Friday Sept 4th, 2020

Dear Blueridge Families,

We hope that you are doing well and are looking forward to the upcoming school year. We know that there are many questions and we appreciate you giving us the time get our school and staff organized to best support your children and to ensure everyone’s health and safety at school. The partnership with families will be more important than ever this year. We are doing everything that we can to keep the school a clean and controlled environment for everyone and we ask that you ensure that children who are demonstrating any symptoms of a cold, influenza, or COVID-19 are kept home for everyone’s safety.

There has been important information already sent to you. For your quick reference we have attached links to those updates here:

[Superintendent Mark Pearmain’s letter](https://www.sd44.ca/COVID-19/Documents/08262020_NVSD%20Superintendent%20Letter%20to%20Elementary%20Parents%2c%20Guardians.pdf)

[North Vancouver School District’s Restart Plan](https://www.sd44.ca/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

[Parent FAQs](https://www.sd44.ca/COVID-19/BacktoSchoolSeptember2020FAQs/Pages/default.aspx#/=)

[Back to School Fact Sheet](https://www.sd44.ca/school/lynnmour/Documents/BackToSchool-Factsheet.pdf)

**Health and Safety Protocols for Blueridge:**

* Parents and caregivers are **required** to assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory diseases before sending them to school
* All outside doors will be locked for the day as we will be limiting the number of people that enter the building. Students are to remain outside the school at their exterior classroom door to wait for their teachers to welcome them in. They will be dismissed from these same doors.
* Please send your child with a filled water bottle. They will have access to water bottle filling stations should they need to replenish.
* Should you need to pick your child up early, or drop something off, we ask that you call the school office first to make arrangements **(604.903.3250)**
* Any requests to meet with teachers must be done so via a pre-arranged appointment and in most cases will be a phone call or through MS Teams.

**Important dates and communications to expect:**

**Friday, September 4:** Today you are receiving this communication detailing Blueridge’s Health and Safety Protocols and any potential changes to the school schedule as needed to ensure everyone’s safety. Kindergarten families will receive their gradual entry schedule and class placement.

**September 8th & 9th –** Students not in session.  Staff will participate in training regarding the safe and healthy return of students to school. This includes learning the new Health and Safety protocols, finalizing learning cohort placements, preparing learning spaces, MS Teams tutorials and set up, Instructional Planning, and guidance for incorporating Social Emotional Learning to support student mental health.

**Wednesday, September 9**–Classroom teachers will communicate with families about the process for Thursday morning. Teachers will welcome your child to their class and confirm your child’s learning cohort with specific cohort protocols as well as specific drop off and pick up information and timing for September 10th.

**Thursday, September 10** – Students in Grades 1 to 7 will follow the plan outlined in the communication provided by the classroom teacher from September 9th. Please note that your child will be at school for a shortened day (2 hours) in the morning from 8:40 AM to 10:40 or 8:50 to 10:50 \*See staggered entry below. We welcome all students to attend this orientation session, including students who are not planning to attend regular in-person class.

**Friday, September 11\*–** First full day of classes for students in Grades 1 to 7. Kindergarten Gradual Entry begins (plan will be communicated by Kindergarten Teachers)

**Transition Support Option**

For families of elementary students planning to select the Transition Support Option, participation in the orientation sessios will connect students with their classmates and familiarize them with the routines that will be in place when they eventually return to school.

General information regarding the Elementary Transition Support Option was sent by Superintendent Mark Pearmain to all elementary families on Wednesday, September 2nd. Further specifics about the Elementary Transition Support Option will be sent out by schools. Families will be asked to confirm their selection of the Transition Support Option (deadline will be provided). Teacher support for those in this option will begin Monday, September 21st.

**Some important information to highlight and help to answer questions regarding Blueridge**

**Learning Cohort/Group**

**What are they?**

Learning Cohorts or Groups are comprised of one class of students and the classroom teacher(s). At Blueridge there may be times where an EA (Educational Assistant) is included directly in a Learning Cohort/Group due to support needed in that group or because maintaining a 2m physical distance will not be possible. Learning Cohorts/Group will not exceed 30 people. **All students will be assigned to classes/cohorts even if they might not be planning to attend school right away.** Information regarding class/teacher placements will be sent out on **Wednesday, September 9th.**

*\*Students who are attending the Literacy Centre will receive communication directly from Literacy Centre staff inviting them for testing on Thursday, September 10th and Friday September 11th. They will begin classes on September 14th.*

**Why do we have them?**

Learning Cohorts/Groups allow us to ensure that school remains a controlled environment for your child. With strict guidelines and clear safety protocols adhered to by each group, we can ensure that all students have the same directions and are kept safe.

**How can parents/guardians help support your child?**

Parents/guardians can support their child by explaining/reinforcing the importance of staying in a learning group while at school. When children interact with others outside of their Learning Group, we will be reinforcing physical distance protocols. Parents can help by practicing these measures in the community and giving reminders about what is expected at school. By being respectful of these groupings, you help to keep everyone else in the group safe as well. We also ask that you familiarize yourself with the MS Teams platform as this will be how teachers will communicate directly with families and students. Should we have to transition back to stage 3 or 4 of [B.C’S Five Stage Framework for K-12 Education,](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school/five-stages-framework) this will be the platform used for instructional delivery. Information regarding MS Teams [HERE](https://www.sd44.ca/parents/techservicesandresources/tech_support/Pages/default.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fparents%2Ftechservicesandresources%2Ftech%5Fsupport%2FDocuments%2FOffice%20365%20Support&FolderCTID=0x012000B88FA2D3835C014C9D27244FFFEA098C&View=%7B862EC78F%2D4448%2D48A3%2D9D7F%2D1BD03A0A4577%7D#/=). Students in grades 1-7 will receive a classroom MS Teams invite on Thursday, September 10th. Kindergartens to follow in the upcoming weeks.

