



Nicole Buchanan
Board Chair

Chad Erickson
Superintendent of Schools

November 5, 2020

Dear Families,

Fall Break... It has been great to have our students and staff back together in our classrooms for the last nine weeks. We want to thank our families for their unwavering support, patience and understanding as we have navigated through these challenging times...together.

Our students and staff are heading into a much deserved Fall Break. We hope our families and staff take this time to recharge. We look forward to seeing you back on Thursday, November 12.

Remembrance Day... Recognizing Remembrance Day in our schools and remembering those who fought and continue to fight for our freedom is extremely important to students and staff in Red Deer Public Schools. Given the limits on assemblies in schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Red Deer Public Schools produced and showed a Division-wide video in our classes today to commemorate Remembrance Day which features:

- Red Deer landmarks used during wartimes with details from local Historian Michael Dawe
- A focus on the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II featuring the Dutch Liberation
- A listing of Red Deer Public students who served in World War I and II
- The laying of wreaths at each of our schools

With local Remembrance Day ceremonies cancelled as well, Red Deer Public Schools wants to make this video available to our families and the broader community, which can be viewed [here](#). For those interested in making a donation for Remembrance Day, please visit the [Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Trust Fund](#).

COVID-19 Pandemic... As you know, school has looked and felt different this year. Thank you to students, staff and families for being diligent with our health protocols so our focus can be on teaching and learning.

To date, we have had 14 COVID-19 cases in 9 of our schools, each of these cases originated outside of school. The few cases that were at school before they were aware they were infectious did not result in any transmission inside of our schools. We believe that our enhanced cleaning protocols, hand sanitation, mask requirements,

and the many other changes to the way that we now teach our kids have played an integral role in making sure COVID-19 has not spread within our school buildings.

Our schools have been nimble and quick to respond, ensuring the health and safety of our students and staff continues to be a top priority. By being diligent and following self isolation rules, we have reduced the number of students who have had to self-isolate. Let's continue to be vigilant in following the [revised daily screening checklist](#) and staying away from school if you have any risk of exposure or are exhibiting symptoms.

With COVID-19 cases rising in our community, mask use for students in Grades 4-12 will continue to be mandatory in our schools where physical distancing is not possible. We also continue to see enhanced cleaning to help ensure our buildings are safe environments for all students and staff. Lastly, we want to remind families to complete the updated [daily screening checklist](#) each morning before sending their child to school. Students staying home when they are unwell has made a difference as the pandemic continues to evolve.

Travel Plans... With the announcement of the International Border Testing Pilot Program, some families have inquired about future travel plans. While some restrictions have eased, it is essential that students and parents are aware of isolation restrictions specific to schools after travel outside the province. We would like to highlight a specific section of this program in regard to participants being prohibited from certain settings during the course of the pilot. The section below refers to school and child care and states;

“Child care programs (for example daycare, out of school care), K to 12 schools and post secondary institutions - attendees, students in schools and staff who work in these settings cannot go back to these settings until they have their second test and have received a negative result.”

Participants in this pilot are required to undergo a second test on day 6 or 7 after returning to Alberta. This means that children, parents and staff members will be allowed out of their homes after 2 days but they will not be allowed back into a school until after they receive a second negative test result, which given these timelines will be a minimum of 7-10 days from the time that participants are back in Alberta.

Please refer to this [Alberta Government webpage](#) for more information.

All other International travel that does not qualify for the Pilot program will still require students, parents and staff members to isolate for 14 days after arriving back in Canada.

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic is a dynamic situation. We must remain vigilant. We continue to encourage you to visit the [Red Deer Public School Re-entry Webpage](#) for the latest information as well as the [2020-2021 Handbook for Students and Families](#).

Sincerely,

Nicole Buchanan
Board Chair

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