

May 3, 2020

Dear Parents,



I would like to give an update on the news we have received during the last couple of days and about the news we are still waiting for from the Ministry. I have also received a number of questions with respect to the press release from the Quebec English School Boards Association, and the one from our Chair of WQSB, Alain Guy.

The updates are below – highlighted in **YELLOW**.

INFORMATION CURRENTLY KNOWN:

STAFF

Not all staff members will be returning to school, as any staff who has a compromised immune system, is pregnant, is breastfeeding, is exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms, or is over the age of 60 is not allowed to return for safety reasons. This includes teachers, support staff, office staff, and bus drivers.

If your child is returning to school, their homeroom teacher may or may not be there and your child may have another teacher. Adjustments to the daily schedule will also be made in order to adhere to the recommendations from Public Health which asks us to limit the number of teachers interacting with a group of students.

STAFF COULD BE WEARING MASKS AND GLOVES. PLEASE PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR THIS IF THEY ARE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.

ISOLATION ROOM

PUBLIC HEALTH HAS STATED THAT WE NEED TO HAVE AN ISOLATION ROOM, IN THE CASE THAT A CHILD HAS A FEVER OR SHOWS ANY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19. A STAFF MEMBER WILL REMAIN WITH CHILD IN THE ISOLATION ROOM, WEARING FULL PROTECTIVE GEAR (MASK, FACE SHIELD, GLOVES, GOWN) UNTIL THE CHILD IS PICKED UP FROM SCHOOL. PARENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PICK UP THEIR CHILD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE WILL CONTACT PUBLIC HEALTH AND THEY WILL GIVE FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. WE ARE WAITING FOR MORE INFORMATION AS TO IF, HOW AND WHEN OTHER PARENTS WILL BE MADE AWARE IF A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER SHOWS SIGNS OF COVID-19; OR IF WE HAVE A REPORTED CASE OF COVID-19.

IF YOUR CHILD IS RETURNING TO SCHOOL, PLEASE PREPARE THEM FOR THIS PROCEDURE SHOULD THEY BECOME SICK AT SCHOOL.

CLASSES/CLASSROOMS

IF YOUR CHILD IS RETURNING TO SCHOOL, PLEASE PREPARE THEM TO UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW THE 2 M DISTANCING AT ALL TIMES. THE YOUNGER THE STUDENT, THE MORE DIFFICULT THIS WILL BE, SO PLEASE USE THIS TIME TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD. UNFORTUNATELY, TEACHERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HAVE ANY PHYSICAL

CONTACT WITH STUDENTS; AND STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO HAVE ANY PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THEIR PEERS (As per Public Health Directives).

In classrooms, staff and students need to follow the 2m social distancing rules and each group of students will be kept separate from the other groups; there will be no changing of classes. The maximum number of students that can be in the room is 15. Your child may be in a different classroom and may be with other students not in their homeroom if we need to balance groups. We will try to keep grade levels together as much as possible. MANY OF THE GROUPINGS WE HAVE CREATED SO FAR ARE A MIXTURE OF STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT CLASSES/GRADES.

The group of students will be in the same classroom all day and will not have access to other school spaces (i.e. gymnasium, library, MPR, computer lab). STUDENTS WILL BE WITH THE SAME GROUP OF STUDENTS FOR LUNCH AND RECESSES. THERE WILL ONLY BE 2 OR 3 GROUPS OF STUDENTS OUTSIDE AT ANY GIVEN TIME, AND THEY WILL HAVE A DESIGNATED AREA TO PLAY AWAY FROM THE OTHER GROUPS, WHILE ALWAYS ADHERING TO THE 2 METRE SOCIAL DISTANCING (as per public health).

Learning resources, physical education equipment, laptops, iPads, and manipulatives will not be used in order to limit the spread of germs. Students will only be able to use their own supplies and no sharing will be allowed. STUDENTS WILL HAVE THEIR OWN BASKETS OF SUPPLIES, AND ITEMS THEY WILL BE ABLE TO USE DURING THE DAY.

IF YOUR CHILD IS RETURNING TO SCHOOL, PLEASE PREPARE THEM THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SHARING OF MATERIALS AT SCHOOL (as per public Health Directives). THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS, AS THEY ARE USED TO SHARING MATERIALS.

HALLWAYS

We will need to develop a plan to move students and staff through the space while adhering to the 2 m distancing regulations, likely arrows indicating directions of movement and where to stand and wait.

