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Dear MCHS Families:

As we near the start of the school year it is important to take note of a number of things that need to take place before students come to school every day. If you haven't had a chance to take a look at the parent handbook, please do so when you get a chance by using the following link [Parent Re-entry Handbook](#). Here are a couple of the big rocks that you need to be aware of as we get ready to get back to school from the handbook as well as the school.

### Screening:

One very important thing that parents have to do with their child before sending them to school every day is the COVID-10 Information Screening Questionnaire tool (English: [link](#)) (French: [link](#)). Please be diligent with this as this will be your baseline (every day) to determine whether you send your child to school or not. Students who have any symptoms noted on the questionnaire cannot attend school. The form does not need to be submitted to the office. If your child has any symptoms, contact the office to let us know. Everyone who enters a school will see a sign that reminds them to complete the daily COVID-19 Information Screening Questionnaire before entering the building.

### Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is one health measure to reduce risk of transmitting COVID-19. At times, students and staff will be sitting, walking, talking, or doing activities that require them to be closer than 2m, **so varied strategies** will be put in place to promote physical distancing throughout their buildings, where possible, including in classrooms, hallways, washrooms, and common areas. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- removing excess furniture in classrooms to make more space to spread student desks and tables farther apart;
- removing or rearranging seating in common areas to prevent students from gathering;
- staggering the start/end/break times for classes to prevent crowded hallways;
- posting signs and using floor markers to control the flow of foot traffic and

- support physical distancing; and
- using plexiglass shields.

## **Hand Hygiene**

Everyone who enters a school will need to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately. Students and staff will be required to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the day, including every time that they enter or exit the school/classroom, before and after using shared equipment, and before and after eating. Schools will provide hand sanitizer throughout the building to support these requirements. *It is also encouraged that families send their children to school with personal hand sanitizer.* Schools will also promote proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette with verbal reminders and posters throughout the school. Parents can help their children practice these hand hygiene practices at home before returning to school.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks, face shields, gloves, and gowns are provided to staff who work with students in classrooms.

The Minister of Education and the Chief Medical Officer of Alberta have mandated that all staff and all grades 4-12 students wear a mask when physical distancing at school is not possible. Masks are required for students on buses, as buses are an environment in which students from multiple cohorts come together and social distancing is difficult to maintain. It is our collective responsibility to adhere to mask protocols. Masks will be provided to students. That said, we encourage families to send their children to school with a mask and to practice proper mask protocols prior to coming to school. Emergency supplies of masks, face shields, gloves, gowns will be kept at the school office.

## **Lockers:**

No students will be allowed to use lockers at the school due to them being high touch areas. Students are encouraged to use a backpack and keep their own items with them at all times. This means that you don't share pencils or paper or let someone else carry your books to class. We need our students to be safe and responsible and look after their own items only.

## **Vending Machines/Microwaves/Snack Shack:**

Unfortunately at this time, these services will not be available at the school. These are once again high touch areas and any time you are dealing with food, you have to be extremely careful. Until things change, please do not rely on these services as they will not be available.

### **Water Fountains:**

Students are more than welcome to use the refillable water stations in the school to fill up their water bottles. The drinking fountain itself will not be in service for students to take drinks during the day.

### **Lunch:**

We know many of our students will leave school for lunch and to go to a variety of places in the community to grab something to eat. Of course that is permitted, as well as students wanting to go home for lunch. We want to remind our students and families to make sure you wear masks wherever you go and follow physical distancing measures at all times. For those students staying at the school, please bring enough to eat for the course of your day. Bag lunches are okay, but sharing your lunch with others is not. Once again, be responsible, pack your lunch, make sure you have enough to last throughout the course of the day.

We are also encouraging students to go outside for lunch. Let's take advantage of the weather while it's warm and let's get out of the building as much as we can. A change of scenery will be a nice change of pace from being in the classroom all day and we all should take advantage of the last few weeks of warm weather before the cooler fall weather hits.

As we must maintain physical distance during the lunch time we will be opening classrooms for students to eat their lunches. We want to keep our students as safe as possible and that includes lunch. Please encourage your son or daughter to be safe at lunch as we have limited ability to police them during this time.

### **Arriving at School:**

At the high school level we have students coming into the building at different times of the morning. A couple of things to be aware of:

1. Make sure you are wearing your mask
2. Please sanitize or wash your hands immediately

3. Staff will direct traffic and tell students where to go
4. Parents, please do not come into the school. If you are dropping off kids in the morning, please pay careful attention to the number of students going into the school. Wait until numbers are low to let students out of the car to go into the school.
5. Students coming to school late will report directly to the office. A call will be made to the classroom to let the teacher know the student is on the way.

### **Bring Your Own Device:**

We are strongly encouraging students to bring their own device if they have one. A Chromebook or laptop would certainly work. School owned devices must be sanitized after every student uses making it near impossible for us to maintain. Thus having your own device will mitigate this issue. Not only will this make a difference during the pandemic, but this is something we need to do more of as we move into the future after the pandemic. Having a personal device is a critical piece of equipment that students will need throughout their high school careers.

### **Supply Lists:**

At the high school level there is not really supply lists to be had as students generally have a number of different teachers who require different things. Please only bring the basics such as paper, pencils, pens, a binder and of course a backpack to keep all student belongings in one area. If teachers need students to get something more, they will let students know in the first couple of days of class.

### **Breaks:**

We will do our best to stagger breaks throughout the course of the day as well as lunch time so we don't have too many students in one area all at once. A reminder once again, students need to wear their masks in all areas of the school.

### **End of the Day:**

Students will be dismissed at the end of the day in smaller numbers so bigger groups don't form. Students will be dismissed in a timely fashion to make sure they get to their buses on time. If students have all their materials with them in their backpacks, this will help us be able to facilitate this. Students will not be able to gather in the school at the

end of the day. Students who do not take a bus will need to leave the building immediately after being dismissed.

Well folks, that's over four pages for you to read, so that's enough for now. As we move along, more communication will come your way. Please be patient with us as we figure things out, but know we are very excited to see our students soon as we begin the 2020-2021 school year. Take care and as always, please be safe.

MCHS Student Learning Team