

Q&A re the reopening of LEB
May 21st, 2020

(Rough transcript of Q&A follows)

Bryan: Thank you for joining us. Rushing to get things organized. Provincial level doesn't have clear organization for what specifically will be happening at our school.

Going to go through pre-sent questions as well as live questions.

DPAC meeting going on simultaneously with this one. We have a representative attending (Anthony Floyd), and will report back. We'll also take notes here so that DPAC attendees can hear what we talk about here today.

This meeting is specifically about our school.

Natalie:

Presentation with some information

Directed by MoE to proceed into Stage 3 -- offering somewhat part-time in-person education. Is a puzzle to organize. Feels like the 3rd time we've re-opened.

Won't be able to answer all questions!

Health and safety is important. Will be attempting to implement physical distancing, but

Personal decision for everyone to make. Will be only few days for each student, maybe as few as 4 days for Gr 6-7. I think the ministry would like us to practice for opening.

Guidelines and protocols

- Drop-off/pick-up staggered, possibly two different times, but not certain yet. Ministry will provide more information next week
- Keep as much separation as possible
- Arrows on floor to indicate hallway flow
- Masks are optional
- Some staff will feel more comfortable wearing masks
- Building will be closed to the public, difficult to do losing sense of community, but seems like the right way to proceed
- Plan is one student in the washroom at a time, to attempt to minimize physical contact
- Water bottle dispenser will be open, but water fountain closed

- Classes will have different areas to meet before/after school
- Students will not share media, manipulative equipment or sports equipment
- Not clear what PE will be yet. Attempting to identify equipment that can be used safely

Cleaning protocol:

- Deep cleaning every day
- High touch areas cleaned twice a day
- Playground closed, but outdoor area open
- A lot of playing after school, normally great for community, but will ask you not to congregate on playground
- And frequent handwashing
- Will be fewer students per class, probably 8-10 per class

Communications:

- E-bulletins, probably more than only Fridays
- Pay attending to teachers emails and blogs. Might request additional resources for those that are unable to be shared
- PAC emails

What can you do?

- Keep your child at home if they're sick
- Review expected behaviour, coughing in sleeve, physical distancing
- Easy to forget or go back to normal behaviour, really try to impress upon children monitoring distancing
- Please respect drop-off/pick up times, can't accommodate off-time drop off causing extra people in the school
- Pay attention to teacher communications for additional guidance and requests

Decision?

- "New normal"
- Small groups
- 2 days a week for Gr K-5
- 1 day for Gr 6-7
- Approx 70% yes coming back
- About 62-63 with ESW status. Entitled to come 5 days/week
- Teachers will teach what they can when they can, following guidelines
- Students may be returning for various reasons, this is a personal family decision
- Teachers will *not* be able to do in-person and on-line teaching at the same time, so there may be adaptations in class organizations
- YES you can change your mind
- It will basically not be possible to meet all of everyone's expectations
- We will all be trying to adapt as well as possible

What we don't know:

- We don't know how many teachers will be able to come back. Some have family situations where they will not be able to teach in-person
- Will inform as we know more
- When grouping, we will attempt to group siblings
- We cannot guarantee your children will be with their teacher, or possibly not every day of the week
- If your children attend child care (La Garderie, Kindercare), please contact their staff
- We don't know what the in-person vs. online learning will look like
- Are they only coming back to socialize? For some students the lack of friends and socialization has been key, and we are conscious of mental health aspects. Very important for some students to be back to seeing friends.

Bonjour from all the teachers!

Q&A**Question about Essential Service Workers, will they have 5 days, and will they have their teacher?**

Probably not fully possible, some days will be an alternate teacher.

What process will you be following if anyone tests positive for COVID-19? What happens if staff or child has symptoms during the day?

Good question, received in-depth information on symptoms, we do have an isolation room to be used if necessary. I think we will hear more about that later on. If a child is diagnosed, understanding that there will likely be a team to do tracing.

If symptoms occur during the day, child will be in isolation until parents pick up. Staff will also be subject to isolation/going home.

Parents need to screen children at home before coming each day as well.

What are the symptoms?

Fever, throat, coughing, sneezing, fatigue are main ones, can send out further information. You know your child, and we know it's allergy season, but err towards taking to doctor and avoiding going to school. If any symptoms (even if allergy, etc.) they'll be isolated and parents called.

Check BC CDC for symptom information as well. Will make available.

