



Auguston Traditional Elementary School



September 2, 2021

Welcome back Auguston Traditional families!

It is with great excitement that we welcome all students back for full time, in class learning, beginning the week of September 7th. As such, the staff have been busy preparing the school and their classrooms to meet the learning needs of each student. I would also like to acknowledge our hard-working custodial team who have worked around the clock all summer making the school safe, clean, and ready for the Auguston School Community. Also, want to thank District staff for installing new flooring in the office and staff room. In addition, we have new carpet in the Learning Commons! Thank you to the PAC for the 3 new pieces of playground equipment which is being installed as I type this letter!

I also want you to know how proud I am to be the Principal at Auguston Traditional Elementary School. We had a fantastic year last year in spite of very difficult circumstances. The power of sticking together as school community was evident and why we felt like it was such a successful year. For those of you who don't know me/are new to the school. I wanted to take a few moments to introduce myself as I truly believe relationships and connection should come first in everything we do.

I am entering my 24th year as an Educator and all of this has been spent in the Abbotsford School District. I have taught at Rick Hansen Secondary and Eugene Reimer Middle School. I was the Vice Principal at C&G Howe Middle School, WA Fraser Middle School, and Eugene Reimer Middle School. I was the Acting Principal at John Maclure Community School (6 weeks), C&G Howe Middle School, and Jackson Elementary. I am entering my 17th year as an Administrator, and this is my 9th year as a Principal. My two daughters will be attending Robert Bateman Secondary this fall. My wife is a nurse and currently works as an Occupational Health and Safety Nurse for Fraser Health. I also have a calico cat named Wynn. I hope you had a great summer with your family and friends. I was fortunate enough to have a great summer with my family. We spent some time on the Island camping and were able to surf and Kayak in Tofino. I was also fortunate to spend some time with my family in Kelowna (pre-forest fires) and play some golf with friends.

Staffing Announcements:

- We would like to wish Mr. Lawson all the best. Mr. Lawson choose to retire as of September 1st after a long teaching career. He will be missed!
- Welcome back to: Mrs. Anita Dhaliwal (nee Thind) (Mr. Lawson's replacement), Mrs. Coral Christianson (EA), Mrs. Crystal Chow (Library Learning Commons) and Mrs. Tina Deol (Gr. 4 teacher)
- Welcome to new staff members: Mrs. Diana Walsh (new Library Technician on Thursday)
- We are still waiting to find a Friday teacher for Mrs. Dirom's job share.
- Mrs. Heppner and Mrs. Simpson will also not be returning right away this school year. We are still awaiting to staff these two positions as well.

As we head into next week, we are finalizing our safety plans for the school district. These safety plans are based on the guidelines established by the BC government, which can be found here: [updated COVID-19 guidelines for K-12 schools](#). Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with this information.

Below are the key details in the announcement:

- **Vaccinations.** Vaccines continue to be the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in schools and communities. Individuals 12+ are eligible to be vaccinated. You can learn more at www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca.
- **Masks.** All K-12 staff, visitors, and students in grades 4 to 12 will be required to wear non-medical masks in all indoor areas of the school and on school buses. Students in kindergarten to Grade 3 will be strongly encouraged to wear masks. If a student is unable to wear a mask due to health, behavioural reasons, and/or because they can't tolerate it, please email Mr. Colbert directly at ryan.colbert@abbyschools.ca
- **Daily Health Checks.** To reduce the likelihood of coming to a school or district site when ill, students, staff and other adults (e.g., visitors) are required to complete a daily health check prior to entering the building.
- **Cohorts.** Cohorts (i.e., learning groups) are no longer required and will not be used during the school year.
- **Physical Distancing.** While public health no longer recommends strict physical distancing of two metres, our schools and district sites will work on strategies to help with respecting personal space, including using available learning spaces and taking students and learning opportunities outside, where and when possible.

Health Checks for Visitors/Front Door procedures

We will be maintaining a locked door at the front of the school until further notice. All building visits/entry must be approved by the Principal. Appointments can be made by calling the school or emailing auguston@abbyschools.ca. There is a QR code attached to the front door. All parents, visitors, noon hour supervisors and volunteers must complete this prior to entering the building. If you are dropping off something for your child or picking up for an appointment, please use the front doorbell and we will assist you. In most instances, we will not be allowing entry into the school until further notice.

