

September 1, 2021

Dear HWSS Parents,

I apologize for this lengthy message, but please read through it 😊

Our school is getting ready to welcome students back to school in a safe, controlled manner. The circumstances remain challenging, but we are hopeful that this year will be much better than last year!

The Ministry of Education announced that BC schools will be open, and students are expected to attend full time. **The first day of school is Tuesday, September 7th.** You can read more here:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021EDUC0058-001663>

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. Below is a brief summary of some of the actions taken to safely restart school this September.

Health and Safety

- Students in Grades 4-12 must wear a mask when they are in all indoor areas of the school and on school buses.
- All staff must wear a mask when inside school.
- Although physical distancing (2m apart) is no longer mandated, students will be encouraged to minimize involuntary contact. Classrooms will be set up to maximize space usage and decrease student physical contact.
- Daily health screening check for students (completed by their parents) and staff before arriving at school. You can find the Daily Health Check on the district and provincial websites:
 - [http://www.sd43.bc.ca/covidresponse/Pages/default.aspx#/="](http://www.sd43.bc.ca/covidresponse/Pages/default.aspx#/=)
 - <https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1>
- 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, and the parents contacted to come and pick up as soon as possible.
- Hand hygiene (hand washing or sanitizing) upon arrival at school and throughout the day.
- Signs posted throughout the school to help control the flow of foot traffic within the building.
- There will be cleaning protocols for high touch points (door knobs, faucets, etc.). These surfaces will be cleaned once every 24 hours.
- Students will no longer be organized into Learning Groups or Cohorts as we did last year.
- Teachers will be encouraged to take their class outside more frequently.
- Windows and doors may be left open more regularly to increase ventilation.
- Students are asked to enter and exit the building using the doors nearest their classroom to help decrease congestion.

- There will be no large gatherings (assemblies, special events, open house) or fieldtrips at this time.
- No sharing of food or drink.
- Parents and visitors should make an appointment to meet with staff. There will be limited and controlled access to the building by parents and visitors. All visitors must sign in for the purpose of contact tracing and acknowledge they've completed the Daily Health Check. Visitors must wear a non-medical mask inside school.
- We also ask parents to respect other people's personal space when on school grounds. This is for your safety and good modeling for our students.

** Lunch: students will eat in their Period 3 classrooms or outside.

*There will be no eating in the Grand Hall to start the year. The reason for this is that it gets quite crowded, and the tables are round and, as per current guidance, we do not want groups of students eating facing each other in close proximity without masks.

** Lockers: we will not be issuing lockers again this year. The reason is that students accessing their lockers is a major cause of congestion in the hallways.

*The exception will be students taking PE and music students requiring instrument storage (this will be arranged by individual teachers).

**if you have a special circumstance that requires you to have a locker, please contact Mr. Rao (Vice-Principal).

Educational Programming

- Our school will only provide in-class instruction.
- 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) may take up some instructional time.
- Students will continue to receive report cards.

We look forward to welcoming students back to school on Tuesday, September 7th.

Part of school-start up is determining student enrolment so please endeavor to contact the school if your child is unable to attend on September 7th and have their attendance counted. Please also contact the school principal if you have moved, your child is registered elsewhere or is not returning to the school.

Absence Reporting:

We no longer use the link on the web page to report absences.

Options:

- Call the office
- Email: heritagewoodssecretary@sd43.bc.ca

Tuesday, September 7, 2021:

- 9:30 AM-12:00 PM (Grade 9s) from (intro to school and procedures, tour, Advisory, photos taken, ...).
- 8:30-9:30 AM (Gr 10s) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.
- 9:30-10:30 AM (Gr 11s) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.
- 10:30-11:30 AM (Gr 12s) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.

Sincerely,

Todd Clerkson

Principal

Heritage Woods Secondary School