



THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58 (NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN)

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

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December 10, 2021

Revised

Dear SD58 parents, caregivers, families, students, staff, and community:

After several weeks of being in emergency response mode, we have started to enter slowly into a recovery phase. It has been almost a week since some of our SD58 students returned to classrooms, and we have been so impressed by both the resilience and compassion that so many of you have shown. Today we are writing to you to share more progress that has been made in planning students' return to learning as well as to provide our full return to school plan.

In Princeton, the current shared space at Vermilion Forks Elementary has been able to provide face to face support, with good attendance rates as students are eager to be back learning. The "do not consume" water order continues to be in place in other areas of Princeton, so we will use the VFE shared schedule throughout next week. We thank our Princeton community for their patience and understanding as we continue to adapt. We look forward to being able to return to full time learning as soon as it is safe to do so.

In Merritt, we are very grateful that we have been able to work with community partners to make Coquihalla Middle School available to us in the new year, thus making room for Grade 8-10 students from Merritt Secondary School to return to in-person learning. We are also grateful to be working with the Crossroads and the Evangelical Free Churches, who are generously providing us with spaces that will become classrooms for Merritt Central Elementary students in the new year. Diamond Vale School continues to prepare to have classes join Merritt Bench, Collettville, and Nicola Canford Schools. We are making progress towards our early January 2022 target of providing in-person learning spaces for every student in the Merritt area of School District 58.

We are proud of how far the School District and our communities have come in less than a month. This is the direct result of the support from both the community, families, and staff. Both have been truly remarkable during this time, and we cannot thank everyone enough.

We have included the complete SD58 school reopening chart at the bottom of this letter. It summarizes what we have all accomplished to-date in terms of school re-openings and accommodations, and what we plan to accomplish going forward.

Now that we are getting more access to schools, teachers and students will have more technology to increase access to remote learning. As well, we are anticipating the 500 devices sent to us by the Ministry of Education to arrive shortly.

On Monday, Jane Kempston, District Principal of Student Support Services for SD58, reached out to everyone as a reminder that we will continue to be here for each of you in the days ahead. The Social Emotional Learning Team is continuing to support SD58 students and staff. Safer Schools will also continue to support school district staff in caring for your children as they move through this challenging time. We have had upwards of 100 staff and families choose to connect confidentially with additional emotional support, and we are

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committed to ensuring that this continues for as long as is needed. Please contact Jane Kempston, District Principal of Student Support Services, at jkempston@365.sd58.bc.ca; Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, District Principal of Aboriginal Education, at slacerte@365.sd58.bc.ca; your school principal; counsellor; FNSW; or teacher if you need any support at all. We are here for you.

Over the last month we've connected with many of you, but we look forward to the opportunity to come together with everyone soon to celebrate the strength and resiliency of our communities.

Take care.

K^{wuk}scemx^w, Limlōmt, Maarsii and thank you,



Stephen McNiven
Superintendent of Schools

SD58 School Reopening Chart

Merritt Openings

School	Returned to Learning	Planned Return to Learning
Nicola Canford	December 2 nd	
CLC	December 2 nd	
SCIDES	December 2 nd	
Merritt Bench	December 3 rd	
Collettville	December 9 th	
Diamond Vale	December 7 th Coquihalla Middle School Drop in Primary grades 9:15 to 10:25 Intermediate grades 10:30 to 11:50	December 13 th All grades Face to face full time Classes dispersed to Collettville, Nicola Canford, and Merritt Bench
Merritt Central	December 7 th Coquihalla Middle School Drop in Primary Grades 12 to 1:15 Intermediate Grades 1:15 to 2:45 N'Kwala School – every day fulltime face to face Coldwater School – Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 3	January 6 th Maranatha and E Free Church locations All grades face to face full time

MSS	December 7 th Grades 8,9,10 Remote Support Technology available if needed	December 13 th Grades 8,9,10 Coquihalla Middle School Gym 10 am to 12 pm daily Face to face drop in technological and teacher support for remote learners
	December 7 th ongoing Grades 11 and 12 Face to face full time NVIT	January 6 th Grades 8, 9, 10 Face to face part - full time Coquihalla Middle School
Strong Start	Ongoing parent communication All centres currently closed due to space; will look for community options	

Princeton Openings

School	Returned to Learning	Returned to Learning
John Allison Elementary	December 6 th Face to Face at VFE Part time schedule	TBD Based on 'boil water' announcement
Vermilion Forks Elementary (VFE)	December 6 th Face to Face at VFE Part time schedule	TBD Based on 'boil water' announcement
Princeton Secondary School/Bridge	December 6 th Face to Face at VFE Part time schedule	TBD Based on 'boil water' announcement

Resources:

[Government of British Columbia — Disaster Financial Assistance \(DFA\)](#)

[Government of British Columbia — Evacuee Registration & Assistance \(ERA\)](#)

[Government of British Columbia — Mood and Anxiety: Getting Help](#)

[Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre — Parents & Caregivers](#)

[City of Merritt — Return Home Plan](#)

[City of Merritt — Latest News](#)

[Town of Princeton EOC – Latest News](#) (Facebook Page)