

August 19, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of the faculty and administration, we would like to welcome you to Albert Lacombe Catholic Elementary School and the 2020-2021 school year. As we broach a new school year in unprecedented circumstances, we feel that it is crucial to have open communication, frequent, and meaningful communication with the parents and guardians of our students. We recognize that this is going to be a very different approach to starting off a new school year as we incorporate a range of health measures for the safety of students and faculty will be flexible as we encounter new and emerging elements related to the pandemic.

As the principal of Albert Lacombe, I am very proud to share that we have an excellent faculty that is committed to working with parents and guardians to support you and your child/children through the transition of a new school year and beyond. In addition to the implementation of health and safety protocols, we will also focus on building connections, relationships, and learning excellence. Students have been out of school for a long period of time so we will make sure they feel safe, secure, and have a sense of belonging to our school community.

As we begin the new school year, as a Catholic School Community of parents/guardians, students, and faculty, we will continue to learn and adjust as required as the pandemic situation continues to evolve.

Division Guidebook

On Thursday, August 13, our Superintendent of Schools released our Division guidebook specifically for parents/legal guardians. The Parent Guidebook for School Re-entry: 2020-2021 provides essential information concerning:

- programming (face-to-face and online education)
- health and safety protocols
- transportation
- communication
- logistical information

As health measures are continually evolving, we will be responsive and flexible as the year progresses. As such, this Guidebook will be updated and revised as new information becomes available from the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Alberta, the Minister of Education, and Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

You can access this resource here: [Parent Guidebook for School Re-entry: 2020-2021](#)



WHAT STARTS HERE CHANGES THE WORLD

Our School Communication Plan:

This is the first in a series of communications that will be going out to all of our families that will provide more specific information as it relates to our school context. Over the next week, parents and guardians can expect school communication on the following topics:

- How to best prepare for the start of the school year.
- Kindergarten class placements and start-up.
- The Safe and Caring element - how we are mitigating risks related to COVID within our building.
- What can parents and guardians expect for the first couple of days.
- Information on pick up and drop off.
- Sports academy programming.

In order to facilitate communication, we have also dedicated a tab on our school website called "School Re-Entry," where parents and guardians can access all district and school information and past communications as it relates to our re-entry into the school year. You can access this directly here: <https://www.al.gsacrd.ab.ca/school-re-entry> .

Once the school year is underway, we will continue to keep you informed about new developments as they occur via our website, our BEAR Bones Week-at-a-Glance, and parent/guardian notifications that are sent directly to email.

Office Opening:

Beginning on August 20, our school office will be open between 8:30-12:00 and 1:00-3:30 PM until the beginning of the school year. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact school administration via telephone (780-459-4478) or email (amenduk@gsacrd.ab.ca and dhayes@gsacrd.ab.ca).

As per the August 6 Communication from our Superintendent of Schools, families will be required to set up an appointment in advance in order to enter a school for any face-to-face appointments.

Supporting Transitions for In-class Instruction:

Originally, it was our intention to have a meet the faculty event prior to the beginning of the school year to provide parents and guardians the opportunity to drop off school supplies and meet their child's teacher. We will be offering a staggered entry for our students to reduce traffic congestion in the area as parents and guardians assist their child/ren with the transportation of school supplies at the beginning of the school year. More information regarding drop off procedures will follow next week.



To facilitate this opportunity, we have revised our plans for the beginning of the school year.

- August 27 - Parents and Guardians will find out what homeroom class their child will be placed in. Teachers will be sharing an invitation to all families in their class between 3:00 and 4:00 PM.
- August 31 - Students with the surnames that begin with A to K will attend this day.
- September 1 - Students with the surnames that begin with L to Z will attend this day.
- September 2 - All students that have opted for in-class schooling will begin regular attendance.

For students riding the bus, the bus route will stay the same for all families and only need to get on the bus the day that they attend school on either August 31st or September 1st. .

Supporting Transitions for Online Learning:


As per the email sent out on August 17th, to families that expressed interest in the online learning option through the online surveys, I am providing you a summary of timelines from that communication. .

- **August 17-21: Staffing:** During this week, we are determining who will be teaching courses (English and French) at each grade level.
- **August 24-28: Communicating proposed schedules and teachers:** I will contact you during this week to share with you the names of teachers who will be teaching online, courses that your child would take, and the process moving forward for starting classes and sharing with you what you may need to take part in online courses. **It is during this week that we need you to confirm whether you are proceeding with online education or face-to-face education.**
- **August 28-31:** Your teacher(s) will communicate with you about all details regarding programming (course outlines, supplies, routines, assessment, how check-ins and teacher support will happen).

Mr. Hayes and myself will be contacting parents and guardians who requested the online learning option in the survey to confirm their desire to register for online learning via telephone on August 20 and August 21st.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 780-459-4478.

Yours in education,



Mr. Allan Menduk, M.Ed.
Principal
Albert Lacombe Catholic Elementary School

