

August 14th, 2020

Dear parents:

As we move in to our [modified Stage 2](#) of [B.C.'s Education Restart Plan](#) for September, many questions and concerns are arising, as is to be expected. First, you have likely heard the first day of school has been pushed back 2 days to Thursday, September 10th by the Ministry. This will provide teachers and staff some orientation time to review new procedures and protocols. Please note middle and secondary schools will also be operating with only a portion of students on Thursday, with the remainder arriving the following day. Check your school website for this information.

Modified Stage 2 involves the full return to in-class instruction for all students for the maximum time possible within learning group limits. For most elementary students, this will have relatively little impact on them, except that some events and activities will be limited to their Learning Groups. A typical elementary Learning Group is 2-3 classes of students and their teachers. Middle School students may find they have a similar experience, with limited exposure to students not in their Learning Group. At Mission Secondary, however, significant modifications are being made to the timetable to try to ensure students get the courses they want while complying with the Learning Group limits set out by the Province. Similar work is happening at many large secondary schools across BC. Expect more information on MSS and its schedule in the coming weeks. Additional information about learning groups is available on the [Ministry of Education website](#).

School districts will continue to follow enhanced health and safety measures following the guidelines developed by the *BC Centre for Disease Control* and the *BC Ministry of Health*, and outlined in the updated [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#) manual. These measures include enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures, more individual and smaller group activities, and limitations on assemblies and other large gatherings.

While more details will be coming soon, it is important to note that students that opt for school bus transportation will be expected to wear a mask while on the bus, similar to other public transportation. The School District will supply masks to students, but only in limited quantities. Many other health and safety protocols are currently under review, at both the District and Provincial level, so please be prepared for new information in the future.

We know some parents are very concerned about sending their children to school. Parents who do not want to their child to attend in-person classes at a school have the option to register their child for distributed learning here in Mission or elsewhere (based on program availability) or home-schooling. It is important for parents to understand that the hybrid model of in-class instruction and remote learning that was used in the spring will not be available to most students this fall. This also means that students in special programs or schools of choice will not be able to guarantee their space for the future, as we are not able to 'hold' space for students not registered in a school.

You are welcome to contact me at angus.wilson@mpsd.ca should you have questions. As noted previously, these are complicated times and our information is changing regularly, so we appreciate your patience as we work to ensure your children are both safe and receiving a strong educational program. You can expect further communication from our district and your school in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, I wish you a wonderful rest of your summer.

Sincerely,



Angus Wilson
Superintendent of Schools