BATHROOMS

Bathroom use will provide a number of challenges in adhering to the 2m distancing rules. The plan for this had not yet been finalized; we will do so next week when we are back to school. WE ARE STILL PLANNING THE MOVEMENTS IN THE SCHOOL.

HOT LUNCHES/SNACKS

There will be no hot lunch services or snacks/food provided by the school, as per the Public Health directives. Students coming to school will need to bring their own lunch and snacks, as well as their own water bottle (as we still need to let the water run for 60 seconds before drinking at school – water fountains are still off limits). THIS IS ALL THAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD BRING TO SCHOOL WITH THEM.

PARENTS IN BUILDING

Parents and visitors are not allowed in the school building, as per Public Health Directives. We will be working on a system for drop-off and pick-up of students at the end of the school day, as well as for the school daycare. More information will come shortly regarding the procedures for these transition times.

To minimize interactions, students are required to arrive to school on time and should stay at school for the entire school day. WE ARE STILL PLANNING THE MOVEMENTS IN THE SCHOOL.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND TEMPERATURE TESTING

As per Public Health Directives, students will not wear masks at school. Staff will likely be wearing masks at school. STAFF COULD BE WEARING MASKS AND GLOVES AT SCHOOL.

We will not be taking the temperature of staff or students (as per Public Health). WE WILL BE TAKING TEMPERATURES OF STUDENTS OR STAFF WHO ARE NOT FEELING WELL. STAFF MEMBERS WILL BE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY IF THEY SHOW ANY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19, AND WILL SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. STUDENTS WILL BE KEPT IN THE ISOLATION ROOM UNTIL THEY ARE PICKED UP TO GO SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

HAND WASHING AND SANITIZER

We will ask students to wash hands or use hand sanitizer at school often and routines will be clearly established. Students will use the products from school, and are not permitted to bring their own (Public Health). THE SCHOOL BOARD IS TRYING TO RENT HAND WASHING STATIONS FOR THE ENTRY POINTS OF THE SCHOOL. WE WILL BE USING CLASSROOMS THAT HAVE SINKS WHENEVER POSSIBLE FOR THE STUDENTS WHO ARE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD HAS PRACTICED PROPER HANDWASHING. YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP TO KEEP STAFF AND STUDENTS SAFE.

CLEANING SURFACES

WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVES THAT WERE SET OUT FOR THE EMERGENCY DAYCARES THAT HAVE BEEN OPEN IN THE PROVINCE. STAFF MEMBERS WILL IMMEDIATELY WIPE DOWN SURFACES AFTER ANY CHILD OR ADULT HAS TOUCHED THEM (ALL DOOR HANDLES, INCLUDING WASHROOMS, ALL OTHER COMMON CONTACT POINTS). LOCKERS WILL BE WIPED DOWN DAILY. STAFF WILL WIPE DOWN ANY SURFACE THAT THEY HAVE TOUCHED BEFORE THE NEXT STAFF MEMBER ENTERS THE ROOM.

BRINGING ITEMS TO SCHOOL

Students should come to school with items limited to (as per Public Health) a lunch bag and water bottle. Students will only have one pair of shoes at school that they will use indoor and outdoor. Agendas are not to be sent to school and communication must be done by email or to the office by phone. There will be no homework or learning materials sent home. THEY SHOULD NOT BRING ANYTHING BUT THEIR LUNCH AND WATER BOTTLE TO SCHOOL EACH DAY.

RECESSES

Students will go outside during the day, but recess times will be adjusted as different groups will go out at different times so that there are no large gatherings. Students will not be allowed to use the play structure or share any equipment (balls, etc.). More details of recesses will be planned, as we receive further directives. AS WE HAVE LIMITED ACTIVITIES THAT WE CAN DO DURING RECESS, WE WILL TRY TO COORDINATE WALKS AROUND THE YARD AND NEIGHBOURHOOD, ALWAYS RESPECTING THE 2 M SOCIAL DISTANCING DIRECTIVE. IF YOUR CHILD IS RETURNING TO SCHOOL, PLEASE PRACTICE WALKING IN A LINE, 2 M BEHIND THE PERSON IN FRONT OF THEM, AND REINFORCE THAT THIS RULE MUST BE FOLLOWED AT ALL TIMES, as per public health directives.

