



## School District No.59 (Peace River South)

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August 26, 2020

Dear Parents/Caregivers

School District 59 (PRS) is excited to be welcoming students back to Stage 2. Since March families have been dealing with constant change to the education model. Once again, we are asking that you work with us in this new change. Teachers and principals are working together to develop plans for their school that meet the needs of all learners. Quality education and safety are our top priorities. Our goal is to maximize face to face instruction because that is the best model for students to thrive.

The School District 59 Restart Plan for K-12 Education in Stage 2 has been approved by the Ministry of Education. Here is an overview of the most important things for you to know. More detail is provided in the links at the end of this document. Next week, schools will publish individualized school plans on their website. The last week has been focused on creating learning groups/cohorts, decreasing the amount of people that students and teachers come in contact with, in a day, and decreasing the amount of transitions students and teachers have in the school.

### **LARGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Elementary schools have been organized into cohorts/learning groups with a maximum of 60 individuals (including staff) in the cohort. Learning groups will be assigned entry and exit doors, as well as, specific recess times, lunch breaks, and outdoor play area locations.

This structure will help reduce the number of students in the hallways and on outside play areas. Students will continue to receive support from staff who are not in their cohort by staff physically distancing and use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) where appropriate. Library, music, and physical education will be arranged when possible within learning groups/cohorts. Some teachers may work between cohorts and they will distance and/or use Personal Protection Equipment.

Students will be oriented on all of the health and safety protocols including washroom use, hand hygiene, sneeze/cough protocols and staying home when sick.

## **SMALLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Some of our schools have under 60 students in the whole school. They will be one cohort. They may implement the use of separate entrances and will follow all of our health and safety protocols.

## **HIGH SCHOOLS**

The high schools in our district are quite different in number of students which affects their planning. Here is a brief description of what each high school is planning, and they will provide more specific details next week. Each school has worked to create learning groups/cohorts of a maximum of 120. This does not mean they would ever be together in one big group of 120. It means in their rotation of classes they would only ever come into contact with 3 other classes. In this planning some timetables had to change to decrease the amount of transitions in a day, and to limit the number of students and teachers in a cohort. Please be patient with the schools who have had to change their timetables as they are working on creating new schedules for all of the students. Please watch their websites as they will provide times for when schedules are ready.

### **Tumbler Ridge Secondary – grades 7 to 12**

The school will stay in a semester timetable model. They have created learning groups/cohorts that will be in specific locations in the school. The grade 7/8 cohort will consist of 70 students and 4 teachers. The grade 9 to 12 cohort will have 6 teachers and 111 students.

Students will use assigned entrances/exits and have staggered breaks and lunch.

### **Chetwynd Secondary – grades 8 to 12**

The school will stay in a semester timetable model. They have created learning group/cohorts. Each learning group will be located in a different area/zone of the school and stay in that area. Cohorts will use different entrances and have breaks and lunch at different times.

### **Dawson Creek Secondary - South Peace Campus – grades 10 to 12**

This school will adapt to a quarterly model, also known as a Copernican. Students will take two classes at a time for an 8 week period. Classes will be two and a half hours long. In this model students are in cohorts of less than 120. Cohorts will be assigned entrances and staggered breaks and lunches. The administration will be putting out information next week around timetabling and scheduling.

## **Dawson Creek Secondary - Central Campus – grades 8 to 9**

This school will adapt to a semester model. This is to minimize the amount of student transitions and the number of teachers in the cohort model. Students will take four classes a semester in a learning group/cohort. There will be assigned entrances, staggered breaks and lunches. As well, to minimize exposure to other cohorts, the number of electives available will be decreased. The administration will be putting out information next week around timetabling and scheduling.

### **BUSSING**

Any new registrations for bussing must be received by September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. We ask you to do this so that we can create seating plans and make sure there is enough room on the bus to ensure safety and distancing. Students will be seated one to a seat, unless they are from the same family or are in the same learning group/cohort at school. High school students will need to wear a mask when on the bus. A reusable mask will be supplied to them on the first day the bus picks them up. They can wear their own mask if they like. If a high school student has a medical reason why they cannot wear a mask, please contact the bus garage so arrangements can be made ahead of time.

