

August 28, 2020

Dear Parents of Kilmer Elementary Students,

Our school is getting ready to welcome students back to school in a safe and controlled manner. The Ministry of Education announced that BC schools will open in Stage 2 where students are encouraged to attend daily as schools will not be able to provide the remote learning options as we did in June.

On Tuesday, September 8th and Wednesday, September 9th, staff will be reviewing and implementing safety procedures within the school. The first day of school for students is Thursday, September 10th. I am providing you with the link to the Ministry of Education Restart Plan:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-restart-plan.pdf>.

The Ministry also has a site with information for parents: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school>

We are ready to welcome your child back to school. Under the guidance of public health authorities and the Ministry of Education, we developed a plan so that students and staff can learn and work together safely. We will strive to keep learning as the focus, but school will look different as health and safety are critical factors in our planning.

Some of the actions we have taken to safely restart school this September are:

**Health and Safety**

* Daily health screening check for students by parents before arriving at school and also by staff.
* Students who are ill with cold, flu or [showing Covid-19 symptoms](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms), must stay home. If a child becomes ill during the school day, they will be isolated from their Learning Group/class and the parents will be contacted and asked to come and pick up their child as soon as possible.
* Families arriving from outside of Canada will be required to self-isolate for 14 days before coming to school.
* There will be enhanced cleaning protocols especially focused on high touch points such as doorknobs, faucets, and railings.
* Teachers will be encouraged to frequently take their classes outside.
* A staggered schedule may need to be adopted to promote physical distancing at drop off/pick up; and recess and lunch times. **KILMER ELEMENTARY DOES NOT RQUIRE STAGGERED ENTRIES**
* There will be no large gatherings such as assemblies or special events.
* Elementary students are welcome to wear a mask, but it is not mandatory at this time.
* There will be no sharing of food or drinks.
* There will be limited access to the building by parents and visitors and they must make an appointment to meet with staff. Virtual meetings will be an option for staff and parents.
* All visitors must sign in for the purpose of contact tracing.
* We ask parents to practice physical distancing by staying 2 meters away from others when on school grounds. This is for your safety and it is good modeling for our students.

Please find attached a document for your review entitled ‘**Stage 2 Health and Safety Protocols: K-12 – Parents’**.

**Learning Groups**

A [Learning Group](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school#learning-group) is defined as a group of students and staff who remain together for an extended period of time and who interact primarily with each other.

* In the Coquitlam School District, the Learning Group will include your child’s classmates and any staff assigned to work with the students in the class on a regular basis.
* Within the learning group, while there will be less opportunity to physically distance, physical contact will be discouraged.
* The learning group will stay together. Students will learn, eat and play together.
* Class size limits have not changed, therefore a kindergarten class will have no more than 22 students and the staff who work regularly with the classroom; a primary class with no more than 24; and an intermediate class with no more than 30 students in the group.
* The Ministry of Education has stated that in an elementary school, a Learning Group cannot exceed 60 people. Our Learning Group sizes are well under the provincial limits outlined in Stage 2and in most cases will be kept well below 60.
* Morning, recess, lunch and afterschool schedules and routines will be adjusted to keep Learning Groups apart as much as possible.
* If children interact with students or staff from other learning groups, they will be expected to practice physical distancing and not engage in physical contact.
* Specialist teachers who work with children from different learning groups to provide additional support such as learning assistance, English language development or counselling, will wear a mask if physical distancing is challenging.
* Parents and students will be informed about their child’s teacher and class placement before beginning full time attendance on Monday, September 14th. Learning Groups will be finalized by this date.

**Educational Programming**

* Our school will be focused on in-class instruction during Stage 2.
* Students will spend most of their educational time in their classroom and there will be reduced movement of students among learning spaces.
* Student well-being will be guiding educators in their planning to support the successful return of students to school.
* Students with disabilities or diverse abilities will continue to be supported by the goals outlined in their Individual Education Plan.
* Regular health and safety practices such as frequent hand washing and teacher supervision while students eat lunch, will take up some instructional time.
* There will be an adjusted Welcome to Kindergarten / Gradual Entry schedule sent out to you soon.
* Students will continue to receive report cards.
* Parents of children who are medically diagnosed as immunocompromised by a physician should contact me by Tuesday, September 1st. The following links are provided for your reference:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID-19-IS-Children-FAQ-BCCH.pdf>

<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19-easing-social-distrancing-IS-children.pdf>

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| **Kilmer Bell Schedule**  **KILMER ELEMENTARY DOES NOT RQUIRE STAGGERED ENTRIES**  8:45 am Instruction begins  10:35 – 10:50 am Recess  11:45 am – 12:00 pm Student eat lunch under teacher supervision  12:00 pm – 12:40 pm Students play time  12:45 pm – 2:40 pm Instructional time  All students will follow the same bell schedule. Students will join their classmates outside the school and each class will enter and exit the school from different access points. Students will wash their hands:   * immediately upon entering the school * before exiting the school * before eating * after using the washroom |

We look forward to welcoming students back to school on Thursday, September 10th. The district plan provides for elementary students to attend school on Thursday, September 10th and Friday, September 11th:

* Thursday, September 10th: Students attend school for a welcome and enrolment count. Duration: 15 minutes. **SCHEDULE TO FOLLOW**
* Friday, September 11th: Students will attend safety orientation sessions.

Duration: 60 minutes. **SCHEDULE TO FOLLOW**

During this time, we will be reconnecting with students and completing an important health and safety orientation with them.

We need to know how many students are returning to school or if you are choosing an alternative educational plan. To this end, I am forwarding a survey to you and including the link.

[September 2020 Stage 2 Return to Kilmer Elementary School Survey](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=74xl2ZICUkKZJWRC3iSkS1yeUR8KS8dKsQR0hJ_Rsr5UME01Q0ZVQkpCWVM4M0FFSjZIUktaUEFXWS4u)

***It is critical that you complete the survey to give us this information.*** If you are choosing an alternate educational program, such as distributed learning or homeschooling, we cannot guarantee that your child can return to Kilmer Elementary if you re-evaluate your plans later in the year. Please contact me if you are undecided.

If you know someone who has moved into our neighbourhood with school aged children, please encourage them to contact the school as soon as possible to arrange registration.

Please note that the Provincial Health Officer and the Ministry of Education may decide to move to different stages in response to the Covid-19 situation in British Columbia and we will inform you of next steps if this should occur.

I will be following up with more information early next week.

I look forward to working with your family this year.

Sincerely,

Laurie

Laurie Birnie, Principal