website by the end of this coming week for your reference – is informative about what will lead us to different closures. Please hear us say that this is the "worst case scenario" as we are hoping for schools to stay open to serve students as usual.

Again, happy new year, and we are looking forward to seeing you all soon – Healthy thoughts!!