

March 1, 2021

Dear families, parents and guardians,

Everything we've done this year has been with student, staff and community safety in mind. Since the beginning of the year, our schools have been working hard to provide meaningful celebrations, learning opportunities and experiences for our students. This includes marking special and momentous occasions.

The provincial government has announced that in Step 2 of "A Path Forward" there will be some potential easing around banquet halls and conference centres. It is important to note large indoor gatherings (similar in size to our high school graduation ceremonies) are part of Step 4 of the provincial plan.

For this year, graduation committees have focused their efforts around meaningful events for spring 2021, to ensure we're doing our best to keep students, staff, and families safe.

This includes graduation events for Kindergarten, Grade 6, Grade 9 and Grade 12 celebrations. Our schools have already been preparing and planning for virtual and modified graduation celebrations this year and I know they will build upon the wonderful and exciting events they organized last year, to create special memories of graduating for the class of 2020-2021. All celebrations will adhere to the provincial COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines in place at the time. More details from your child's school will follow in the coming months.

We all share in the desire to have our regular commencement and graduation events; however, we need to continue to work together to support alternatives during this global pandemic. We are hopeful that the provincial vaccination plans will serve to return schools to regular operations at some point during the 2021-2022 school year.

We are proud of all of our graduates and their accomplishments. Our Division and our schools know how important these milestone events are for our students and their families. Our students have worked hard, and want to share these accomplishments with their friends, families and our staff. It's crucial that we stay the course with our current Re-entry Strategy; this plan is serving us well and we continue to receive positive feedback from Alberta Health Services around the strength and efficacy of our plan when all safety protocols are in place and are being adhered to.

I want to thank all of our students, staff, families and communities for all you have done to help keep our schools safe. By making these collective shifts in our daily lives, we are helping to keep one another safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DR', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

Darrel Robertson
Superintendent of Schools

