



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

S O U T H E A S T K O O T E N A Y

August 31, 2021

Dear students, parents/guardians and staff:

My hope is that you have had a restful summer with your family and friends. It is hard to believe that the end of summer is almost upon us and we are getting ready to welcome your children back to school. While many will be excited, we acknowledge that the start of this school year may be challenging for some.

At the end of June last year, we were hoping for a “near normal” start this year. While we still have some health and safety guidelines, we are hopeful that with vaccinations and our continued health and safety plan, students and staff will have a great school year! As we have learned in the last year or so, plans continue to shift and change, and we will adapt as regulations from the regional or provincial health authorities are updated.

Health and Safety:

Just like last year, being safe in schools is of the utmost important to us. For staff and students, we will continue with daily person health checks, promote hand hygiene, and the requirement to stay home when sick. As outlined on August 24th by Dr. Bonnie Henry, masks are mandatory for our Grade 4 – 12 students as well as all adults in our buildings. Our K – 3 students will be strongly encouraged to wear masks and we will once again encourage a mask culture in all our buildings. Please send your children with masks as we will not have re-useable masks available this year.

Please see a summary of changes [here](#), our [SD5 Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](#) and the [K – 12 Provincial Guidelines for Schools](#) for more information.

In Interior Health, we are under additional health and safety measures which are reflected in our plans. We will adapt to any changes that we receive and ensure appropriate communication to our school communities.

Vaccinations:

Vaccinations are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and are available for individuals ages 12 and up. We are working with Interior Health on hosting vaccine clinics within our middle and secondary schools. Please watch for more information from your school principal in the next week as we confirm the dates.

Schools are busy working on their new health and safety guidelines and will be posting their individual information on their websites soon.

Important First Day Information:

Students will start at 1:00 pm on September 7th to give staff time to review the health and safety protocols. Busses will run 4 hours later on this day. School will end using the regular bell schedule.

Please contact your school principal or vice principal if you have any questions on the safety protocols or require further information.

I am really looking forward to visiting schools this year and connecting with staff and students. The first day and weeks are exciting times for our students. Enjoy your long weekend and see you soon!

Sincerely,

Silke Yardley
Superintendent

Please continue to look at our [Facebook](#) page here for the good things that are happening in our schools.