Will school be doing temperatures health assessment in the morning?

No, relying on parents to do assessments.

Any comment on why masks are/aren't optional?

Not our decision, understanding is that masking children is not supported. Gives them an unwarranted sense of safety. Gloves do not especially help because droplets still on hands. If you want your child to wear a mask, suggest that you practice at home because can quickly get difficult to manage wearing a mask all day.

Committed to keeping physical distance as well as we can, but not distributing masks to student/staff. Not school's decision, made at provincial and VCH level. See section 2 of letter from VCH.

Are masks available if symptoms develop during school time?

Yes, masks/gloves are available to some staff for first aid situation.

Since masks are optional, any measures to avoid kids making fun of others?

Not trying to convince you to come, but our staff will spend a lot of time learning how to conduct ourselves. I don't see that a teacher would tolerate anyone making fun of anyone else due to masks. It would be respected. Handwashing is very important and will be provided as much as possible. Arriving, changing activities, before eating, etc.

Mentioned washing of hands, concerns about quality of faucets in bathrooms?

Plumbers have circulated school and Natalie will confirm with Ed. Will probably encourage children to wash hands rather than going to washroom.

How is Kindercare going to fit into reopening? Before/after school care or when not in class?

It is a separate organization, will have to contact child care for their protocols, guidelines, operations.

Romy -- mike not working, but "we will be providing care for children who are attending scheduled classes". Have been 6-10 children in care throughout the pandemic.

Will there be no-rinse hand sanitizers available throughout the school?

I think so yes, not sure how it will be used yet. Value proper handwashing, but hand sanitizer is good too.

Specialized programs, Earth Bites, etc? Funds/fees/refunds?

We have a lot of fees that haven't been paid by parents. If you feel strongly that you need to be reimbursed, please contact Natalie. Understand that it can be difficult for some families. But we're a lot of money in the hole. Earth Bites will continue in June, newsletters will also continue.

Will library be reopening? Can students take books home?

Not sure yet. Hoping to have a plan figured out, but unsure how they'll be manipulated. Brigitte still waiting to hear back from Ministry. However, normally books returned at start of June anyway, and 1200 are currently outstanding. Normally gathering and closing down for year, but understand that it's a different time. Waiting to hear back.

Do we know what's going to be taught to balance with at home work? More social or academic at school?

Up to teacher. Will try to complement what has been going on online. Focus will be reconnecting, being apart very hard for some students. For a 6-7 student, after many weeks of not seeing friends, only 4 days of in-person education before the end of the year, will probably not be the most effective to drill math. There will be a large social-emotional connection component. Students will only be there 4-10 days for the most part. Will not be able to cover the entire curriculum given time. Academic is important, but focusing on well-being, and everyone will be taken as able for next year.

What is the goal of in school vs home? Is the intention that it's basically home vs school is the same? Are parents "off the hook" if kids are at school?

We don't know, as we don't know how we'll be directed to organize our students. Teachers will be spending time preparing in the next weeks preparing classes.

Very difficult to estimate how much will be online, and will vary depending on grade level.

Also very difficult for admin/teachers to offer a judgement on whether it's a useful time to come back. Depends a lot on other connections, social, academic.

Have you figured out where kids drop-off pick-up?

Proposal to staff is that main level classes will line up at the door, with ground markings for distancing. Hopefully have parents help until the teachers ready. Classes look similar, less furniture, less people.

Staggered drop-off, don't know exactly the schedule, but not sure if we'll be able to do it yet.

Is the day a full day?

I think that's the plan. We will hear more next week. Seems to make the most sense because a parent that has to go to work doesn't help to have 2.5h to work.

Bike-to-school next week? Bike lockers available?

Not biking to school, but there will be some PAC events. Details coming.

Yes, biking and locking up should be fine, keep washing hands, sanitizing, etc.

Everything is optional and you said we could change our mind, how do we do that?

Send Natalie/Cynthia an email

What will school look like? Will kids be off July-September?

No idea yet! One week at a time right now.

Are there any concerns with students coming by themselves (senior grades)?

I think it's OK w/o parents as long as they show up on time.

Thank you very much to admin and teachers!

Will plan another meeting for next week, plan is for another next week 7pm Thursday next week May 28th, will send email.

Would it be possible to get a video walkthrough to understand protocol?

Yes, will try to get that ready, once it's actually set up.