

September 6, 2022

Dear Richmond Parents, Caregivers and Students,

To those families who are joining us for the first time, welcome to the Richmond School District! To those families who are returning, welcome back! I hope that you were able to connect over the summer with those you are close to and that there were many opportunities to enjoy the glorious summer weather that finally arrived.

We are excited to be starting a new school year that will bring many opportunities for learning and new experiences for our students. As we continue to emerge from the pandemic, we are very much looking forward to a more 'normal' experience for our students, staff and families with many of the activities we have been unable to enjoy these past couple years finally returning.

### **Health and Safety Update**

The school district will continue to follow the guidance of provincial and local health officials in all matters relating to health and safety. The provincial government recently updated the Provincial [Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#) and in accordance with these guidelines, schools will continue to provide supportive environments for communicable disease prevention and management. Here are a few things to keep in mind as we all work together to ensure health and safety continues to be a top priority:

- Parents and caregivers are asked to continue to check their child's health every day before sending them to school. All staff will be expected to do the same thing. Anyone who has new or worsening symptoms is expected to follow the [guidelines provided by the BC Centre for Disease Control](#) and not attend school or work if they are ill.
- Mask wearing will continue to be a personal choice, with all decisions being respected. The district will continue to have masks available for adults and students who request them.
- Ventilation systems will continue to be maximized in every school. The Richmond Board of Education has committed \$12 million towards installing ventilation systems in schools that do not currently have a mechanical ventilation system.
- Frequent handwashing will continue to be encouraged.
- Effective school cleaning will continue to be a focus.

### **Visitors to Schools**

In the spring, schools began to re-open their doors to visitors such as parents and caregivers as we continued to transition out of the pandemic. We are pleased that schools will now be able to welcome visitors to their schools in ways that will be similar to how they did before the pandemic. In the coming days, individual schools will communicate school-based routines and protocols related to welcoming visitors. Thank you to everyone for respecting those protocols.

### **Student and Family Affordability Fund**

You may have heard about the recent government announcement about the *Student and Family Affordability Fund*. This fund is designed to assist families who require financial assistance with school-related costs such as school and course fees, workbooks, specialty supplies, field trips and other school-related charges often requested in early September. The additional funding will also include support for school meal programs.

In the coming weeks, schools will be respectfully reaching out to offer help to families who may benefit from additional assistance. **In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to your school principal if you are in need of assistance with school supplies, fees or other school-related costs.** As always, all requests will be treated with dignity and your privacy will be respected. We want to work with our families to ensure that our students, your children, have everything they need in order to be successful at school so please do not hesitate to reach out if we can help.

### **School Board Trustee Election**

On Saturday, October 15th, municipal elections will take place in all communities across the province, including Richmond. At that time, school board trustees will be elected for the upcoming four-year term. I encourage you to learn about the people who are running for a position as trustee in Richmond and to exercise your right to vote during the election. Your voice matters and it's important that our school board reflects the values of our Richmond community. For information on how to vote, please visit the [City of Richmond Elections Services](#) webpage.

### **Strategic Plan 2020-2025**

The school district continues to focus its energy and resources on the Richmond Board of Education's [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#). Based completely on student, staff and stakeholder input, the plan lays out a roadmap for our district for the next few years. I encourage you to take a few moments to check out the plan and see some of the areas we will continue to focus on this next school year. I also encourage you to check out your child's school website as well as the [district website](#) which offer useful information, updates and [monthly celebrations of the amazing things happening in our schools!](#)

I wish you and your children a happy, healthy and successful 2022-2023 school year!

Sincerely,



Scott Robinson

Superintendent of Schools