



**PRAIRIE SPIRIT
SCHOOL DIVISION**

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Principal: Mr. Lockwood
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Date: August 26, 2020

To: Blaine Lake Learning Community

From: Mr. Lockwood – Principal of Blaine Lake School

RE: Welcome Back, School is Officially Opening - Important School Start Up Information for Families to Review

Dear Blaine Lake Learning Community,

I hope all of you had a relaxing summer, we were certainly blessed with some beautiful weather and now that harvest season is here, school is finally open. Our school staff is excited to be back to work and they are currently planning for a successful school year to begin.

Before I begin sharing important information with you, please note that at any time when you are reading, if questions arise or something doesn't make sense, feel free to call Mrs. Barrington (vice principal) or I (Sean Lockwood, school principal) to assist you with any clarifications or assistance that you may need. Our role is to serve you and to ensure that you feel comfortable sending your children to school. The students' needs and safety must be met, so anytime that we can be of assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact either of us.

It has been very busy at the school; Mrs. Barrington and I have just completed our school safety start up plan and this document has been reviewed and approved by our school division. Within this approved return to school safety plan, much of the document included feedback that we received from our community members and SCC, who participated in our June consultation process, where you assisted us in developing our back to school plan. We listened to the feedback that we received from our community and created a plan that was in the best interest and safety of our students. The school division also conducted a follow up survey with families this month and this information was also instrumental in the development of our school safety plan.

At this point, I am completely confident in our school safety plan; we have done everything in our power to ensure student safety is first priority. There is no plan that is perfect and we all assume risks in anything that we do in life, whether it's getting in our vehicles and driving down the road, crossing a busy highway, flying on a plane, playing hockey or football, at the end of the day, nothing we do is completely free of risk, but with certainty I can assure everyone that this return to school plan places the wellbeing of our youth and families first and foremost.

We are proud and feel lucky to be part of the Blaine Lake community. Our school is small and we feel confident that we can work together to support the learning needs of all students in safe ways. While the following Safe School Plan is long, we ask that you please read it carefully as there are many aspects of school that will look very different this year and we want families and students to feel prepared for the changes as they return to school.

Sincerely,
Mr. Lockwood

What should families expect in the weeks ahead at Blaine Lake School?

First Week Back for Students will be a “Soft-Landing” (Staggered Start) Week

The students first week back is from September 8 -11th, and students will only attend on two days during this week. This is a “soft landing week” and its purpose is to allow students, bus drivers, support staff, and teaching staff to get themselves accustomed to new routines and safety procedures before we begin a full school start up.

Students with last names that start from the letters **A to L** will come to school on the **Tuesday Sept. 8th and Thursday 10th**. Students with the last name that start from the letters (**M to Z**) will come to school on **Wednesday Sept. 9th and Friday Sept. 11th**.

What are the main safety procedures families should be aware of before the start of school?

Here is a breakdown of the main “need to know” information for school start up.

Bussing Safety

- Parents are encouraged to drive students to school if they can.
- Busses will be disinfected twice daily and hand sanitizer stations will be at the front-loading door of each bus.
- All students (K-12) will be expected to wear masks at all times while riding the school bus.
- Buses will take longer to get students to and from school because of the increased safety procedures in place. It is important for families to be aware of this as busses may run later than expected on some days given the circumstances.
- Students will be divided in cohort groups (based on age and family groupings) and will be provided a seating plan for contact tracing purposes. Students will be provided a seat and will not have a choice as to where they sit on the bus.
- Family members will be grouped together on the bus.
- Student misconduct on the bus (including not wearing masks or following the seating plan) will not be tolerated.

School Safety (Outside of the Classroom)

- Students from Grades 4-12 are required to wear masks when social distancing of 2 meters is not possible. This means that students will be required to wear a mask at almost all times when in the hallways and classrooms. Students from grades K-3 are encouraged to wear masks, though they are not required.
- The school will provide masks for students, but it’s encouraged for students to wear cloth masks to school that are more breathable and easier to wash each night they come home.
- Students are not permitted to share school supplies and food items.
- Social distancing (of 2 meters) should be practiced at all times when possible; students will be trained and reminded to do this at all times.
- Hand sanitizing stations are at the front entrance of all entranceways into the school (elementary, middle/high school entrances). Students will sanitize their hands before entering the school at the sanitizer station.
- K-7 students will enter and exit the school through the elementary doors. Grade 8-12 students will enter through the main doors. Students should practice social distancing as then enter and exit the building.

