

October 28, 2020

Dear parents, guardians and families,

It's hard to believe two months of the school year have passed and Quarter 2 starts in just a few weeks. I want to thank you for your ongoing efforts to support the safety strategies that we have in place and to make sure children stay home when they're ill. With your partnership and co-operation, our in-school COVID-19 transmissions are low. This shows that the combination of actions we are taking in our [Division Re-entry Strategy](#) are working.

### Updates to our COVID-19 Division Re-entry Strategy

We're making changes to our Division Re-entry Strategy this week after the Alberta government revised the [Guidance for School Re-entry Scenario 1](#) earlier this month. We are implementing some of the government's updates, but not all of them. With COVID-19 numbers rising in the Edmonton area, we do not want to introduce changes that may bring additional risks for schools.

### New changes to the Division Re-entry Strategy

The Division will be revising our strategy so:

- boot racks can be used at the school's discretion,
- students can use lockers at the start and end of the day, at the school's discretion,
- food prepared in foods class following all safety protocols can be eaten, and
- Grade 12 graduation photos can be taken with health protocols in place.

### Changes that won't be implemented

After gathering feedback from our schools and reviewing Edmonton's current COVID-19 numbers, the Division has decided not to make changes in the following areas at this time:

- singing or using wind instruments is still not permitted,
- classroom treats sent from home remain postponed,-
- indoor school photos remain postponed (only outdoor photos can be arranged), and
- field trips that involve transportation remain postponed; community walking trips and in-class virtual field trips are possible.

We know many students are eager to fully participate in music programming. Our Division is setting up a committee to look at how we can bring singing and wind instruments back into our schools, in a way that's as safe as possible for students and staff. I'm committed to keeping families informed about this work.

### **Safety and getting students to school**

We're asking families to be safe when travelling to and from school. Alberta Health Services has identified carpooling as a high-risk activity for spreading COVID-19. When possible, students should only carpool with members of the same household. If your child must carpool with another family, please follow these safety guidelines provided by Alberta Health Services:

- limit the number of people in the vehicle, where possible, to maintain physical distance of two metres,
- make sure all occupants wear masks and wash their hands before entering the vehicle, and
- clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, seatbelt buckles and arm rests after each trip.

### **Additional resources for families**

The Government of Alberta developed additional materials families can use for guidance during COVID-19, including [how long to stay home from school](#), [frequently asked questions](#) and an [updated Daily Health Checklist](#). The checklist is an important tool to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Families should use it at home daily to determine if your child is healthy and can attend school or if they need to stay home.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we implement the Division Re-entry Strategy in our schools. As the COVID-19 situation changes, we will continue to review and revise our plan. Together, we're all doing our part to keep our schools safe.

Sincerely,



Darrel Robertson  
Superintendent of Schools