



## Welcome back!!!

On behalf of the staff at École Sifton School, it is my pleasure to welcome our families back for the 2021-22 school year. We are looking forward to having our students back in the building and are excited that we will be able to resume many of the activities and events that were not possible last year. We know that students and their families have many questions about what back to school will look like this year. We hope this back to school message will provide you with answers to these questions. A reminder that our first day of classes will be Tuesday, September 7th. We look forward to seeing all of our students then!!

Our plans for re-entry this year follow those guidelines provided both by Alberta Education and Battle River School Division. Our staff have been planning since last fall on how to implement many layers of safety to ensure we have a safe, welcoming and caring learning environment. We look forward to working with our school community to help implement these necessary aspects of our re-entry plan which include screening for illness, hand washing & sanitization, physical distancing and use of personal protective equipment and masks. Much of the information provided here is also available in the [BRSD Back to School Plan \(2021-22\)](#) which was emailed out to families last week and is available on the BRSD website. The following will provide some clarification regarding how this plan will be implemented at École Sifton School.

Many of our protocols from last year will remain in place. We will continue to have students come in a variety of different doorways to help minimize the traffic in these areas. Classes will continue to have assigned areas on the playground in which they use for the day at recess. These will rotate so that they have access to all areas during the week. Students and staff will continue to hand sanitize when they enter and exit classrooms and the school.

We will use the same bell schedule as last year which provides different recess times for our younger and older students. We had a great deal of positive feedback regarding this change last year. It gives our students more access to playground equipment, increases supervision and helps minimize incidences on the playground. Our doors will continue to be open at 8:15 for students. Once students arrive they will go directly to their classroom for morning activities just as they did last year. Please note that there will be no morning or after school supervision on the playground. One change to this schedule from last year is that we will not have a staggered dismissal schedule at the end of the day. All students will be dismissed from their classes at 3:15 each day regardless of whether they are walking home, being picked up, are going on the bus or are attending our after school OSCAR program. Of course if parents need to pick up their son and/or daughter early they can always contact us at the school to arrange this.

As indicated in BRSD's Back to School Plan, all parents will need to continue to complete a [Daily Assessment for Children under 18](#) with their child(ren) each day before sending them to school. This is a checklist for parents' use and does not need to be submitted to the school. This assessment will also

be required for all our staff and any visitors that enter the building. We are asking that families supply at least 3 emergency contact numbers for their children. As was the case last year, if students develop symptoms during the day, even mild ones, we will need to contact families to pick them up immediately.

As was the case last year, it will be necessary for visitors to the school to make appointments ahead of time. Parents are welcome to come and see members of our school's staff to discuss the progress of their child(ren). If you need to arrange a visit, please do not hesitate to contact the school office to arrange an appointment. Appointments with teachers can be made by contacting them directly. It is important that these meetings be prearranged in order to limit the amount of traffic in the building at any given time. For this reason unfortunately parents will not be able to enter the school to pick up or drop off students. All visitors are asked to come to the front doors and will be signed in at their time of arrival. Parents that are dropping off students late or picking them up early are asked to call the office and we will help with these arrangements. In the event, students are late or returning from an appointment, they will need to enter the building through the main front entrance. As the doors will be locked, we ask that you call the school when you arrive so we can welcome your child into the building. The number for the school is 780-672-2980. There is also a doorbell if you are unable to call. Please use the bell on the right hand side of the door as this one only rings at the school office.

To help facilitate drop off for the first few days of school, teachers will meet their class in the playground in a well marked area and will walk their class into the school to their classroom. Teachers will provide more information in their welcome messages but please feel free to send school supplies over a couple of school days if your son or daughter will have too much to carry on the first day. For the first week or two of classes, teachers will continue to meet their students on the school grounds and walk them to their classrooms. After this time the school will be open at 8:15 and students will be able to enter the school using their assigned entrance and head to their classes. Masks will be necessary for all students while they are in hallways and common areas. Students will have activities to be involved in until the bell goes at 8:30. Once students are in their classes and seated, masks will not be required unless they are involved in activities that do not permit social distancing. Please note that there will be no supervision on the playground in the mornings before school or after school. For this reason, we ask that students are not dropped off earlier than 8:15 whenever possible.

One significant difference from last year involves the use of masks by all students and staff, including our students in kindergarten to grade three. Students will only be required to wear masks on the bus, in common areas like hallways and when social distancing is not possible in the classroom. I want to assure parents that staff are working to make this a positive experience for students and that the majority of the time in the classroom will not involve wearing masks. We learned last year that students adapt to this very quickly and with the support of their families and staff, they will see it as an important part of keeping us all safe and able to attend. As they did last year, teachers will spend time helping students adjust to this new procedure.

Our staff is excited about the opportunity to welcome all of our students on the first day and to ensure they have a great school year. Thank you for your support and patience as we work through new routines and procedures. We know that these will need to evolve over our first few days and/or weeks and we thank you in advance for your flexibility as we communicate these changes to you. Teachers will be connecting with our families this week to provide additional information for their specific classes. Please visit our website to find school supply lists under the "Family" tab. Thank you again for your support in making this re-entry plan successful. Please do not hesitate to contact us at the school if you have any additional questions.