

Principal's Update Sept. 18—2020

We made it through the first week! I am proud of our students and how they are managing themselves as they navigate this 'new normal.' Our teachers are gushing about how the kids are doing in their classrooms and the flow in and out of the building is very good. When I walk by classrooms, students are engaged and everything seems kind of normal, except for all the masks 😊

Things will never be perfect and new challenges will come up every day. This makes sense since we are asking students to do school in a way that is counterintuitive for them (the urge to want to socialize is a powerful one for teenagers!). I know that many are frustrated by "all the new rules," but these are challenging times, to say the least.

Recurring message (sorry): I do not want to sound overly negative about this as it is a process! We continue to work with the students who are waiting outside to be picked up when they are done for the day and those that are staying for lunch. I realize that it looks like a mass of humanity when parents pull up, but many of the kids are wearing masks or are appropriately distanced, even though it may not always appear that way. It is the ones that are not that we need help with. Us repeatedly nagging them isn't the answer. We also need peers encouraging and reminding each other. Please continue to speak to your kids about the expectations (mask on if distancing not possible, no physical contact, etc.).

Clarifications to the following statements when asking kids to adhere to protocols:

- "It's okay we are all in the same bubble, we hang out together all the time outside of school"

A: That 'bubble' doesn't apply at school

- "It's okay, we are in the same Learning Group"

A: Once students leave their Blk 2 classroom and start interacting with people outside of their Learning Group, then masks and/or distancing are required.

The vast majority of students are doing a phenomenal job. For every one student we need to remind, there are 100 others following the protocols perfectly. We can do this!

Lunch Time:

Students are **NOT** to go into the forest or to Foxwood Park. Past experience has demonstrated that this is a safety issue as inappropriate behavior and activities occur in these locations and it is very difficult, if not impossible, for us to supervise these areas. If students continue to frequent these areas, we will contact their parents.

There are plenty of other outdoor areas where students can go on our campus.

No Activity Fees

While we will still try to do as much as we can in terms of student activities and will still incur some of the associated costs, the District feels that it would not be appropriate to charge a blanket student activity fee at this time.

*There will be other fees for specific activities or items that may come up as the year progresses (ie: workbooks, virtual field trips and presentations, potentially some athletics, yearbooks, etc.).

Student Photos:

Photos are scheduled for the mornings of Oct 8th and 9th.

Students will come down to the gym in their Learning Groups and all safety protocols followed. Our photo company, GradsBC, also has an extensive set of protocols in place.

*Students should be ready to have their picture taken on either day.

Athletics:

While there are no organized athletics at this time, there may be a time when teams can run practices following certain protocols. We will pass this info along if/when we receive the go ahead.

Pro-D Day: Friday Sept. 25th

No students in session.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding,

Have a great weekend,

Todd Clerkson

Principal

HWSS