

*God Calls Us*



EACH BY NAME

## Re-Entry Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Parents

August 10, 2020

### 1. When will staff and students need to wear face masks?

All staff are expected to wear a mask where physical distancing of 2m is not consistently possible. Exceptions may be considered when working with individuals with a hearing impairment or when working in a context that supports 2m physical distancing or other protective measures are in place. As per Alberta Health Services (AHS) guidelines, a face shield does not replace a face mask, but may be used as an additional measure in conjunction with a face mask.

All students, K-12, riding on ETS or Yellow bus must wear a face mask.

Students in grades 4-12 must wear face masks whenever physical distancing of 2m is not possible. This will include:

- In hallways and common areas,
- In classroom contexts in which there is a high degree of close interaction, food preparation (Home Economics) or other physical safety conditions cannot be appropriately maintained.

Students in grades 100 Voices to 3 are strongly encouraged to wear a face mask, if they are physically, developmentally and psychologically able to. Parents of students with unique sensory challenges should meet with school administration to discuss exemptions and alternative strategies to this mandate.

### 2. How do I select the method of educational delivery I wish for my child to have? (in-person or at-home).

SWIFT messages have been emailed to parents outlining this process within PowerSchool. Please check there for detailed descriptions of the process to be completed for each child. For appropriate staffing and planning purposes, we ask that parents make that determination by Friday, August 14.

#### a. Why can only one parent make the choice?

- i. There are limits within PowerSchool whereby once a parent entry is made to student information, that is what remains. If there are custodial issues, those must be resolved outside of the school and a choice in the best interests of the child ultimately determined and communicated to the school.



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- b. **What if we change our mind before school starts? How do we make the change?**
  - i. Please provide a written request (email is fine) to your principal, indicating that you wish to change your stance and that all parents/guardians agree with this change. It would be preferable if all parents/guardians were part of that communication. From there, the principal will coordinate the change with Division staff responsible for PowerSchool data entry. We are already experiencing many parents wanting to go from an online setting to the in-person school setting; please understand that there are significant staffing challenges with last minute changes.

### 3. Why are lockers not being allowed? What about the cubbies in elementary classes?

Hallway lockers are typically used at the Junior and Senior High grades, and occasionally in upper elementary as well. The use of these lockers presents a significant issue with respect to maintaining appropriate physical distance between students, in addition to presenting challenges to cohort integrity. Further, they present a significant increase in high touch surface area for custodians to clean daily, which prevents them from appropriately cleaning other areas effectively.

- In High School, the quarterly model only sees students attending a maximum of 2 classes per day, and so they can reasonably carry their minimal belongings with them.
- In Junior High, students will spend as much time as possible in their homeroom class, with teachers moving more than students, and therefore can maintain their personal belongings within the classroom. (options and PE will be the primary student movement times at this grade level).
- In Elementary, most classes have a vestibule, coat-hook or cubby area. If these exist within their classroom cohort, there is little additional risk of cross-contamination by the use of these areas, and so they will continue to be available for use for the storage of personal belongings at the discretion of the school administration.

Students will be reminded that only necessary items be brought to school.

As with all guidance, this will be monitored and potentially adjusted as the need arises, including once the colder months are upon us.

### 4. What are the expectations around parents dropping off or picking up their children outside the school?

Parents are welcome to bring their child to the assigned door of the school, and to meet them outside the same door at the end of the school day. The mention within our re-entry plan indicating that parents are to remain in their vehicles was only intended to prevent congregation of adults against the physical distancing requirements; however, the safety of the students is paramount, and as long as parents escort their children to the door of the school to which they are assigned, and maintain appropriate physical distancing, this is most certainly supported.



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## 5. Is Kindergarten mandatory?

According to Alberta Education, Kindergarten is not mandatory. Therefore, should a parent choose to keep their child at home and not participate in online learning choices at this level, it will not impact their child's opportunity for grade 1 enrolment the following year.

## 6. Why is the Division not allowing my child to participate in extra-curricular opportunities if we choose online learning as our method of educational delivery?

The choice to provide online options was made in direct response to the concerns parents have with respect to the health and safety of their child as a result of COVID-19 or the heightened risks to vulnerable family members within the home. The primary purpose of our Division is the education of our students. While we value what the benefits of extra-curricular involvements bring to a student's overall school experience, it is our stance that it is contradictory to select an online learning format for safety reasons, but to expect that those safety reasons are not present in extra-curricular offerings. So, to maintain our priority focus on learning, and to mitigate safety risks, ECSD has determined that participation in extra-curricular activities will only be supported for students choosing in-person learning, and at that, only insofar as the guidance from the Chief Medical Officer allows these activities to occur. At present, interscholastic athletics are on hold until further notice. Similarly, band offerings have restrictions that prevent their full complement of instrument sections, and so are also limited at this time. As a result, should interscholastic athletics and/or band be reinstated, only students enrolled for in-person schooling will be able to participate.

## 7. Will French Immersion and other Language programs be offered online?

French Immersion programming is planned to occur within the online school option. It may be limited in scope to focus on French Language Arts initially. Staffing of this offering will be instrumental in determining the extent to which this programming may occur. The same staffing limitations exist for our Spanish, Ukrainian, Cree and Polish bilingual programs of choice. While it is the goal of the Division to offer these important programs, the extent to which they may be offered is still undetermined at this time. Registration choices reflecting a desire for language programming in the online stance will guide this planning.