### **ORIENTATION WEEK AND KINDERGARTEN**

September 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> will be orientation days for staff. Students (with the exception of Kindergarten) will return to school on the 10<sup>th</sup>. This will be our traditional shortened day where we start two hours later and end one hour earlier. The 11<sup>th</sup> will be the first full day for students.

Kindergarten will be different this year. They will not start on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Kindergarten teachers will connect with parents to let them know schedules. Teachers will create a schedule where smaller groups of Kindergarten students attend on Friday, Monday and Tuesday. Then a full class on Wednesday. This will allow students to meet their teacher, learn new routines, and practice great hand hygiene in smaller groups. This year we need to limit the time parents and visitors spend in classrooms and hallways ensuring the health and safety of adults and children working and learning in the school.

For all parents, this is also a reminder that schools are still not open to the public. Please call the school to set up appointments if you need to meet with the principal or a teacher.

## STUDENTS WITH IMMUNE SUPPRESSION

According to the Provincial Health Office and the Centre for Disease Control, most children who are immunocompromised can return to in-class instruction where safety measures are in place. Protective self-isolation is only recommended for children who are severely immunocompromised, as determined on a case by case basis.

Parents/caregivers seeking an alternative to in-class instruction, and who do not want to register their child in a distance learning program or homeschooling, will be required to obtain a doctor's note indicating the need for accommodations due to health-related risks. Schools district are expected to work with these families to ensure continuity of learning and supports. Accommodations could include some elements of remote learning, specific course offerings, and/or modified days. Specifics for each child need to be developed in collaboration with the families and school staff.

**For students with immune suppression, if attending in-class instruction is right for their child:** the school district will work with parents or caregivers to develop options to continue their child's education at school.

**For students with immune suppression, if attending in-class instruction is not right for their child:** schools and the school district will work with families to develop options to continue their child's education within the district.

### Criteria for Students with Immune Suppression:

Criteria for Children with Immune Suppression based on information from the BC Children's Hospital available from: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/priority-populations/children-with-immune-suppression>

1. They have a medical condition that affects their immune system.
2. They have side effects from medications that cause a very low white blood cell count.
3. They are taking medication that suppresses their immune system. Children may be taking these medicines as treatment for:
  - autoimmune or rheumatologic disease
  - inflammatory bowel disease
  - immune-mediated kidney or liver disease
  - organ transplant
  - bone marrow or stem cell transplant
4. They are having chemotherapy, or they had chemotherapy recently.

### Process for Parents to Request Accommodations:

- Parent/guardian visit their medical health practitioner to obtain a doctor's note using attached form (to be provided by the school district).

- Contact the school principal/vice principal to discuss accommodation options and develop a collaborative plan.

### **Educational Programming:**

- The student is assigned to a learning group/classroom. A case manager will be assigned by the school principal/vice principal, and in consultation with the learning group/classroom teacher, will develop and implement the accommodations.
- For some students programming will be focused on the goals in their IEP. If appropriate, programming could include virtual Educational Assistant and/or Teacher support, virtual specialized therapy support (e.g. Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech and Language Pathology).
- District support will be available to the school including programming design support and learning resources.
- Options for returning to in-class instruction will be revisited at the end of each term.

### **Distributed Learning**

At this time our district's Distributed Learning program is prepared to service students in grade 8 to 12. Based on need we may be looking to open this up for Kindergarten to grade 7, if there is a significant number of parents interested in this model.

This would not be with classroom teachers, but your connection would be to a Distributed Learning teacher. If you are interested in this, please contact your school and you will be guided through the process.

### **Health and Safety Protocols**

The health and safety protocols are posted on the district website. These protocols will be updated throughout the year.

These documents include the symptom check list that parents/caregivers are asked to perform each day before they send their child to school.

The process if a child becomes ill at school is also included. Students will be brought to the office, where they will be given a disposable mask while the parent/caregiver is called to come and pick them up from school. Parents and caregivers can then follow the directions listed in the protocols.

Before the school year begins, each school will publish on their website procedures and routines that will be followed in each school. These will align with the district's health and safety protocols.

Once again, welcome back and we look forward to seeing you and making this a successful school year for your child. If you have questions, please contact your school or the board office at 250-782-8571.

Take care,

Christy Fennell  
SD59 Superintendent of Schools