- Water stations will be in designated areas in the hallways. Touchless water fountains are on order. Until they are installed, paper cups must be used.
- Signage will be posted around the school to support social distancing and sanitization procedures.
- Cohort groupings of students will be in place. Elementary students will be kept down in the elementary end of the school at all times and if they have to move into other parts of the school (for special circumstances), all areas they enter will be disinfected and sanitized beforehand.
- High school cohorts (grades 8-12) will stay together in the senior end of the school in their respective groups. They will not be permitted to enter the elementary hallways. Separation of age cohorts is necessary for contact tracing purposes.
- Recess breaks for Grades K-5 will occur at the same time but have staggered exit and entrance times, where each grade cohort grade will exit and enter the school at separate time intervals. Supervising staff will have walkie talkies on them at all times for communication and crowd control purposes. Supervisors will monitor students to ensure they are playing safely within their cohort groupings.
- Class breaks for high school will involve staggered times of exit and entering between classroom transitions. All middle and high school staff will always have walkie talkies on them to communicate and provide support to students staying within their cohort groupings. High school students will not use the bell as their dismissal. Students will be dismissed by their teachers when it is their turn to enter the hallway and move to their next class.
- Students (K-12) who arrive at the school prior to 9am will be required to immediately report to their homeroom. Students are not permitted to be in the hallways at any point during the day.
- At this time students are not being given lockers to use; please have them bring their school essentials with them in a backpack and one main binder to store all their learning materials in.
- Town kids are encouraged to go home for lunch if that is an option.
- All students who stay at school for lunch will have their own designated lunch room (based on grade cohort) and seating arrangements, where they can socially distance and eat lunch. Students who stay at school for lunch have the choice to be in their lunchroom or outside.
- At this time, the gym will be closed during the lunch hour until routines and protocols for use and sanitization are established
- At this time, the computer lab will be closed at lunch hour until routines routines and protocols for use and sanitization are established
- Grade 11 & 12 students who have a spare will not be permitted to move throughout the school. Students on spare may leave the building, or work in the area designated by school administration. Access to the computer lab will not be accessible for students on spares.
- The school principal and vice-principal will be monitoring school hallways during all class transitional periods to provide support to staff and students.
- Caretakers will be following increased sanitization standards determined by PSSD
- Student misconduct that jeopardizes the health and wellbeing of our learning community will not be tolerated.

School Safety (Classroom)

- Students in Grade 4-12 must wear masks when they can't socially distance. We encourage students in all grade levels to wear masks.
- Students will be provided seating plans by their teachers that distance as much as possible. (Socially distancing will not be possible in many classes even with a seating plan, and therefore masks will need to be worn during instructional and work times.)
- Classroom grade cohorts will stay together and not mix with other grade cohort groups during the day.
- It is encouraged for students to bring their own hand sanitizers, but it's not mandatory.
- Classrooms will have hand sanitizer, wipes, and disinfectants available to teachers, support staff, and their students at all times throughout the day.
- No sharing between students of school supplies.
- No sharing of food and lunches between students.
- Breakfast and lunch program will occur, but all food items will be prepared by designated staff members or home-economics classes and it will be delivered directly to classrooms.
- Student misconduct that jeopardizes the health and wellbeing of our learning community will not be tolerated.

Student Illness

- Any student that has a fever, very distinguishable cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or running nose (cold or flu like symptoms) should not be sent to school.
- Students with any of these symptoms while in school will be moved to the school "isolation room" by the school principal or vice principal who will supervise them until their parent/caregiver comes to pick them up.
- The School will follow the [Illness in Care COVID-19 Protocols Appendix B](#) to support students presenting with symptoms
- If parents, guardians, or caregivers receive a call from the school about a child being ill, pick-up arrangements will be required as soon as possible.
- The school principal and vice principal are the two designated staff members who make the decisions on whether a student is sent home for illness related purposes.

Parent, Community and Guest Speaker Safety

- Guest speakers or outside service providers that are non-Prairie Spirit employees will not be permitted in the school (for the first 6 weeks from the time school opens). Further review of this plan will occur.
- We continue to value a welcoming school to all parents and community members; however, to ensure the safety of all community members, parents and community members can only enter the school if there is a compelling reason and have permission by the school principal or vice-principal. The individual permitted to enter the school will be required to follow protocols and restrictions prescribed by the school division.
- Parents are encouraged to contact teachers and school administration by phone, email, or videoconferencing. We are still here to work with and support you!
- The goal for us is to minimize outside contact to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

Learning Options

Due to covid, some students may not feel comfortable attending school, there are four learning options for students this year.

In-Person Learning – Attending school (in person full-time)

Blended Learning – Attending class in person full-time, but if a student becomes ill, the classroom teacher and school will provide learning to keep the student caught up, until they return to class. This is a blend of in-person and at temporary home learning.

Spirit eLearning - This is available to families of K-12 students who will not be attending school in person. All learning will be facilitated by certified Prairie Spirit teachers who can set students up for online learning and supports to students from the comfort of their homes. If technology access is an issue for families, Prairie Spirit School Division will provide supports to families who require these needs.

Home-schooling – Parents provide curricular outcomes to their children, but must submit an outline of the homeschool learning plan to the school division. (Please note that home-schooling for Grade 12 students is not recognized by the Ministry of Education for graduation requirements.)

If you have any questions about the different learning options available for students, please connect with Mr. Lockwood or Mrs. Barrington.