## 8. Will Online School in the fall look different than this past spring's online instruction?

Yes. This past spring, we engaged in emergency remote instruction. Teachers were required to deliver approximately 10-15% of the mandated curriculum, even though about 1/3 of the curriculum remained in the year. In elementary school, only Mathematics and Language Arts were required by Alberta Education. Elementary students were to have 5 hours of instruction per week.

In choosing authentic online instruction for the fall, students will be instructed in the entire program of studies in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. We will also offer Religion and Health. The school day will be structured much like a regular school day, with scheduled meeting times with teachers and scheduled breaks. The expectation is that students will engage in online



learning every day. This fall's online experience will mirror the school experience, as much as is practicable.

To create common learnings with both the online experience and the school experience, a scope and sequence is being developed for all teachers across the Division that will be followed, to ensure program continuity and ease the transitions of students from online learning back to the community school classroom. The scope and sequence will include critical learner outcomes and common timelines for key curriculum concepts in the core subjects across the Division.

## 9. What are the technical requirements of online learning?

Students require reliable internet service and a device. A desktop computer, laptop, or Chromebook with camera and microphone is required to access digital classrooms and word processing applications. Families making this choice are asked to acquire their own technology to support online learning.

## 10. Will my child be writing the Alberta Government Provincial Achievement Exams?

Yes. Whether or not your child is in the community school or the online school, our Division will be participating in the Provincial Achievement Exams at the grade 6 and 9 levels. Students taking Diploma level courses will be expected to write their Diploma Examination, worth 30% of their final grade, whether taking the course in-person or online. All Diploma exams will be available to be written at the end of each quarter.

## 11. My child has Special Needs. Will those be accommodated in the online school?

The Online Learning experience will mirror the Community School experience as much as is reasonable and practicable. Students with Special Needs will receive supports and services in the same process as within a Community School. When registering your child for the Online Learning Program, it will be important to discuss your child's needs and Special Education code (if applicable) with the Community School Administration. The Online Learning Admin team will review your child's IPP and plan for your child's program.

## 12. My child has an Individual Program Plan. What will that look like in the online school?

Your child's teacher will review your child's previous individual program plan (IPP) and begin development of the new IPP in collaboration with parents. The IPP will be developed in ECSd's new online IPP through PowerSchool. Parents will be able to login to PowerSchool and view their child's IPP throughout the school year. Supports and services required for your child's individualized program will be provided online through Microsoft TEAMS. Staff on your child's learning team will support your child individually, in small groups, or during whole group instruction through online resources and online therapy and intervention as indicated in your child's IPP. Questions regarding the supports and services should be directed to your child's teacher.



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### 13. What will be the expectation of parents in the online school? Will I need to teach my child?

While we do not expect that parents are the primary teacher, successful online learning will depend upon a positive cooperative relationship between parents and teachers. Being able to fully participate in online activities and complete work will depend upon your child's level of independence. Parents may assist their child in setting a regular routine, supervising work, and assisting their child in accessing their online classroom and assignments. Authentic assessment will also rely on parents supporting their child's independent work. Online teaching and learning will take place within the normal confines of a regular school day, with the expectation that the student engage during the times posted.

### 14. What if we need to make a switch between at-home and in-person learning?

To minimize disruptions in classrooms, there will be four points in the year during which you can choose at-home or in-person learning: September, November, January, and April. Three weeks before the next quarter, you will indicate your intention to switch on PowerSchool. These dates can be found on the parent re-entry plan which is posted on our Division

With a scope and sequence developed by the Division, based on Alberta Education Program of Studies, all teachers will be following the same key learnings at a similar time throughout the year. This will make the learning transitions more natural for your child's learning and support the teacher with their planning.

### 15. Will we see the teacher during online learning? Will my child need to be on camera?

In ECSD, we use Microsoft Teams as our digital meeting tool. It will be an expectation that both students and teachers are on camera to facilitate the best possible instruction. Meeting times will be clearly communicated to families so a regular schedule can be maintained.

### 16. Will online school be the same hours as in-person school?

As courses will be limited to core subjects (Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts), Religion, and Health, online school will be approximately 2/3 of a regular school day. There will be time scheduled online with the teacher and time for independent work. During independent work, your child's teacher may not be immediately available for questions. A specific schedule will be communicated prior to the start of school.

The availability of the teacher for instruction will typically be during the regular school operational hours.

### 17. What about subjects other than core subjects in online learning?

In grades K-6, subjects such as Art will be integrated within core areas. Suggestions will be provided for Physical Education. Language offerings will be dependent upon staffing.



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18. My child is registered in an academy. Can they participate in academy activities in-person but do online school?

In order to participate in academies, students must attend in-person instruction at their home school.

19. Will 100 Voices be offered online?

100 Voices will only be offered in-person, due to the nature of its programming.

20. What will kindergarten look like online?

Online kindergarten will focus on experiential activities in numeracy and literacy. Other elements of the program will not be available online.

21. Grouping (cohorting) of students.

The grouping of students into homeroom or cohort groupings remains the responsibility of the school principal.



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