

Dear Parents/Guardians of our K-5 Students,

We are excited to be welcoming your child back in September! We know there are many questions and we will do our best to answer them as more information becomes available.

Further details will follow in the coming weeks, however outlined below is some of what students and families should expect as we return in the fall, as well as some of the health and safety measures that will be in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The District and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) have been working closely with Public Health and WorkSafeNB to ensure we continue providing a safe environment for our students and staff. Each school is developing a site-specific Operational Plan which will include the measures they will have in place to support the unique needs of their school. You will hear more about these plans from your child's school as they are finalized in late August.

Please note: **This information is subject to change given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic.** Families will be kept up-to-date with any additional information.

What's New

- Specific health and safety protocols will be implemented in schools across the province this fall. EECD, along with Public Health are finalizing these plans and will be communicating what these practices will look like in the upcoming weeks.
- Students in grades K-2 will be grouped in classes of approximately 15 students. In grades 3 to 5, classes sizes will be reduced wherever possible. ASD-S has added 75 additional homerooms at K-5 to accommodate these smaller class sizes. Classes will serve as social "bubbles" to help reduce the potential spread of COVID-19. Students may interact with others in their class but will physically distance from those in other classes. This includes during morning drop off, afternoon pick up, lunch and recess.
- Access to schools from the public will be limited in the Fall. Each school will communicate their process for parent/guardian access to schools.
- Students are asked not to share their personal items. Sharing and borrowing of school supplies, food, etc. must be avoided. Common classroom items, such as books, games, and learning tools may be shared, as per the direction of the teacher.
- Schools will be cleaned frequently throughout the day with an increased focus on common spaces, regularly touched surfaces, and items such as gym and play equipment, musical instruments, and technology devices.

- Water fountains will be replaced in September with bottle filling stations. Please provide your child with a reusable water bottle for use at school and clean it regularly.
- Schools will not have cafeteria service the first week of school. Cafeterias will re-open through the month of September. Please plan to pack your child a lunch until you have confirmed their cafeteria service has resumed. In schools with no cafeterias, we will work to continue breakfast/lunch programs following guidelines from Public Health.

Returning to Classes

Our schools will implement staggered start dates to help familiarize students with the new safety protocols in the school. You will receive a message from your child's school regarding the return to school schedule for the week of September 8-11, 2020. You can find the [2020-21 school calendar](#) on the ASD-S website.

We appreciate that students have not been in a traditional school setting since March. Teachers are familiar with working with students at varying levels and will meet them where they are academically to ensure that each student is achieving the appropriate outcomes. As well, educators are mindful that some students have been impacted socially and emotionally over the past 5 months and will be sensitive to this.

Busing

Students who must take the bus will be required to follow physical distancing measures. Students in K-5 will be required to sit one per seat, however students from the same household will be seated together.

ASD-S has 228 buses covering 990 runs and physical distancing of students may require us to alter our schedule. We are working to minimize any disruptions, but families should anticipate changes to our bus service. We recognize the importance of getting this information to families as soon as possible and will share more information as it is finalized.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is asking families to consider providing transportation while these physical distancing measures are in place. All families should have received an email from the province detailing how to opt out of transportation services if you are able by August 7, 2020.

Please note: Families who wish to request transportation to an alternate address, such as after school care, are asked to [complete this form](#) as soon as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to review this important communication. The health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority and we are committed to providing a safe environment for your child to learn. We will continue to provide updated information throughout August. Watch for updates from our

School Messenger messaging system, our ASD-S website, Twitter and Facebook. Please ensure your contact information is kept up to date. If you would like to update your information, please email asdsinfo@nbed.nb.ca. We look forward to welcoming families back to the start of a new school year!

Zoë Watson
Superintendent