Student Health Checks and Students who are sick

Please ensure you continue to do daily health checks with your child before sending them to school. If they are ill, **DO NOT** send them to school. The daily health check can be found [here](#). More information in regard to this will be sent by the District on September 3rd. Like last year, if a student is sick, we will be sending them home as soon as possible. We appreciate your support.

New Bell schedule

Auguston Traditional has a new bell schedule for the 2021/2022 school year. Please note the following times:

8:25- Welcome/Get Ready bell

8:30- Instruction begins

10:45-11:05- Recess

12:35-1:20- Lunch

2:33- Dismissal

Please be prompt in picking up your child. We do not have supervision past 2:43 pm.

Bus Students

The school is responsible to ensure all district buses students are taken care of until their bus arrives. However, we will have a general meeting spot for students who ride with independent companies. As for now, we will continue with our plan from last year which is all bus students meet in the gym after dismissal. We will have a noon hour supervisor or EA help us with this supervision.

Attendance

A reminder to let the office know if your child will be absent or late via [Safe Arrival](#).

First Day of School: September 7th, 2021 (Half day)

The first day of school is a **half day for Gr. 1-5 students**. Please note the following times:

8:30- Instruction begins

10-10:20 am-Recess

11:30-Dismissal of students

Students will return to last year's teacher for the first day of school (in most cases). Students are to line up where they did at the end of the school year. We feel this "soft start" will allow for teachers and students to re-connect and check in on each other (we had two "sun days" last year) and will reduce any nervous feelings on day 1.

Exceptions to this will be:

- Mrs. Chow will be greeting **Mrs. Heppner and Smith's class** from last year.
- Mrs. Dirom will be with her class and **Mr. Lawson's class**. Mr. Lawson's students, please line up at the front of the school with Mrs. Dirom's class.
- Mrs. Ward will be with her class and **Mrs. Dhaliwal's (Thind) class**. Please line up at front of school as normal. Mrs. Dhaliwal (Thind) will also come by and make an appearance as well!
- Mrs. Deol will be with **Mrs. Sorensen's class**. Please line up where you did last year.
- A TOC to be determined will be with **Mrs. van den Ham's class** in the portable.
- Last year's K teachers will welcome their students from last year, then students will spend the rest of the day with:

Mr. Lande: **Mrs. McAllister's Class**

Mrs. Dhaliwal (Thind): **Mrs. Puglisi's Class**

TOC to be determined: **Mrs. Hambly's class**

Wednesday to Friday Classes

Due to fluctuating enrollment numbers, we won't be able to solidify the students' permanent classes the first week of school.

Therefore, on Tuesday, we will tell students the general meeting/line up spots for their temporary classes on Wednesday. Students will be with grade level teachers in the most part by alpha order. In some cases, teachers will rotate (students will stay in their classes) and teach different lessons. This also allows teachers and students to get to know each other.

Class lists

Class lists will be posted as soon as possible and our goal would be to have them posted by **5:00pm Friday, September 10th (if the School District confirms our configuration)**. Please do not phone the office regarding class lists before this time. Be mindful that there has been significant teacher collaboration and pedagogical rationale in creating each class list and as such **student learning needs are central in creating class composition and placement.**

Also, once classes are set, no changes will be made due to the fact we are full and have no "wobble room." I appreciate all class requests, but, unfortunately, not all requests can be granted. I appreciate your support with this.

Safety Measures

While some protocols have changed slightly, we are generally starting the school year the way we finished. The main thing of emphasis for parents and students are the following:

- not to congregate outside at drop off and pick up. We would encourage mask wearing by all parents while on our campus (this is required when inside the building)
- Bathrooms: back to normal but emphasize if there are 3 or more people, just wait in the hall. No assigned washrooms
- Handwashing: Arrive, Leave, Before and After Breaks, Before and After eating, before and after using equipment/shared materials
- Playgrounds are back to normal, no restrictions. Please try to give people space and spread out as much as possible
- High intensity sports: Gr. 4/5 masks off, low intensity walking, etc: masks on (for Gr. 4/5)
- Meet the Teacher will be virtual this year, not face to face.
- Singing. Gr. 4/5 masks to stay on, encouraged K-3.
- Parents pick up all students outside, not allowed inside except in cases approved by Principal
- We will not be having full school assemblies or PAC sponsored activities at this time as there are restrictions for gatherings, etc. Please attend our first PAC meeting to find out more information.

Finally, as we head into the long weekend, I wish you all the best! Stay safe and enjoy the remainder of the break!

Sincerely,

Ryan Colbert
Principal
Auguston Traditional Elementary