TRANSPORTATION

Public Health recommends that parents transport their child to school. If you are unable to transport your child to school, you can request bus transportation. The School Board does not guarantee bus service at this time due to a shortage of staff, but is working hard to be able to provide this service to those that need it. Only 12 students are allowed per bus (as per Public Health), allowing for spacing. **IF YOUR CHILD IS RETURNING TO SCHOOL AND HAS REQUESTED A BUS, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THEY REMAIN IN THEIR SEAT, AND REMAIN THERE UNTIL THEY ARE CALLED TO GET OFF THE BUS. STUDENTS MUST FOLLOW THIS DIRECTIVE, FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL OTHER STUDENTS ON THE BUS, AND FOR THE BUS DRIVER. IF YOUR CHILD IS UNABLE TO FOLLOW THE SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES ON THE BUS, THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE THE BUS. THE SCHOOL BOARD WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO CONFIRM IF A BUS IS AVAILABLE NEXT WEEK.**

STUDENTS WITH COMPROMISED IMMUNE SYSTEM, OR LIVING WITH SOMEONE WITH COMPROMISED SYSTEM

Students who have a compromised system or live with someone with a compromised system are to stay at home and not return to school (Directive from Public Health), as per the exemptions as listed in “**STAFF**” section above.

TECHNOLOGY AT HOME

The details of providing students with technology for home learning has not yet been given from the Ministry. **WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, WE ARE HOPING TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE SOME TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS AT HOME FOR OUR STUDENTS WITH THE GREATEST NEED STARTING AT THE END OF NEXT WEEK.**

LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM, LEARNING FROM HOME

Teachers will still support learning activities at home and students will receive the weekly learning packages. If your child remains home for their learning, there may be a change of teacher providing the weekly check-ins and support.

No new concepts will be taught either at school, or virtually; as per the Minister of Education Directives. All material will be a review of concepts previously taught and fun educational activities.

Students will be evaluated based on terms 1 and 2, there will be no evaluations, tests or exams at school or at home. We are still unsure what the report card will look like or promotion to the next grade.

PICKING UP MATERIALS FROM SCHOOL

The school will organize a plan for the parents of students who are remaining at home to pick up all of your child’s materials from school. This will be by appointment, to respect the Public Health Directives. More information will come next week. **WE WILL SEND OUT A “SIGN-UP” FORM NEXT WEEK BY EMAIL, WHERE YOU CAN SIGN UP FOR A TIME SLOT TO PICK UP MATERIALS. WE ARE HOPING TO HAVE PICK-UP STARTING ON WEDNESDAY. PARENTS WILL NEED TO COME AT THEIR DESIGNATED TIME AND LOCATION. MORE INFORMATION TO COME IN A SEPARATE EMAIL.**

DAYCARE

Daycare staff could also be different for your child should they be returning to the program. Again, they will be following all of the same protocol as is followed during the school day, with limited access to areas of the school, possibly different educators and groupings and a different routine. We will be

determining pick-up routines as well that will abide by Public Health directives. **DAYCARE WILL BE COMMUNICATING THEIR PROTOCOL WITH PARENTS NEXT WEEK.**

SENDING MY CHILD TO SCHOOL OR KEEPING AT HOME

It is a parental decision to send your child to school, or to keep them at home unless your child has a compromised system, or lives with someone who does. Each family has a unique situation, so please choose what is most appropriate for you and your family.

Our hard-working staff will be able to provide learning and social connections both at school, and at home.

ALL PARENTS are asked to complete the brief survey by May 4th at 10:00 am to communicate to the school whether your child will or will not attend school beginning May 11th, 2020. In this survey you will be asked to indicate whether you need transportation and if your child will participate in daycare (they must be registered previously registered).

CAN I DECIDE TO SEND MY CHILD TO SCHOOL LATER DURING THE MONTH OF MAY OR JUNE?

If you are not sending your child on May 11th and wish to send them later, you will need to notify the school one week in advance in writing at: wakefield@wqsb.qc.ca so that we can adequately prepare (as per Ministry Directive). One week notice is mandatory and no exceptions will be made.

PART- TIME SCHOOLING is not permitted, as per Directives. Students must attend for 5 days a week when they sign up.

PRESS RELEASE FROM QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, AND FROM THE CHAIR OF WQSB – ALAIN GUY

AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, THE QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION AS WELL AS THE COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS OF WQSB DO NOT FEEL THAT WE HAVE ALL THE SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE TO OPEN ON MAY 11TH. AT THIS POINT, SCHOOLS STILL NEED TO DO THEIR BEST TO PLAN FOR A SAFE RE-ENTRY ON MAY 11TH, AS PER THE MINISTRY DIRECTIVE.

Sincerely,

Julie Fram Greig

Principal, Wakefield Elementary School