

Como Lake Welcome Back Document September 10, 2020



Greetings parents and guardians,

Just a friendly message to say Welcome Back!

Today, our staff was able to welcome your child back to Como Lake and do a quick touch-base. Tomorrow, we will bring them into the building and make sure everyone is aware of the safety protocols we will be following and get a chance for staff to connect with a small group of students (about 1/2 the regular size of a class). The sticker with your child's name attached to this package indicates which entry door they are to go tomorrow, Friday, September 11 (Yellow, Green, or Blue). Students saw where the door was on their Welcome Back Parade. If for some reason, they are unsure, they can go to the front entrance and we will point them in the right direction.

- Grade 6 9:45 – 11:00
- Grade 7 11:30 – 12:30
- Grade 8 1:00 – 2:00

On Friday, students will be given their class placements and an email will be sent to parents. On Monday, students will report to their new entrance doors and will head to their classes. Then our 2020/2021 year will really be underway.

It is going to feel different, at least to start. But working with the staff these last two days, I think we will find some pretty dynamic ways to ensure every child feels connected to their class, feels safe, and feels like they belong. Our first priority is safety. It will guide all we do and as protocols get tweaked from the ministry, we will adapt. To start the year, we will keep learning groups together for the entire day. They will interact with a limited number of adults, they will arrive and be dismissed together and they will have their lunch break together. They will also wash their hands a lot – and sanitize them too. Students will wear masks in the hallways and any time there is a chance that interactions with someone from a different learning group might happen and social distance can't occur. Guests beyond district staff and our students will need to make appointments to enter the building and they too will follow our safety protocols.

I know there are many of us feeling a little unsure about what this year will look like. The team here at Como is committed to working both with you and for you to make this a safe and successful year.

In Regards to class placement:

- A great deal of work goes into building our classes. We gather information from parents, students and past teachers beginning that process in April and finishing it off just before school starts. We try to build classroom settings that will provide the opportunity for all to thrive. In a typical year, it is very hard to make changes to class organizations once the classes are rolled out. Think of a pebble hitting a pool of water – the ripple effect can be huge.

This is not a typical year. The ministry has asked us to create learning groups and once established, to keep them the same. **Therefore, it will be next to impossible to make changes. Safety has to be our priority.**

I love this community. I am proud to be one small part of it. I look forward to working with you all.

Sincerely,

Darren Stewart

IN THE KNOW AT COMO

Welcome to our new families and welcome back to our return families!

A few helpful hints and information for parents/guardians:

1. Neither hot water nor microwaves are available currently. Students should bring a lunch that is ready to eat. If needed, also bring eating utensils.
2. Everything a student needs for the day should arrive with them in their backpack. At this time lockers are not being assigned.
3. All items brought to school should have students name or initials marked on them.
4. In your KEV account (Cash On Line) there are two required forms that need to be completed as soon as possible for all students including those on a gradual return plan.

1. District School Policy
2. District Health Check

*If you have not created a KEV account please check your emails from Karen West for the How To Instructions.

5. If your child is not attending school it is very important we get that information by filling out the online absence form that is available on our Como Lake Middle School public website. This form can also be submitted in advance if you know your child will be away for vacation or an appointment. If for some reason you are unable to complete the online form please call us before school start. For every absent student we must make contact with their parent/guardian to establish where they are. It saves us a lot of phoning if you complete the on line form or let us know.
6. There is a student phone available in the office. Students can access this phone before school, break time and after school for necessary phones calls. Cell phones are not permitted to be used during school hours. Reminder* no pictures or videos are to be taken inside the school.
7. If parents/guardians need to come into the school please call ahead to set up an appointment. Upon arrival please come directly to the office. Masks are required to enter the school.
8. Reminder* you are also responsible to do a **daily physical health check** for your child before you send them to school. They must stay home if they show any signs of illness.

And from the office staff: We are really looking forward to re-connecting with our return families and welcoming our new families. Any questions??? Just give us a call.

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Questions and answers 1 of 2:

1. What happens for the families choosing to gradually transition from home to school?
 - a. Contact will be made by the teacher sometime next week
***This is a work in progress and might look differently for each teacher and for each student.
As a staff, we are currently exploring ways as to how we can build connections for and amongst all our learners.
 - i. The district will create some work packages for students to work through on their own. The focus would be on Literacy, Numeracy and SEL assignments and would not necessarily be related to the classroom lessons.
 - ii. The teachers will provide some connections to the class for the student and provide information about the assignments being covered in class.
 - iii. Content for the student would most likely be a combination of assignments from the district and from the teacher.
 - iv. Teachers would still be responsible for the connection to the student and the assessment.
 - v. The parents will work with the teacher in completing a Home to School Transition plan. This will look different for every family.
2. How does the Learning Group work?
 - a. Students will be assigned to a learning group (essentially their class). That learning group will have one core teacher attached to it. It may have additional adults; it may not.
 - b. While working together in the classroom, the members of the learning group (including the adults) do not have to wear masks
 - c. Any adult working with the students who is not part of the learning group will need to wear a mask and work to be socially distant.
 - d. The provincial number for a learning group at middle is 60. As a district, we will be keeping our learning groups as being defined by those students in the class. The rationale: if a class has 27 students, one core teacher, one student service teacher, and one EA who are part of that LG, if classes (which are their own learning group) were allowed to interact with another learning group, the two would now be one learning group and there is a good chance the entire group would exceed 60. We can't exceed 60.
 - e. For now, Learning Groups will stay together for the entire day and only work in their classroom or outside / gym space. This includes lunch breaks.
3. What happens if there is someone who has a positive COVID-19 result? Will the person and their families have to quarantine themselves?
 - a. All concerns regarding COVID-19 would be sent to the Provincial Health Officer. The Provincial Health Officer will determine the appropriate course of action and direct people as such.
4. Will the school population be informed of a positive COVID-19 case from the school? Will everyone associated with that person have to quarantine? Will the families?
 - a. All concerns regarding COVID-19 would be addressed by the Provincial Health Officer. The PHO would direct admin as to what response is needed (if any) from the school.
5. Are people and their families quarantining after travel?

