



School Board Office, District No 40
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December 1, 2020

Dear parents and caregivers,

We're now about a third of the way into this unusual school year ... and we're seeing our routines are now well settled as life has become a bit more normal, in this new way.

When it comes to our schools, what we know is: students are benefitting from the face-to-face learning opportunities and social interactions that are taking place through in-class instruction. And the layers of health safety protocols in schools are working. In fact, the provincial data has shown the risk of exposure is four times lower in school settings than in the community at large. And we continue to believe that schools are the best place for most kids to be.

That said, we are also closely watching the numbers and restrictions change as we navigate this second wave of the pandemic. And we understand that the health and wellness of our students and your families may be changing as well, in ways that could make in-class instruction challenging.

That's why we're opening a new window for families needing to reconsider their previous choices.

If your child or family are currently engaged in online learning and wish to return to in-class learning, you'll be getting information later this week with instructions on how to do so.

If you wish to consider online learning, I encourage you to attend our virtual information evening on December 3, 6:30-7:30, via Microsoft Teams, to determine if this is the best decision for your family: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

After participating in that meeting, if you would like to move forward, please complete the transfer application form, within the timelines listed below:
<https://newwestschools.ca/application-to-transfer-from-in-class-learning-to-online-learning-for-k-8/> (the link will open up on December 7 at 9:00 am)

- **The K-8 online application process will be open on December 7th at 9 am, and will close on December 11th at 4 pm**
- Your application must be received by the December 11th deadline as there is limited availability into the program
- We will process and evaluate our capacity to accept new applications during the week of December 14-18 and will confirm placement by **December 18th**
- Should the demand exceed our capacity, we will use a lottery system to assign available spots within the program

What does online learning look like? In our Online Learning for K-8 Program, students work at home with the support of a parent or caregiver to complete grade level learning – designed for them by one of our BC qualified teachers. The teacher provides synchronous (in real time) and asynchronous (independent) learning activities in the online environment and uses videoconferencing and online collaboration tools to support student engagement. Students are invited to class meetings, online lessons, group meetings, and one-on-one conferences with their teacher, via Microsoft Teams.* And, depending on the grade, students are also invited to online

learning sessions several times a week—with sessions lasting between 20 minutes and an hour. Parents are expected to work in partnership with their child’s teacher to facilitate continued learning at home. And teachers will assess the learning experiences and provide feedback to students and parents on a regular basis.

**All Online Learning for K-8 students will need regular access to a laptop or desktop computer and a reliable internet connection. Chromebook loans are available for families in need.*

If you are successful in your application to transfer into our K-8 Online Learning Program:

- your child’s spot in their current school will be held for the September 2021 school year
- though if you wish to transition back into in-class learning within this current school year, we will do our best to accommodate your request, but we may need to place your child at a different school for the remainder of the school year, depending on capacity.

Again, if you are considering making an application to move to our Online Learning for K-8 Program, please attend the virtual information session to find out more and ask further questions. You may also email any inquiries to Director Maureen McRae-Stanger at mstanger@sd40.bc.ca. And if you are currently in online and interested in making the transition back into in-class instruction, information on that process will come later this week.

Otherwise, I hope this finds all of you healthy and doing well as we head into our winter months here in New Westminster.

Sincerely,



Karim Hachlaf
Superintendent of Schools / CEO

