



**BORDEN SCHOOL**  
*Achieving Success Together*

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Dear Borden School Families,

I am so pleased to be reaching out to you all again today. I hope that the summer has been healthy, safe, and that you and your families have all had opportunities to experience joy and relaxation! I would like to take this opportunity to share some new information and provide some updates on evolving topics for Borden School.

In this letter, I will share information regarding the following topics:

- Borden School Cohorts, Quarter & Block scheduling, Student Learning Options, Masks, and Ministry Announcements

### **Borden School Cohorts**

In a letter shared last week, I shared general information about cohorts. At Borden School, we have made adjustments to our classroom configurations to make reductions to the student size of our class cohorts and we have also eliminated the cross-over of class cohorts (grades won't be mixed).

Here are the Borden School classroom cohorts for the year:

<b>Grade(s)</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Anticipated Students</b>
K, 1, 2	Miss Laura & Miss Smith	24/18 (K/Non-K)
3-4	Mrs. Troupe-Logue	16
5	Mrs. Kauk	11
6 (A)	Miss Fisher, Miss Laura, Mr. Morris	15
6 (B)	Miss Fisher, Mrs. Kaufmann, Miss Laura	15
7-8	Miss Fisher, Mrs. Kaufmann, Mr. Morris	15
9-12	Miss Fisher, Mrs. Kaufmann	19

*\*The Grade 6 A and B are days that will rotate. I have made every effort to reduce and minimize staff transitions with our class cohorts. Rotating days in this manner means one less teacher transition in and out of the Grade 6 cohort every day.*

Structuring cohorts in this way increases the health and safety of our students and staff while also preserving the high academic standards that the Borden School staff expects of itself.

Reducing the size of classroom cohorts is currently viewed as the best practice for minimizing exposure and it also aids in reducing contact tracing numbers (aids medical personnel). Before the return of students to school, we will be planning strategies to minimize cross-over between students during breaks and recess times.

Classroom cohorts will be one part of a larger plan to minimize risk and exposure for all Borden Bruin students.

**Quarter and Block Scheduling**

The Borden School Grade 7-8 and 9-12 cohorts will be switching to a *quarter/block* timetable this school year.

The new timetable has 4 quarters that last for about 45 school days each. Some stretches of the year have long vacation breaks scheduled within them, so it is difficult to measure quarters of a school year in weeks or months. Also, with the recent announcement for the delayed start, the dates of our quarters may alter slightly. Below is a rough timeline that will be finalized in a future letter to families:

- Quarter 1: September 8<sup>th</sup> – November 6<sup>th</sup>
- Quarter 2: November 12<sup>th</sup> – January 28<sup>th</sup>
- Quarter 3: February 1<sup>st</sup> – April 21<sup>st</sup>
- Quarter 4: April 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 29<sup>th</sup>

There are many reasons why Borden School is moving to a quarter/block system for the 2020-2021 school year. The primary reasons for the switch revolve around health and safety. These are the health and safety reasons that timetables are structured this way: transitions are reduced, cleaning and sanitizing is more predictable and contained, student movement in the building is controlled, contact numbers for everyone involved are reduced.

Another reason has to do with timetable flexibility. By utilizing a quarter timetable, students and families have more accessible entry and exit points if their home and school learning plan were to change. Academically, Grade 7-12 students will engage in their course work more intensively over a shorter amount of calendar time. The instructional time and academic integrity of each course is not negatively impacted at all in a quarter schedule.

This visual has helped me to understand the quarter schedule system. Each number represents its own course:

	Quarter 1: Sept 8 <sup>th</sup> – Nov 6 <sup>th</sup>	Quarter 2: Nov 12 <sup>th</sup> – Jan 28 <sup>th</sup>	Quarter 3: Feb 1 <sup>st</sup> – April 21 <sup>st</sup>	Quarter 4: April 22 <sup>nd</sup> – June 29 <sup>th</sup>
Period 1	1	4	6	9
Period 2	1	4	6	9
Period 3	2	2	7	7
Period 4	3	5	8	10
Period 5	3	5	8	10

*\*In the example above, I am anticipating Grade 9-12 taking an ELA course in the #1 slot, a Physical Education/Wellness course in the #2 slot, and a Science course in the #3 slot. Quarters 2, 3, & 4 will be determined soon and communicated in a future letter to families.*

Grade 7-8 quarters will look something like this:

<b>Quarter 1:</b> <b>Sept 8<sup>th</sup> – Nov 6<sup>th</sup></b>	ELA x 2 Periods Science x 1 Period	Math x 1 Period Phys Ed & Health Rotation x 1 Period
<b>Quarter 2:</b> <b>Nov 12<sup>th</sup> – Jan 28<sup>th</sup></b>	ELA x 1 Period Science x 1 Period Social x 1 Period	Math x 1 Period Phys Ed & Health Rotation x 1 Period
<b>Quarter 3:</b> <b>Feb 1<sup>st</sup> – April 21<sup>st</sup></b>	ELA x 2 Periods Social x 1 Period	Math x 1 Period Phys Ed & Arts Ed Rotation x 1 Period
<b>Quarter 4:</b> <b>April 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 29<sup>th</sup></b>	ELA x 1 Period PAA x 2 Periods	Math x 1 Period Phys Ed & Arts Ed Rotation x 1 Period

The final note on the quarter timetable for now is that we still need to finalize some shared staffing to cover the PAA instruction at Borden School. The quarters as they are presented in this letter are one potential option, but not the finalized version. Once the staffing and PAA planning is completed, we will finalize our school timetable and share it with families.

### **Student Learning Options**

Last week the Prairie Spirit School Division sent a survey to families across the whole division. That survey window closed on Monday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at noon. The results from this survey will be critical in planning next steps at both the division and local school level. I will be participating in a meeting this week and the topic of students learning remotely is a high priority for everyone. I am hopeful that there will be a more detailed update later this week or early next week.

At this time, there are 3 broad options for families to choose for their children:

- A) **In-person learning** – the traditional school delivery where students are taught in the school by teachers and educational staff.
- B) **Home Schooling** – the division definition of this option is 100% family led. Families who choose this option are responsible for teaching and assessing the appropriate curriculum for their child(ren).
- C) **Remote Learning** – this option is new as a response to the COVID pandemic. This is the option in which details and fine-tuning are yet to be finalized. At this time, we are predicting that families who choose this option will be linked to a school and will have the support/input of teachers and educational staff while their child(ren) learn remotely from home. There are many reasons that families may choose this option and from my perspective, any reason is a valid reason. I am eager to share more specific details about this option as they are finalized.

I would like to encourage families who are considering having their child(ren) pursue the remote learning option to stay registered with Borden School and to reach out to me directly. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

I would also like to share that as a school, our preference is that each family choose the option that they are most comfortable with. Our Borden School families and parents know what is best for their children in terms of their health, safety, and success. I am eager to work alongside and support all of our students and Borden families no matter what choice they make.

I am grateful for your patience and understanding as the best possible, and most responsive, plans are crafted.

### **Masks**

As I shared last week, masks will be required for students in Grade 4-12 in common areas (bus, halls, etc.) as well as areas where social distancing is not possible. The same guidelines are encouraged for students in Grade K-3. The Borden School staff are expected to wear masks when social distancing is not possible.

Schools are going to be provided with disposable masks that will be accessible for students. At this time, I would like to request that families who are able to provide cloth/reusable masks for their child(ren), to please do so. Students who do not have a mask, forgot their mask, or their mask has become unsanitary will be provided a disposable mask by the school.

In the meantime, families practicing wearing masks, whether reusable or disposable, (building stamina) and practicing conversations while wearing masks (building communication skills) would be a huge help to the school.

### **Ministry Announcements**

Over the weekend of August 15-16, the province had 2 huge announcements that I am sure you have read and heard about already. I would like to speak about each of them briefly:

- 1) School Start has been moved to September 8<sup>th</sup> – The most important thing to share regarding this announcement is that the additional time provided will be utilized by our staff to make Borden School safer and healthier for your children.
- 2) \$40 Million added to education budget – this is awesome news and it shows that the province is serious about supporting your children in school. At this time, it would be reckless to predict how that announcement will directly impact Borden School if at all.

I thank you again for taking the time to read this letter. The whole staff at Borden School is dedicated to making the school the safest it can possibly be, and we are grateful for your support. There will be more letters and more information coming in the following days and weeks.

I have had several families reach out with questions over the last days and weeks. I have really enjoyed and appreciated the dialogue from these connections. If you have questions that have arisen from this letter, other things you have read or heard, or just have general questions about the school year, please reach out to me. I can be reached by email at [brody.morris@spiritsd.ca](mailto:brody.morris@spiritsd.ca) or you can call or text my cell phone which is (306) 371-2888. Your gracious support and kindness are always appreciated!

Brody Morris – Borden School Principal