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**Barrhead Elementary School- Re-entry plans for 2020-2021 School Year**

Hello Parents and Guardians of BES!

We hope everyone had a restful summer. BES staff are very excited to see your children again! We are doing all we can to ensure procedures are in place to create a wonderful learning environment while taking necessary safety precautions. We understand many people have questions and we are pleased to provide the following information in question and answer format! We hope that this answers many of your questions. If it does not, please call us at the school (780) 674-8518 or email us at be.main@pembinahills.ca.

Q: How will school be different for my child?

A: Though many new protocols are being put into place, we are working very hard to keep things as “normal” as possible. Some of the new protocols include:

* Students will have assigned doors to enter and exit the school
* Floor markings indicate directional flow in the hallways so everyone travels in appropriate directions
* Physical distancing when and where possible
* Water fountains will be off however, the water bottle filling stations will be on. Students are encouraged to come with a water bottle that they can fill throughout the day
* Seating plans will be documented and adhered to in classrooms
* Teachers will be wearing masks at certain times during the day (see below for more)
* Depending on classroom seating, clear dividers may be used in classrooms
* In addition to nightly cleaning and disinfecting, we will have custodians for three hours during the school day to clean and disinfect all high-touch areas

Q: What are the requirements for masks?

A: The provincial government has stated masks are mandatory for grades four and up. Masks are optional for kindergarten to grade three.

* Grade 4-6 students will be required to wear masks in common areas of the school, such as hallways
* Masks will be required when moving in the classroom and when talking to peers in classroom, if physical distancing (2m) is not possible
* Masks can be taken off when students are sitting at their desk listening to teacher instructions or working independently on assignments
* Masks are not required during Phys Ed, outside or during recess time
* Students in kindergarten and grades 1, 2 and 3 have the option of wearing masks
* Staff members will be required to wear masks. These may be removed when staff are physically distanced (2m) from students
* Masks provided by the Alberta government will be distributed on the first day of school. Grade 4-6 Students are encouraged to wear their own mask, if available and if possible, until the provided masks are distributed.
* All visitors (including parents of students) who enter the building must wear a mask
* If students can not wear a mask, due to a medical reason, parent must contact the school office to make those arrangements.

Q: What does recess look like?

A: Recess is typically a time for students to interact with their friends and be physically active in a less structured environment. This is an important time for students’ mental health and connections to their peers.

* The risk of virus transmission is proven to be lower outside
* Students will be encouraged to physically distance from each other
* Recesses will be similar to how they were pre-covid, with the encouragement to physical distancing
* Cohorts will be expanded at recess as two grades share a playground for one recess, grades are on separate playgrounds for afternoon recess
* Intramurals will begin where students play other members of their grade cohort

Q: How does arrival and pickup look?

A: Understandably, beginning and end of the day are two times where the possibility of crowds can occur. We are taking the following precautions during these times.

* Each grade will have a designated area to go to after getting off of their bus. The goal is to move students to their grade cohort as quickly as possible
* Students enter the school with their class cohort in a staggered fashion to ensure boot rooms do not get crowded
* Supervisors will be outside in the designated areas
* Everyone entering the school, including staff and students, will be required to use hand sanitizer (installed by all doors)
* Those in grades 4 and up, including staff, will be required to put on their masks and go to their classrooms
* We encourage parents to drop off their children and only enter the school if it is necessary
* Visitors entering the school must wear a mask, enter through main front doors, use hand sanitizer, report to the school office, and sign in. We will assist getting what you need, while trying to limit how many people have access to the school classroom areas.
* At the end of the day, parents are encouraged to meet their child(ren) outside rather than in the school hallways. Again, if you need to enter for any reason you must wear a mask and sign in at the main office.
* Students will be dismissed in a staggered order at two dismissal times (3:17 and 3:20)
* Bus students will proceed outside and load the bus as requested by the bus driver
* For bus protocols, please visit the Pembina Hills website

Q: What happens if my child is sick?

A: Pembina Hills sent the daily health check screening to all parents last week.

* All pre-existing health conditions, especially those with symptoms similar to covid, must be reported to the school office
* All staff and students must do the health check screening questionnaire each day before coming. If the answer to any question is ‘yes’ they must stay home
* If your child becomes sick at school, they will be isolated until picked up. Parents will be contacted and must arrange to have their child picked up.
* If anyone is feeling ill, they must not come into the school.
* If your child develops symptoms that could be caused by covid or by a known pre-existing condition (ex. Allergies), covid testing is recommended to confirm that is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to school
* Alberta Health Services guides these decisions and these are subject to change, as AHS and Alberta government adapt their recommendation
* If your child is advised to self-isolate or stay home teachers will compile classroom work to either send home or complete upon return. This is the same procedures as done previously when students miss class due to illness or vacation.

Q: How will first day look different from other years?

A: We understand that the first day of school causes some extra nervousness for students

* Classroom teachers will be implementing routines, as outlined above, beginning on the first day
* If your child is anxious and unwilling to come into the school without a parent, we kindly ask that one parent accompany your child and follow procedures of wearing a mask, hand sanitizing and signing in at the main office. School staff will advise you on how to assist your child’s arrival to his/her classroom
* We ask that you please encourage your child to come to school independently, as the goal of a cohort system is to limit interactions with others. However, we do understand that the first day back to school can be a tough transition and will help you support your child while following safety protocols

Q: Will hot lunch program be available this year?

A: Yes, the hot lunch program will follow the provincial guidelines for food and serving and will be available this year. FCSS continues to operate this program. This will start towards the end of September. Look for more information from your child’s teacher later in September.

Q: When is my child’s first day of school?

A: Pembina Hills School Board approved the following schedule for the first days:

* September 1 (Tuesday) is the school open house from 3:00-5:00. Students may come with one parent to meet teachers and drop off school supplies.
* September 3 (Thursday) is the first day for all grades 1, 3 and 5
* September 4 (Friday) is the first day for all grades 2, 4 and 6
* Buses will be running these days so anyone riding a bus to school will be able to do so
* September 7 (Monday) is Victoria Day
* September 8 (Tuesday) all students attend and regular calendar is in effect

We are so looking forward to seeing your child this year and can not wait to have students in our classrooms again. We are doing our very best to ensure positive learning environments are created in the safest way possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school by phone (780-674-8518) or email ([be.main@pembinahills.ca](mailto:be.main@pembinahills.ca))