

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

August 18, 2020

For Immediate Release

Presentation: NGPS 2020-21 COVID-19 Re-entry Handbook

NGPS Deputy Superintendent Michelle Brennick and division office staff walked trustees and public members through the [NGPS 2020-21 COVID-19 Re-entry Handbook](#) highlighting the strategies and health measures NGPS will implement to support the health and safety of students and staff as we return to in-person learning. Topics covered included Teaching and Learning, School Bus Transportation, Health and Safety Measures, social/emotional/wellness supports for students, preparation of facilities and custodial services.

Since the July 21 announcement – Scenario 1, normal return to in-school learning with health measures - the Division has maintained flexibility while preparing for and navigating the many operational considerations the pandemic presents.

Teaching and Learning

The Board heard from NGPS Superintendent Kevin Andrea and staff regarding instructional learning opportunities for students for the 2020-21 school year:

- NGPS students who are unable to attend in-person learning in September 2020 can be part of an at-home online learning group with an assigned teacher. This learning format will include live online teacher instruction, directed activities and assignments that students will complete independently.
- Families who choose online learning must inform their school by **August 24, 2020**. The August 24 deadline, and quarterly system (see below), will help to ensure the division can staff and support this learning opportunity for NGPS students.
- At-home online students will remain enrolled at the school where they are registered for the 2020-21 school year; however, the online teacher may not be a staff member at that school. As well, students in an online learning group may be from multiple schools.
- Online instruction will cover all the required areas of the provincial curriculum with a focus on the core subject areas, and a modified focus on fine arts courses, physical education, and CTF/CTS courses for Grades 5 to 12.
- Quarterly System: students who are unable to attend in-person learning and choose at-home online instruction will be committed to at-home online instruction for the duration of the quarter (See [Quarterly System for 2020-21 and In-person Re-entry Dates](#)).

- Family Choice Following Quarters One and Two. Families who chose at-home online instruction and want to transition to in-person learning have the opportunity to do so at the start of the second or third quarters. Please contact your school for more information.

Motion: the Board moved to accept the NGPS 2020-21 COVID-19 Re-entry Handbook. Motion carried.

2020-21 School Year Calendar

NGPS administration recommended a change to the 2020-21 school year calendar to support the significant planning and set up time required by classroom teachers and school staff.

The recommendation moves the first day of school from August 31 to September 2, 2020, allowing two additional days of preparation time for schools.

A motion was made to accept the recommendation. Motion carried.

Annual Employee Recognition Evening

With regret, the Board's Communications Committee recommended that the 2020 Employee Recognition Evening scheduled for October 2, 2020, be canceled in light of pandemic and mass gathering restrictions. The Board discussed alternate options including hosting the evening at a different time later in the year and hosting a "double" ceremony next October. Many restrictions and unknowns deemed these options not viable.

All service award recipients and retirees will receive their Division awards and gifts which will be distributed via schools.

A Motion was made to cancel this year's 2020 Employee Recognition Evening. Motion carried.

Ministerial Order for Student Learning

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange announced on Thursday, August 13, that a [new Alberta education curriculum](#) will be field-tested in Kindergarten to Grade four classrooms beginning in the 2021-22 school year. Additionally, in 2020-21:

- Student Learning Assessments (SLAs) for Grade 3 students will continue to be optional tools for teachers to use
- Provincial Achievement Testing (PATs) for Grades 6 and 9 will be optional

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place on [September 1, 2020](#) commencing at 1:00 p.m. at the Division Office in Whitecourt. Members of the public are welcome to attend virtually, or in-person. Please contact Board Secretary Wendy Robertson at the Division Office, 780-778-2800 or 1-800-262-8674, to confirm your attendance so we may accommodate physical distancing. Masks are required.