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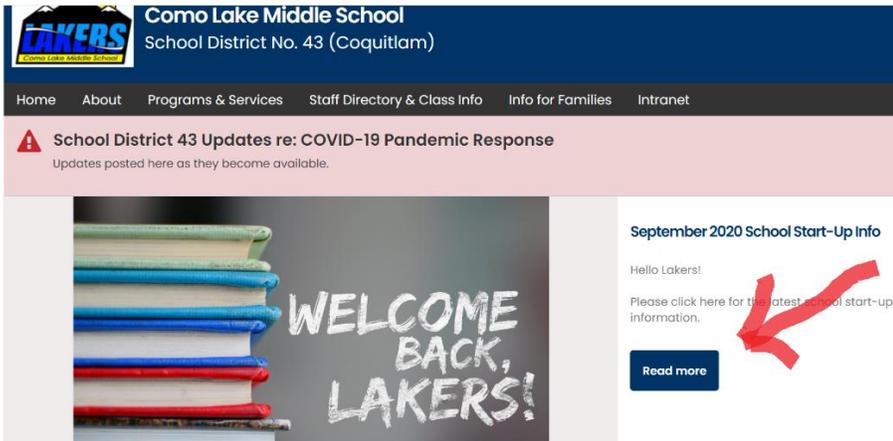
Questions and Answers 2 of 2:

- a. It is expected that families are following the guidelines as outlined by the province (and by the Provincial Health Officer where directed)
6. Will there be zoom meetings in lieu of meet the staff night?
 - a. Most likely, yes. Once we get the school up and running, we will begin to figure out a plan.
7. Will there be zoom meetings in lieu of student progress meetings?
 - a. We are not sure right now. Exactly how communication occurs still needs to be determined.
8. Will band start up soon?
 - a. We are hoping for an early October start. More details to come.
9. What should a parent do if they are not sending their child to school (ill, appointment, other)?
 - a. Use the on-line absence option to let the office know.
10. What will mask wearing look like?
 - a. Anyone walking in the hallway should be wearing a mask.
 - b. Any time people might cross paths and in a way which is not 2 meters apart, masks will be worn.
 - c. If working within one's learning group, masks will not need to be worn. If someone chooses to wear a mask, that is fine.
11. What is the school's plan to reduce the number of interactions?
 - a. Staggered start and dismissal times will be used
 - i. Gr 6/7 classes will attend from 8:40 – 2:40
 - ii. Gr 7/8 classes will attend from 8:55 – 2:55
 - b. Students will remain mostly in their learning group all day.
 - c. Students will have a designated area for the learning group during lunch.
 - d. Only one student will be allowed out of the classroom at a time.
 - e. Only one student will use a washroom at a time. A cone blocking the entrance will be moved in front of the door as a student enters and pushed aside (with their foot) when they leave.
12. What is the best way for me to help the school?
 - a. Complete a daily health assessment of your child every day before sending them to school
 - b. Keep your child home if they are symptomatic
 - c. **Please Read your emails**
 - i. This is our main form of communication from the office
 - d. Complete the KEV forms
13. Will there still be direct service for ELL learners?
 - a. Yes. If students represent different learning groups and would be working together, masks and social distancing would occur.
14. Can I send baked goods to the principal?
 - a. Sigh. Sadly, we will not be sharing food this year. Once this restriction is lifted, the principal would be more than happy to accept any and all baked offerings.

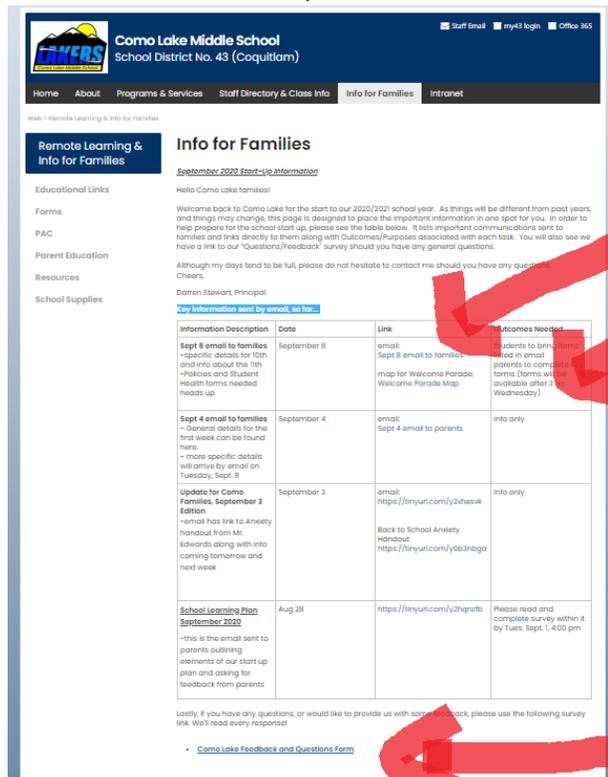
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Feel like you are missing information?

1. Go to our website



2. Scroll down and you will have access to all the email communications sent home. The most recent will be on top of the table.



Past emails and attachments - most recent on top

What parents need to do

Have Questions / Feedback?