



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Sample letter to parents (To accompany the “Stage 2 Return to School Survey”)

August 28, 2020

Dear Parents,

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 that we did in June. The first day of school for students is Thursday, September 10th. You can read more here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-education-restart-plan.pdf>. On Tuesday, September 8th and Wednesday, September 9th staff will be reviewing and implementing safety procedures within the school.

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 have worked under the guidance of public health authorities and the Ministry of Education to develop a plan so that students and staff can learn and work together safely. We are ready to welcome your child back to school. We will strive to keep learning as the focus, but school *will* look different as health and safety are critical factors in our planning. Below is a brief summary of some of the actions taken to safely restart school this September.

Health and Safety

- Daily health screening check for students (by parents) and staff before arriving at school.
- Students who are ill (cold, flu or [showing 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 contacted to come and pick up as soon as possible.
- Families arriving from outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days before entering school.
- There will be enhanced cleaning protocols especially focused on high touch points (doorknobs, faucets, etc.)
- Teachers will be encouraged to take their class outside more frequently.
- A staggered schedule may need to be adopted to promote physical distancing at drop off/pick up; and recess and lunch times.
- There will be no large gatherings (assemblies, special events, open house) at this time.
- Elementary students are welcome to wear a mask, but it is not mandatory at this time.

- No sharing of food or drink.
- Parents and visitors must make an appointment to meet with staff. There will be limited access to the building by parents and visitors. All visitors must sign in for the purpose of contact tracing. Virtual meetings will be an option for staff and parents.
- We also ask parents to also practice physical distancing (staying apart 2m) when on school grounds. This is for your safety and good modeling for our students.

Learning Groups

- A [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 on a regular basis, like your child's teacher.
 - Within the learning group, while there will be less opportunities 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 along with 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 Learning Groups cannot exceed 60 people at elementary school. Therefore, our Learning Group sizes are well under the provincial limits outlined in Stage 2. In most cases our Learning Groups 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 wherever possible and not engage in physical contact. In some cases, specialist teachers who work with children from different learning groups (ie. Learning assistance or English as a Second Language) will wear a mask if physical distancing is challenging.
- Parents and students will learn who their child's teacher and Learning Groups/class is before school begins on Monday, September 14th. We expect Learning Groups to be finalized and students attending full days beginning September 14th.

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, as there will be reduced movement of students between learning spaces.
- Student well-being will be guiding educators in planning and supporting the successful return of students to school.
- Students with disabilities/diverse abilities will continue to be supported by the goals outlined in their IEP.
- Regular health and safety practices (frequent hand washing) will take up some instructional time.

- There will be an adjusted Welcome to Kindergarten schedule. Further information will be communicated 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>

The section below provides you with **specific information about Walton’s procedures**.

Please take the time to review it carefully AND review and discuss it with your child before the first week/day of school.

Thursday, September 10 and Friday, September 11

Please see the table below for times Walton students (Gr. 1 – 5) are asked to attend school on Thursday, September 10. **IMPORTANT:** These times are **NOT CONFIRMED** for our **new Kindergarten** students yet. Parents/caregivers of our Kindies will receive more specific information about their gradual entry schedule next week. However, all students (Kindergarten and Gr. 1 to 5 students), are expected to come for a portion of the day on September 10 and 11.

Since students are not in their cohorts, they *must be* physically distanced. We expect an average of about 4-5 students per group on these two days. We will communicate the locations where teachers will meet with their students in a future email.

Thursday, September 10	Groups of Students	Friday, September 11	Groups of Students
9:00-9:15	A-D	9:00-10:00	Students with last initials A-I
9:30-9:45	E-H		
10:00-10:15	I-L		
10:30-10:45	M-P		
11:00-11:15	Q-T	11:00-12:00	Students with last initials J-R
11:30-11:45	U-Z		
		1:00-2:00	Students with last initials S-Z

Staggered Start and End Times

Starting on Monday, September 14, Walton Elementary students will begin their days at 8:55 a.m. or at 9:10 a.m. Those students who start school early will end their day at 2:43 p.m. and those who start at 9:10 a.m. will end their day at 2:58 p.m.

Morning Drop-Off Procedure

As students arrive at Walton, all students must go down to the lower all-weather gravel field to line up (6ft apart) in their division. Teachers will pick up their classes from the field and lead them into the school. Every morning. Every day. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately in case of inclement weather.

If your child arrives late to school, we expect him/her to go to a designated spot (based on his/her classroom) and wait until he/she is invited into their classroom.

