



Phone: 1-306-682-2558
Toll-free: 1-866-966-2558
Fax: 1-306-682-5154
10366 8th Avenue
PO Box 40
Humboldt, Saskatchewan
S0K 2A0

To: Horizon Families and Staff
From: Kevin C. Garinger, Director of Education
Jim Hack, Board of Education Chair
Date: August 14, 2020
Re: Fall 2020 – Mandatory Masking

Hello, everyone.

I trust and hope you are having a safe and relaxing summer holiday. As we head into the upcoming school year, I want to remind everyone that our most critical responsibility in education, before we can do anything else, is to ensure the safety of our students and staff. There are recommendations we need to continue to adhere to, including hand washing and physical distancing. There are also new recommendations and growing evidence that one of the most effective measures we can take for health and safety against COVID-19 is to wear masks when we are near others. This includes areas within our schools.

On August 11, the [Minister of Education and the Chief Medical Health Officer announced guidelines](#) for school divisions who wish to move from “Level 1” to “Level 2” within the [Provincial Government’s Safe Schools Plan](#). Within that plan, there are four levels of education delivery for Saskatchewan schools:

- **Level 1:** Primary and Secondary Educational Guidelines – As close to ‘normal’ as possible, with some additional measures.
- **Level 2:** will involve mask usage as determined by the Chief Medical Health Officer.
- **Level 3:** will involve reducing classroom capacity. This may include establishing cohorts and hybrid learning models as considerations.
- **Level 4:** would take us back to suspending in-class learning, and moving back to a similar model we saw this past spring, with divisions working at the local level to ensure learning continues. In this model school would continue to be mandatory, albeit remotely.

On behalf of our Board and my office as Director of Education for Horizon School Division, I am writing to share that Horizon will begin the 2020-2021 school year at “Level 2”. Masks will be mandated in our schools for students in Grades 4 through 12, when physical distancing is not possible. This includes in hallways, common areas, and in classrooms where a 2 metre (6 feet) physical distance cannot be maintained. Masks will be required for students on all buses, regardless of age. Bus Drivers will be required to wear masks while loading and unloading children. All staff in Horizon School Division will be required to wear a mask when 2 metre physical distancing is not possible.

Horizon School Division will be providing disposable masks for student and staff use. Masks with clear sections for the mouth are being purchased for Speech and Language Pathologists and teachers who have

the need to ensure their students are accommodated (hard of hearing, cochlear implants, early learners, etc.). Horizon is also in the process of purchasing a reusable cloth mask for all students and staff, as well as face shields for all staff, to use as deemed appropriate. I ask families to include a non-medical cloth mask as part of your student’s school supplies.

This is not a decision that we felt should be rushed, so we appreciate your patience. It is also not a decision that we take lightly. However, it is one that we feel, and the evidence suggests, will help ensure the health and safety of students and staff returning to schools in the fall. I want to thank you all in advance for your cooperation and support in this important measure. It is our hope that this measure – which is supported by the Ministry of Education, the Chief and Medical Health Officers of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Medical Association, the Chief Health Officer of Canada, and others – will add a layer of prevention and safety for our children, our staff, our communities, and our families.

I will remind you that our own detailed [“Re-Entering Horizon School Division – Phase 3 Plan”](#) for Fall 2020 can be found on the homepage of our website – horizonsd.ca – and on all [school sites](#). Our plan document will undergo regular updates and adjustments, as new information and/or recommendations arise. I will keep you informed of these changes as they occur.

New to our website, you will find the [“Ready Reference for Re-Entry into Horizon Schools”](#). This document is a one-page version of our plan to provide a reference guide for families as we prepare for the new school year. This document is subject to changes as our planning document is updated, so please check our website for the latest version of this reference guide.

If you have questions regarding your child’s education and your family’s plan for the fall, please contact your school principal. Horizon School Division will be supporting all students in their learning for the coming year, and we request that all families continue to register with the school, even if your plan includes Learning From Home.

Please continue to check horizonsd.ca for updates, and do not hesitate to contact our Communications Centre Hotline at 1-306-682-2558 with questions or concerns.

Thank you,



Kevin C. Garinger, B. Ed, M.A. Ed
Director of Education/CEO
Horizon School Division No. 205



Jim Hack,
Board of Education Chair
Horizon School Division No. 205