



ÉCOLE PUBLIQUE **RIDEAU** PUBLIC SCHOOL
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August 24, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Welcome back to Rideau! We have missed everyone very much, and are excited to see our Rhinos return to school shortly. A lot has changed since we last left Rideau as a group in March, and we know that returning to school in September brings with it mixed emotions for our students and families, and many new safety practices and protocols. We understand and share many of those emotions, and are committed to a safe healthy return for all, focused on the well-being of students, staff and families. In this memo you will find a lot of information about our return to school. As we get closer to re-entry and more information becomes available, I will continue to share with our families. All newsletters and memos will be emailed through our School Messenger system, posted to our website, and tweeted. If you continue to have questions, please contact us at ridea@limestone.on.ca, or by phone at (613)546-5901. We may not have all the answers right away, but we will work together with LDSB Senior Staff, our Public Health partners, and school personnel to find answers to all your questions. Families will play a very important role this year in keeping everyone safe and healthy, and we thank you in advance for your support and cooperation as we work together to ensure a great return to school for everyone.

G. Seiveright, Principal

Safety Practices

In order to enhance safety, schools will focus on keeping students in their class cohorts separate from other cohorts, frequent handwashing/sanitizing, masking, and limiting shared materials. Full, updated health and safety guidelines are available on the LDSB Website at https://www.limestone.on.ca/board/school_reopening_2020. Please note the specific points below:

- Families must self-screen daily for COVID-19 symptoms. Students who are ill must stay home.
- LDSB and Public Health are developing a protocol for students/staff who develop symptoms during the day which will maintain the privacy and dignity of the individual while prioritizing the health and safety of the individual, class, and school. Families will need to have a plan to pick up any student who develops symptoms during the day.
- In the event of a COVID-19 case at Rideau, information will be shared with the cohort/community following KFLA Public Health protocol/direction.
- Students will remain with their class for the entire school day, including lunch and recess.
- Students in grades 4-6 are required to wear a mask while indoors. Students in kindergarten-grade 3 are strongly encouraged to wear masks. These children have been getting used to wearing masks in public spaces all summer, and we think that they should be able to wear masks at school. All staff are required to wear masks indoors. Exceptions to masking for staff and students in grades 4-6 are for medical reasons only.

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- Students will wash/sanitize hands before and after recess and nutrition break, and after using the washroom. Classrooms without a sink will be equipped with hand sanitizer.
- To begin the year, shared spaces such as the library, gym, and music room will not be used. This will be reviewed regularly throughout the fall. Gym class and Daily Physical Activity will continue outside, and music will be taught in homeroom classes (or outside).
- Classes will be encouraged to take learning outside as much as possible in the fall, where students do not need to wear masks.
- All of our classrooms have windows that open for fresh air circulation, and our HVAC system has been inspected by Facility Services to ensure adequate air exchange in classrooms.
- Students may use washrooms as needed, washing/sanitizing hands before and after. There will be occupancy limits on all washrooms, in order to allow for physical distancing.
- Water fountains will be closed to students, but bottle filling stations are available. All students should bring a water bottle.
- Hallway travel will be limited, and students will be on the right, distanced from classmates. Our hallways are wide enough to allow for safe passage of two classes.

Staggered Entry

LDSB has announced that schools will stagger student entry over the first two weeks of September. This will create smaller classes initially for teachers to work with students on new routines, practice safety protocols, and develop habits around entering and exiting the school, recess zones, meeting spots, etc. Fewer students during instructional blocks will also allow teachers to complete diagnostic assessments in reading and math, which will be more important than ever this year given the 6-month break from face-to-face teaching and learning.

At Rideau, **Group A will come to school on Thursday September 3, Tuesday September 8, and Thursday September 10. Group B will come to school on Friday September 4, Wednesday September 9, and Friday September 11.** No one will come to school on September 7 (Labour Day), and everyone will start coming together on Monday September 14.

Group A will include all students whose last name begins with the letters A-K.

Group B will include all students whose last name begins with the letters L-Z.

All students are to come only on their Group's assigned days. Buses will run their regular routes for all 6 days of our staggered entry. These 6 days are regular school hours (9:05 – 3:35).

The School Day

In order to keep class cohorts separate during entries, exits, and recesses, we have made some minor changes to our school day. School will still run from 9:05 – 3:35. Students walking, biking, or getting a ride to school should try not to arrive before the bell. Students will not have a 'free time' recess before the bell; they will need to meet in their designated muster spots until met by their teacher at 9:05. We will have two clusters of recess classes – some classes will be having nutrition break while others are at recess, and then classes will switch.

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A **Flowchart for Daily Operations**, which includes a recess schedule and a map of Recess Zones and Muster Spots is included to this memo as a separate attachment.

Access to School

Access to the school building is restricted to students and staff. If you need to pick up your child early from school or drop them off late, please buzz at the front door, and wait socially distanced from any other parents who are outside. Your child will be let in or sent out to you. It will be very important to have children at school on time this year, and where possible to schedule appointments outside of school hours. Inquiries or appointments should be arranged by phoning the office at 613-546-5901.

What to bring

To keep students' items separate, hooks and cubby rooms will not be used to start the year. Everything grade 1-6 students bring from home (coats, backpacks) will be kept at their desks. For this reason students should minimize what they bring. Separate indoor and outdoor shoes are not required, unless students are coming in boots due to rain. Students should bring lunch and a water bottle. We will provide students with school supplies such as pencils and paper. Any shared materials, such as glue, scissors, and markers will be sanitized between users, so families may wish to send some of these supplies for the individual use of their child. Please clearly label all items with your child's name, including masks.

Masks – students may bring their own cloth masks, or masks will be provided by the school. Masks are not required at recess or when the class is outside, so families may wish to send a pouch or fanny pack to store masks when not in use.

Busing

We have been working with our partners at Tri-Board Transportation to develop safety protocols for student transportation. Please visit <https://triboard.ca/covid19/> for their latest protocols and expectations for riders and families.

Further Information

LDSB School Reopening Website: https://www.limestone.on.ca/board/school_reopening_2020 includes Messages from the Director, Family Reference Guide, Frequently Asked Questions, etc.

KFLA Public Health 'Schools and COVID-19': <https://www.kflaph.ca/en/healthy-living/schools-and-covid-19.aspx>

Ministry of Education Guide to Reopening Ontario Schools: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-reopening-ontarios-schools>

LDSB Wellness Resources and Supports:
<https://www.limestone.on.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=352782&pageId=28473329>

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