If parents are walking their children to the lower field, we are asking you to remain with your child (probably with your youngest one if you have more than one child) and leave the field once their teacher has picked up their class.

Afternoon Pick-Up Procedure

Teachers will take their classes down to the gravel field at 2:43 p.m. and 2:58 p.m. We expect that students will be picked up by their parents or will leave the premises immediately after being dismissed. Please discuss with your child(ren) that they are to meet you and leave with you right away.

Please be reminded that the pick-up and drop-off area in our parking lot is reserved for daycare operators and those with special, individual parking permits only.

When and How Will We Find Out Our Child's Assigned Division for the Year?

You will receive an email from us prior to Monday, September 14. The email will include your child's teacher and division number. Your child will be asked to line up accordingly on the field on Monday morning. There will be traffic cones with division numbers showing you where to line up.

Recess and Lunch Times

Recess and Lunch times have been staggered into three different groups. Please see the attachments (COVID Groups and Break Times and COVID Daily Visual Schedule) for detailed times. One attachment shows that no more than 8 classes will be outside on the playground areas at any point in time. Each group of 8 classes will be divided into 4 groups of 2 classes each. Each group of 2 classes will be assigned one playground area during recess and lunch. The reason for structuring recess and lunch times like this is to reduce the number of students interacting with each other (rather than having 540 students on the playground, we will have roughly 180 students outside, assigned to four different areas – on a rotating basis). Recess supervision will be provided by staff as well as Ms. Kemp and myself.

The visual schedule shows you when your child will be in class, will be eating and will be outside (once you know who your child's teacher is). Supervision will be provided by our noon hour supervisors, Ms. Kemp and myself.

What If My Child Appears to Be Sick or Is Sick?

Keep your child at home. Your child may not come to school if he/she shows any cold/flu/COVID-19 like symptoms. If your child does come to school, we are required to isolate him/her immediately and ask you to come to school to pick your child. There are no exceptions to this. Teachers will be reminded to be vigilant and to look for any symptoms.

Your child may return to school once he/she has no more symptoms or has been cleared by a health care provider. Please provide us with a statement from your health care provider that your child has been cleared to return to school.

We do understand that some students have allergies. Unless you have already given us this information, please provide us with a doctor's note that your child has allergies.

What can parents and caregivers do?

As mentioned previously, please discuss these things with your child(ren) – on several occasions if possible. The fact is, our staff and students are amazing and that teaching and learning will continue, and even be fun at times 😊, but school will look and feel different. Prepare your children for frequent hand washing – about 10 times per school day or more. Even though 'sharing' is a kind thing to do, remind your children that school supplies (pencils, erasers, etc.), food, water bottles are NOT to be shared.

Discuss with your children our expectations to remain in designated playground areas during recess and lunch breaks. There will be rotations, giving kids a chance to play in their favourite playground area throughout the week – but not necessarily on the day they want to play 'there'.

Discuss with your children that physical contact (such as close, personal greetings and games such as tag) with other children and staff is not permitted.

We look forward to welcoming students back to school on Thursday, September 10th. Following is the district plan for elementary students on Thursday, September 10th and Friday, September 11th: Again,

- Thursday, September 10th: Students attend school for a welcome and enrolment count. Duration: 10-15 minutes.
- Friday, September 11th: Students will attend safety orientation sessions. Duration: 60-75 minutes. Schedule to follow.
- Timelines will be communicated separately based on the gradual entry plan for Kindergarten students

I will be sending out further information regarding the times that students will attend on Thursday, September 10th and Friday, September 11th. We will be reconnecting with children and completing an important health and safety orientation with them.

We need to know how many students are returning to school or what your plans are if you are choosing an alternative educational plan. There is important information in the survey. ***It is critical that you complete the survey to provide 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 our school if you re-evaluate your plans later in the year. Please contact me if you are undecided.

I have included the link for the survey below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=74xl2ZICUKKZJWRC3iSkSyspVjfQfTBLmTOQeNsZJGIUMjNUTFdJVFNXVvhWRFVVRzhURURURkhSTy4u>

If you know someone who has school aged children and has moved into our neighbourhood, please encourage them to contact (phone or email) 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 Covid-19 situation in British Columbia and we will inform you should this occur, advising next steps.

Please find attached a document for your review titled 'Stage 2 Health and Safety Protocols: K-12 – Parents'.

I will be following up with more information next week.

I look forward to working with your family this year.

Sincerely,

Marco Jankowiak

Principal, Walton Elementary