Sept 7, 2021

Dear Families,

The Walker Development Centre staff are very excited that students will soon be back in school! We want to share with you the updates our District has made to make sure our students’ return is safe and smooth.

School District #51’s COVID-19 Health Guidelines have now been posted to the District website (under Sd51 updates). We encourage you to read this document carefully. A summary of the guidelines that are most pertinent to WALKER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE are outlined below. It is essential that you read them and share them with your youth.

<https://www.sd51.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/SD-51-Health-and-Safety-Guidelines-August-2021_mbal_cw.pdf>

We are starting the school year with many of the same guidelines we finished with in June.

* Face Masks are required inside of WDC for all students, staff and any visitors. We have disposable masks if students forget theirs. We ask students to wear reusable and washable masks at school to minimize garbage.
* Students are required to hand sanitize upon entry of the school and before leaving the school.
* Parents and caregivers must assess their children daily for illness before sending them to school. Parents/caregivers and/or students can use the provincial K-12 Health Check (app or web version).
* The students are asked to spray their workspace/table at the end of the scheduled learning session with the sanitizer provide by the School District.
* We have only one student working at workspaces to help maintain social distancing when we can.
* Because our group continues to be small, we are not impacted by the removal of the cohort model presented last year.
* If WDC transports students in their vehicles, students will be asked to wear a mask and sanitize before and after riding in the vehicle. Students grade 4 and up are required to wear masks on school buses.
* WDC staff follow appropriate Health and Safety Protocols while doing activities inside and outside.
* WDC will continue to limit the number of visitors at WDC for now. We ask that parent/guardian to notify us when they would like to meet with staff. Also, any presenters at this time will be required to present via video until further notice.
* *Tuesday-Friday, September 7-10:* New Year Intake Meetings with students and families.

Students/Families will be contacted to set a time to have the intake meeting with Walker staff. During this interview, students/families will receive instructions on the new health procedures and protocols, so everyone understands expectations. Doors will be locked, so please ring doorbell and someone will let you in.

* *Monday, September 13:* **First full day of school for all students.**

With schools returning to close-to-normal procedures and practices, Walker Development Centre will not be offering remote learning opportunities to our students. Instead, Walker students will be expected to attend in-person. If your student wishes to continue their learning through online programming, please visit this site for more information regarding available online learning schools. <https://www.learnnowbc.ca/schools/>

If you have any questions or concerns, please email me or phone the school.

Kind regards,

Michell Bennett

Principal of Walker Development Centre

District Principal of Student Services

**Following are some essential details as found in the SD 51 Communicable Disease Plan**

Please read carefully and discuss with your child(ren).

If you have any questions or concerns, email or call the school.

Student sickness:

* If your child is sick, they cannot attend school. Please refer to the documents for more detailed instructions. If your child becomes sick at school, you must come pick them up immediately.
* If you have any questions about your child’s sickness, please call 811.

Administrative Measures

* Handwashing and/or sanitizing station at entrance of Walker. Student will hand sanitize when they enter the school and before they leave the school.
* Reminders about respiratory etiquette and limiting physical contact will be frequently shared with students.
* Anytime a student transitions inside the building or outside, uses the bathroom, sneezes or touches items touched by others, they must clean their hands.
* Access to schools will be limited to staff and students. Other visitors (including parents) can request an appointment through the school office.

Pick up and drop off expectations:

* Drop off and pick up times are to be as close as possible to the scheduled learning time. Ideally, this should be 5 minutes.
* Smoke breaks will require student to handwash before they leave the building and upon re-entering the building.

Buses:

* Students must be registered to ride the bus. If you have any changes in your busing, please contact the school as soon as possible.
* Students ages 10 and up will wear a mask on the bus, provided by SD #51, unless there is a medical reason. Students will be provided with two masks.
* Students must sit where directed.
* Alternate forms of transportation are encouraged such as walking, riding a bike, or dropped off by parent.
* Alternate busing will not be allowed. For example, students will not be able to ride a bus to a friend’s house or to their after-school workplace.