

September 8, 2020

Dear McBride Families,

Only a few final sleeps to go! We are all busy preparing for the first day of school on Thursday and are very excited to be back after a lovely and restful summer. A big thank-you to our custodian team who have our school sparkling and ready for our first day. Our staff will be taking part in professional learning this week and getting our classrooms ready with all COVID-19 health and safety guidelines in place. We have missed our students and are delighted to be welcoming most back to school. While COVID-19 has necessitated important adjustments within our buildings, it has not hampered our passion for learning. We are planning for exciting and engaging learning opportunities for our students while building upon our strong feelings of connection, community and safety. We are exceedingly grateful to be back at school for in person learning but remain mindful that we may need to pivot back to remote learning should the need arise; you will see in the coming weeks several strategies in place should that occur. We are committed to ensuring that all of our students feel connected to our school community; that we meet the learning needs of each student and that we are school where students love to learn! If you have reconsidered your decision for online learning and wish to have your child considered for online learning (but missed the original deadline) please submit their name on the district waitlist at: <https://newwestschools.ca/waitlist-application-for-online-learning-k-8-and-home-learners-at-hume-park/>

There will be a status update provided to waitlisted families by the end of the week.

Please note the following safety protocols which are in place based on provincial requirements to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the changes include:

- Parents are asked to conduct the daily health checks with their children prior to coming to school
- Staff will conduct a daily health check prior to coming to school
- Visitors to the school will be invited by appointment only
- There will be a strict stay at home protocol for those who are feeling unwell
- There will be enhanced cleaning and disinfecting in our school
- Students will be required to wash their hands upon entry to their classroom and at key points during their day
- Students will stay within their classroom cohort while indoors
- Physical distancing will be encouraged where possible

During the first weeks of school everyone will be working on ensuring that our students understand and follow the health and safety guidelines as defined by our Minister of Health. We have adopted the words of our Provincial hero and Health Officer; Dr. Bonnie Henry, to create a new school wide Charter for our school community:

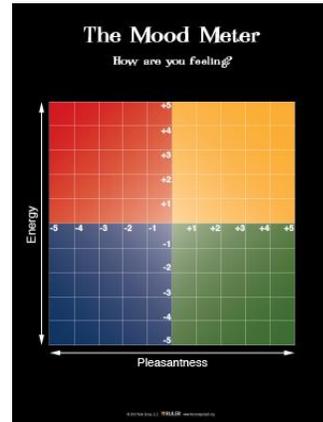
Our classes will continue to develop their own charters as one of the key tools of the RULER program; we look forward to sharing those with you next month. This is just one of the many strategies that we will be using to ensure that our students develop a strong sense of belonging to their classroom and school wide family. We recognize that there will be many emotions which



our children may experience in the first few weeks of school, if we plotted those emotions on our Mood Meter (from the RULER program) they would vary along the pleasant and energy quadrants. In a regular school year, there are always mixed emotions for the return to school, this year we anticipate that mix of emotions will be wider. It is important to acknowledge and support our students and encourage them to use their strategies to help manage their feelings and have the best start possible.

Due to COVID-19 we were not able to host our parent charter night. This year we will be sending home tools that you can use to support your children at home; please look for those in the coming weeks.

- R**ecognizing emotions in self and others
- U**nderstanding the causes and consequences of emotions
- L**abeling emotions accurately
- E**xpressing emotions appropriately
- R**egulating emotions effectively



Teachers have worked very carefully to create balance in our classrooms both academically and socially. Due to the cohort model, we are not able to take any further requests for classroom adjustments. We all understand that it can take a few weeks for a child to acclimate to a new school, new grade level, peer group and teacher. Thank you for helping your child through this transition; please contact Ms. Jhaj, our counsellor, if these feelings persist beyond September.

Thank you to everyone who has worked together to help prepare for the new school year. Your commitment to ensuring that Richard McBride remains a safe and amazing school is awe-inspiring. In the coming weeks I hope to be able to share updates with you about our new school project. I eagerly look forward to greeting students and families again. It remains an honour and privilege to serve as your principal. Together, I know we will make this school year one of growth and achievement for all of our students. Attached to this message you will find a link to a video that Mr. Elves and I prepared for our students to view tonight or tomorrow. We hope that this helps everyone feel safe and comfortable for their first day back. You will receive a separate email which identifies your child's division for this school year and where/when they line up on Thursday morning.

[Welcome Back to School 2020 video: https://youtu.be/6p9pCTfNhNw](https://youtu.be/6p9pCTfNhNw)

Thank-you everyone for supporting our safe return to school and helping to make McBride a place where our students love to learn!

Warmly,

Kathleen