

June 2020

To: Families of BRSD
From: Rita Marler, Superintendent of Schools
Re: What's school going to be like in the fall?

Hello everyone!

As we wrap up this school year, I know I am not the only one who has questions about what school is going to be like in the fall.

My sincere thanks to the nearly 2300 parents and over 1200 students who provided feedback to us through the recent "School Re-entry Survey".

We hear you telling us that, as parents, you have concerns about your children being on-track with their learning and you also have concerns about their social and emotional wellbeing if they remain apart from their activities, routines and school friends.

Students, too, are expressing concern about the impact of being isolated from their friends and their regular school activities.

And, of course, everyone also believes it is very important that school be a safe and healthy place to be.

All of these factors are playing a part in our planning for a return to school next fall.

We've been told that, by the beginning of August, Alberta Education will make a decision about the format school will take in September. That gives us a full month prior to school start-up to get things in place. Please be assured that we've done a great deal of planning already, in order to be ready for whatever might come. We do believe that, unless something changes significantly, all Alberta students will be back in school buildings.

The details of exactly how classes will be organized are not yet known. But whatever programs and services are in place, there are some things we do already know for sure. Even if things are mostly 'back to normal' they won't be the same as they were before. We're putting extra cleaning and sanitizing measures in place at our schools, making hand sanitizer available for both students and staff, maintaining distancing as much as we can and also asking everyone to be more careful about attending school when they don't feel well. You'll find a Daily Self-Assessment form in your back-to-school information that is going to be a requirement for each student to do before coming to school every day. If you don't see it in what comes home this week, you will be able to find the form on our BRSD website before school starts. We'll be sharing information starting in early August.

Once again, I want to thank families for their patience and flexibility as we have worked to meet the needs of students throughout this unusual spring. We have appreciated your support.

I also want to extend sincere thanks to the BRSD staff for their adaptability during the last three months. Whether it was learning to provide services for students in a whole new way, processing more than 1300 fee refund cheques on top of regular duties or being placed on a temporary lay-off, our staff have demonstrated grace and resilience and I commend them. Thank you all!

Rita Marler, Superintendent of Schools