

January 8, 2021

To: Parents / Guardians of BRSD Students

From: Dr. Rita Marler, Superintendent of Schools

Re: Welcome to 2021

Hello everyone!

I know I am not the only one who is happy to say “bye-bye 2020”. The arrival of 2021 brings a sense of hope and we are all looking forward to better days ahead.

But it also feels like the road to reaching those better days might still be long. Please know we will continue to be here to support your children with their education and also their mental wellbeing. Our school teams are focused on meeting student needs, plus our Family School Liaison Workers and our Mental Health Capacity Building team are offering programs and support in every way they can.

Whether your children will start attending school in person again on Monday, January 11, or they will be continuing in the At-Home Learning program, staff of BRSD are looking forward to seeing their faces, re-connecting and getting back into a routine.

Though school is back, many restrictions remain in place for the Province of Alberta. As a result, we will not be having extra-curricular sports teams and will not be making use of community facilities, such as arenas, at this time. When Alberta’s restrictions are removed we will consider what schools can safely provide. In the meantime, we will enjoy the great weather and make the most of both the schoolyards and the gyms.

It’s hard to believe, but the second quarter wraps up at the end of January. Diploma Exams are optional this year, so if your child would like to write them please be sure your school is aware of that. In addition, if your family is considering a switch to or from At-Home Learning for Quarter 3, please let your school know by January 21 at the latest.

It is always our goal to ensure school is a safe and comfortable environment in which to learn and work. We did have people connected to schools test positive for COVID-19 in November and December. Most of those people contracted the virus outside of school, but their cases resulted in hundreds of BRSD students and staff being asked to quarantine. It is our hope that case numbers can be kept minimal in the months ahead. You can help with that by reviewing the Daily Checklist with your children and keeping them home if they are not well. The checklist is available at [brsd.ab.ca](http://brsd.ab.ca) in the section on School Re-Entry.

It continues to be a very unusual time for all of us. Take good care. I will be in touch again soon.

*Rita Marler*