**Assess daily for symptoms.**

It is expected that parents assess their child daily for symptoms of Covid-19. If a child is demonstrating any symptoms, they are not come to school. If a child is demonstrating any cold or flu symptoms they need to stay home. It is important that families respect this and consult their doctor or call 811 if anyone is symptomatic. We really need all families support with this.

**What if my child gets sick or needs to self-isolate?**

Continuity of learning and equitable instructional delivery is important for us. Just as schools have done in the past, teachers will be able to communicate tasks/assignments to families and students through email or MS Teams to ensure that they do not miss out on learning opportunities should they need to self-isolate.

**What do “staggered” hours look like at Blueridge?**

Our Health and Safety team has carefully examined how to enter and exit our school safely. We will have staggered start times of either 8:40 or 8:50 with an end time of 2:50 or 3:00. This is to control the number of students accessing the hallway and handwashing at different times. You will be advised of your start time by your classroom teacher on ***Wednesday, September 9th***. We have decided to continue to divide our classes for break times to ensure more space on the playground and on the playing field as well to accommodate staggered handwashing. This means that about half of the students will have their recess at 10:00 to 10:20 and the others will have it from 10:20 to 10:40. The lunch time process will also be staggered with eat and play times in the same manner as recess.

**What will school “look like” for my child starting September 10?**

* + Students who returned in June, will not be surprised by the changes we have had to make. The school will look and feel very much the same. There will be:
    1. Designated entrances, floor markings, and/or signage to manage traffic flow;
    2. Staggering exit and entrance to the building during recess and lunch times and beginning and end of day.
    3. Increased frequency of handwashing (classroom sinks, communal sinks, washroom sinks and newly installed handwashing stations)
    4. We will continue to limit visitors from entering the building;
    5. Our custodial teams will be cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces at least twice in 24 hours including once during regular school hours (eg, doorknobs, light switches, hand railings); and
    6. \*\*New\*\* School staff will be wearing masks in common or high traffic areas such as hallways and some staff will be wearing them in classrooms.
    7. Library and music will be delivered in the classroom, all common use rooms will be closed to classes.

**Personal Protective Equipment:**

**Is it expected that students wear masks or other PPE items?**

It is not expected that students wear masks while they are with their Learning Group. Non- medical masks will be worn by staff in high traffic areas (such as the hallways) or in situations where physical distancing is not possible. This includes any adult who is not a part of a given Learning Group (Administrators, Learning Support Teachers, EAs, Indigenous Support Workers, etc)

**Can my child wear a mask?**

Absolutely. If they are capable and would like to wear a mask, while at school, they are certainly allowed to. Reusable face masks will be made available for staff and students upon request.

**Important things to note**:

**Lunches and snacks:**

Please ensure that your child has enough snacks and a healthy lunch in their backpack. We will be continuing the “pack in, pack out” procedure to minimize hallway traffic and touch points at the school. This means that any uneaten food, disposable wrappers, or recycling that is packed in a child’s lunch, will simply be put back into their lunch kit to take home when they are finished.

**Will there be a hot lunch ordering program this year?**

At this time, unfortunately, we will not be able to offer the Hot Lunch ordering program for families. Please stay tuned for updated information.

**Personal Items:**

Only required items (backpack, lunch, water bottle, weather appropriate clothing, etc.) should be brought to school. All other personal items (Pokémon cards, toys, sports equipment, etc.) should be left at home to minimize possibility of sharing of items. We will be providing equipment that we can clean for students to play with.

**Visitors to the school**

At this time, we continue to limit the number of people entering the school. School access will be for students and staff only. We ask that all parents contact the school office should they need to reach their child. If you have any other concerns please phone or email the office prior to arrival.

**Five Stage Framework – Important Information to know**

The Ministry of Education, as directed by the Provincial Health Office, had given school districts clear expectations to maximize in class instruction for all students at various stages of the pandemic and be as minimally disruptive for families.

**How will I know when my child should be at school?**

Currently we are in stage two, which means that all students are able to receive in-class instruction and should be at school daily, unless exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19. However, should we need to transition between stages cohorts will be divided into sub groups to accommodate the density requirements set out by the Ministry. Over the next few weeks teachers will make plans to place children into groups within their Learning Cohort/Group. Your child’s teacher will communicate at a later date which days your child will be at school depending on what stage we are in.

Ex: **Stage Two- Monday through Friday**

**Stage Three-** two days in person instruction (50% density target in the school as per Provincial Health Office)

**Stage Four-** one day in person instruction (25% density target in the school as per the Provincial Health Office)

(Please note that due to the numbers of students in the school, numbers of groups we have, and requirements to meet Provincial Health Office directions, we cannot take requests for days of attendance for each child. Siblings will be prioritized to attend on the same days and as needed, accommodations for Essential Service Workers and priority learners will be made, as space allows. The Provincial Health Office has given school districts direction on prioritizing placements of students.)

**Stage Five-** everyone would be working from home (0% density target at the school)