



Mouse Mountain Elementary School

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Hadih and Hello Mouse Mountain families!

I hope you are enjoying your Summer and we cannot wait to see you again soon! As you may already know, the Province has announced that schools will return to full-time, in-school instruction in September based on Stage 2 of the government's Five-Stage plan. This letter is to provide information what families can expect as students return to school in September. I would also like to extend a big THANK YOU for your patience this Summer as schools worked to review new guidelines and develop plans.

School district 91 has developed a proposed district-wide plan for back to school in September guided by the Ministry of Education, the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control. Families with children at both Mouse Mountain and FLESS will notice that our back-to-school plans are very similar with a few differences based on the provincial guidelines. We are excited to share the details of our plan for Mouse Mountain Elementary with you. It is our #1 goal to ensure that our school continues to be the safe and welcome place it has always been.

There is a quite a bit of information to share so here is a list of **Frequently Asked Questions** for you. Our initial planning may require some adjustments as needed and any changes will be communicated home to families.

Thank you for taking the time to review this document as a family. Please don't hesitate to contact me at the school (250 699-6627) or on my cell (604-575-0466) or by email: mboniface@sd91.bc.ca if you have questions or concerns. You can also continue to check our school website, our school Facebook page as well as the School District 91 website and Facebook page for further updates.

We look forward to seeing you!

Megan Boniface

Principal

When will my child return to school?

Tues September 8 and Wed Sept 9

Students will not attend these days. ONLY Staff will be in our schools on these days working together to prepare to welcome students and review our health and safety measures.

Thurs September 10

Students with last names beginning with A-K will attend for a full school day. Students will learn their class and learning group at this time.

Fri September 11

Students with last names beginning with L-Z will attend for a full school day. Students will learn their class and learning group at this time.

***Kindergarten families** will receive more information from their child's teacher regarding a gradual entry schedule.

What time do students come and go from school?

At this time, for morning drop-off:

Students who take the bus to school will be contacted by the School District Transportation Department regarding bus schedules.

Students who walk or get a ride to school can be dropped off after 8:30 and parents are asked to avoid accompanying their child onto the school grounds or congregating in the parking lot.

Morning supervisors will be out so students can play on the grounds in the morning while minimizing contact.

At this time, for student pick-up, we are still waiting for specifics regarding times as we must coordinate with FLESS and the bus garage. We do know:

Students who take the bus to school will be contacted by the School District Transportation Department regarding bus schedules. Bus students will report to their bus line-ups and stay in-line, minimizing physical contact, while they wait for the bus. Supervisors will be outside to help children with this.

Students who are picked up from school will wait outside at the side of the school to be picked up. Student who are walking will be asked to head home immediately.

What are Learning Groups (cohorts) and what will they look like?

Learning Groups (cohorts) are a group of students and staff of up to maximum of 60. The purpose of the learning group is to reduce the number of in-person, close interactions an individual has in a day with different people and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

While our learning groups will consist of two 'buddy' classes, the main learning group for each student will be their individual class.

Within a classroom or learning group, physical distancing is not required. The focus for elementary learning groups will be to minimize physical contact. Students can socialize with peers from different learning groups if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact.

Can students and staff from different Learning Groups (cohorts) interact?

During break times (i.e. recess, lunch) or unique learning situations (i.e. academic support), students can socialize with peers in different cohorts if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact or if they are indoors and can maintain physical distance.

Staff who work with a variety of students such as our Aboriginal Education Staff, supervisors and I will strictly follow all Health and Safety Guidelines including keeping physically distanced and wearing a mask when needed.

ALL staff will physically distance and wear a mask when they are outside of their Learning Group (cohort) in common/ high traffic areas such as our hallways.

Will students go outside together at lunch and recess?

Provincial guidelines state that students can socialize with peers in different learning groups if they are outdoors and can minimize physical contact. The guidelines also state that there is no current evidence of COVID-19 transmission in playground environments; playgrounds are a safe environment.

At Mouse Mountain, students will go outside together, with supervision, at lunch and recess. The focus for students outdoors is to minimize physical contact.

Staff will manage the flow of children in the building by using classroom doors to enter and exit, and hand hygiene practices will be followed by classes before leaving and entering the school.

Do students and staff need to wear masks?

Staff will wear masks while in high traffic areas, like hallways, and any time they are outside of the classroom or learning group and they cannot physically distance from others. Staff may also choose to wear a mask within the Learning Group (cohort).

Elementary students are not required to wear masks in school or on busses. The provincial guidelines do not recommend non-medical masks for elementary school students due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close

personal contact from school staff). However, wearing masks for students is a family decision that will be respected.

What will students be doing at school?

Students will learn the BC Curriculum as they would normally. We will all be focussed on learning and caring!

Will the day be different?

There will be some differences in our day. Handwashing continues to be an important part of our daily routines. We will also be enjoying the great outdoors throughout the day as much as possible. We will be transitioning outside and to different parts of the school carefully to avoid any congestion inside our hallways and exits; most of our classrooms have exterior doors through which classes can enter and exit. Those classes who do not have an exterior door will stagger the use of a main entrance/exit.

