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Parents, Families and Guardians,

On July 29, 2020 the Government of British Columbia announced that students would return to in-person classes in September, at near-normal operations, with health measures in place.

This school year will be unlike any before. However, we remain unwavering in our focus on high-quality teaching and learning in environments that keep our students, staff and families safe.

In order to maximize safety, we have made a number of changes to school routines and practices that we will all need to adjust to. We have updated the District Health and Safety Plan, which will be posted on August 26, 2020, with the latest information from the Ministry of Education and Provincial Health Office. Our district plan will be our foundation for all School Reopening Plans and will continue to evolve as new information is made available. In an effort to keep you informed with all up to date information, you will be notified throughout the year of any changes that are made. The first day of school will be an opportunity to review the new processes and procedures with students. We look forward to connecting with students On September 10-11 to welcome them back and help them adjust to the new procedures.

Safety first

The changes we are making are based on provincial requirements and direction to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These changes include:

- requiring staff and students to conduct daily health checks prior to coming to school
- strict stay-at-home protocols for those who are feeling unwell
- hand hygiene requirements for students and staff
- enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in schools and on buses
- encouraging physical distancing and using masks when distancing is not possible
- creating cohorts of students
- non-medical masks will be required for students from Grade 4–12 while riding the bus
- non-medical masks will be required for secondary students in high traffic area such as hallways and common areas, or anytime outside of their learning group when social distancing cannot be maintained

Physical distancing in many of our classrooms will be challenging. Given this, masks are available as an additional means of protection for staff and students.

Shared responsibility

As our Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Bonnie Henry, has said, “Safety is our collective responsibility. Together, we must all take measures to protect one another—we must maintain high levels of hygiene and we must all follow the provincial health guidance to the best of our ability.”

We take this responsibility seriously. There is nothing more important to us than the safety and well-being of our students and staffs.

Schools will be communicating with their families in the coming weeks and re-opening plans will be posted on school websites on August 26, 2020.

On behalf of the SD6 Board of Education and myself we look forward to seeing you all in September.

Karen Shipka
Superintendent of Schools