

August 13, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

I hope this communication finds your family well and that you are able to make the most of such an unusual Summer. As a follow up to my letter dated July 30, I want to update you on a few developments and provide some reminders regarding timelines and the process we are following in Delta as we develop our re-start plan.

As we have all been focused on following the media coverage in B.C., and globally, regarding students returning to school, it is important to recognize that we appreciate the range of feelings and concerns of families. The Ministry of Education continues to work with the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Steering Committee to refine the Education Re-start Plan released on July 29 and we have recently received updated guidelines as of August 10. We are expecting additional information from the Ministry of Education on August 17 that will assist our planning.

As you can imagine, there are many details that need to be worked through at the local level and we are doing just that in Delta. One of the important parts of the process for us as a district is that we ensure adequate consultation with partner groups including representatives from our District Parent Advisory Council and with our unions. Our timelines are very tight and we are working over the course of the next week to consult with our partners on Delta's draft plans. Once we have had an opportunity for consultation, we are required to submit our plans to the Ministry of Education for approval before August 21. As soon as we have our plans approved by the Ministry, we will provide you with as much of a comprehensive overview as possible on, or before, Wednesday, August 26. Shortly after this time, you can expect to receive further details from your child's school.

In the meantime, you may see information about school schedules and other plans being shared out from other districts through the network news and social media. Please understand that all district plans are "draft" until the Ministry provides final approval, and that what schooling looks like in another district may not be exactly the same in Delta. Although it may look similar, the local context in each district will create some nuanced differences across the lower mainland. However, while districts may have some different structures, all districts must meet the Provincial Health Officer's safety guidelines.

Of course, I will update you as any changes to the timeline, or to the Ministry Re-Start Plan are announced. As you are likely aware, just yesterday we learned that the Ministry is looking at the first week of school as an "Orientation Week". This will be an opportunity for staff and students to familiarize themselves with the safety protocols and important changes to the daily operation of school. More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks regarding what these first few days of school will look like.

On a final note, I also feel it is important to emphasize that although we are planning to start in Stage 2, we need families to understand that these plans can change very quickly if there is a spike in community transmission and an increase in daily numbers of positive tests for COVID-19. The Provincial Health Officer will advise the Ministry of Education of the stage school districts will operate in. We will continue to do our best to keep you informed and up-to-date on any changes as they are announced.

If you haven't looked at them already, I would encourage you to review the resources shared by the government:

- [B.C.'s Education Restart Plan](#)
- [Five Stages Framework for K-12 Education](#)
- [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School Settings](#)

Thank you for your patience as we work hard to ensure your child's safe and smooth return to school in September.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Sheppard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doug Sheppard
Superintendent of Schools