How will bussing work?

Our Transportation Department will contact parents regarding details for the bus schedule and Health and Safety protocols for bus riders. Our Transportation Department will be following safety protocols including cleaning and disinfecting and physically distancing seating.

If your child is new to the school or is planning to start riding the bus this year, please contact our bus garage at **250-699-6995**.

What if my child or an adult at school is sick?

It is vitally important that students and staff who are sick do not come to school. We will follow this guideline strictly. The BCCDC guidelines state:

- Staff and student **MUST** stay home or go home and follow the direction of their health care provider when sick with common cold, influenza or COVID-19 symptoms.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms of illness should not return to school until they have been assessed by a health-care provider to exclude COVID-19 or other infectious diseases **AND** their symptoms have resolved.
- All students who have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days **OR** were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate.
- **Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease before sending them to school. Please use the attached Daily Health Check as your at-home guide (or link to it at https://www.sd91.bc.ca/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1095501&type=d&pREC_ID=1370090).**
- Students and staff who become sick while at school will need to go home as soon as possible.

Are parent/caregivers/guests allowed in the school?

As much as we always want our school to be a welcoming building for everyone, currently we also need to minimize and track contacts within our school. For this reason, access to schools will be limited to staff and students. We ask parents/caregivers to not enter the school and drop off and pick up outside the building. Parents and caregivers and visitors can request an appointment through the school office. Any person who is visiting our school will be asked to confirm that they have completed a daily health check when they sign in at our office and will be expected to follow visitor protocols including handwashing upon arrival, maintaining physical distancing of 2 meters inside the school and wearing a non-medical mask in high-traffic or common areas such as school hallways.

What should we bring to school?

Please send your child to school with a water bottle, healthy snack and lunch. Please try to send food items that require minimal heating in a microwave or access to hot water. Ensure that your child is dressed in layers appropriate for the weather conditions as we will be spending more time outside.

More information will be coming from your child's teacher prior to September 10th about when to send school supplies with your child.

Will hot lunch still be available?

Yes. We know food is an important part of our school day. We will continue with our hot lunch program with very enhanced safety protocols.

What are the other Health and Safety protocols at Mouse Mountain?

Health and Safety will be a very high priority for the 2020-2021 school year. We are using the [Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K -12 Settings](#) document to guide our planning to keep us all safe. I encourage you to refer to this document as it has lots of great information. I have posted the link to this document at the end of this letter.

Our other Safety Measures include:

Cleaning and disinfecting

The school will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants guidelines. Additional cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will occur during school hours.

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

Physical distancing is something that has become part of our lives. It is also something that is challenging in a school setting, particularly with younger

students. As such, it is reasonable to establish different expectations for varying age levels and activities.

Our students will be supported to have minimized physical contact with one another within their cohort and outdoors. They will be supported to maintain physical distance if they are indoors or not within their Learning Group (cohort).

We will not be gathering in large groups such as assemblies. All students will be reminded not to share their personal belongings, food or beverages.

In our hallways we will move in directions that minimize physical contact.

We have installed plexiglass barriers at our front office.

Hand Hygiene

Rigorous hand washing with plain soap and water is the most effective way to reduce the spread of illness. We will incorporate hand hygiene opportunities into our daily schedule and teach and regularly remind staff and students about the importance of diligent hand hygiene.

There are sanitizing stations and/or handwashing sinks in each of our classrooms and spaces and at each of our entrances.

Our daily schedule will involve hand washing at the following times:

- When students arrive at school and before they go home.
- Before and after any breaks (e.g., recess, lunch).
- Between different learning environments (e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions, from the gym to the classroom).
- Before and after eating and drinking.
- After using the toilet.
- After handling common resources/equipment/supplies or pets.
- After sneezing or coughing into hands.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Respiratory Etiquette

We will teach and reinforce these healthy practices including:

- coughing or sneezing into our elbow sleeve or a tissue. Throwing away used tissues and immediately performing hand hygiene.
- refraining from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Our windows will be open when possible. Our HVAC systems will be set to increase the intake of outside air and to maximize air exchange in classrooms and other spaces.

Provincial COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>

Daily Health Check			
1. Symptoms of Illness*	Does your child have any of the following symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
		YES	NO
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Sore throat	YES	NO
	Runny nose / stuffy nose	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Headache	YES	NO
	Fatigue	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Loss of appetite	YES	NO
	Nausea or vomiting	YES	NO
	Muscle aches	YES	NO
	Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	YES	NO
	Dizziness, confusion	YES	NO
	Abdominal pain	YES	NO
	Skin rashes or discolouration of fingers or toes	YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you or anyone in your household returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you or is anyone in your household a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

If you answered “YES” to any of the questions and the symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should NOT come to school.

If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health-care provider for further assessment. This includes 8- 1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner. If you answered “YES” to questions 2 or 3, use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.