

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year. We are looking forward to re-opening St. Nicholas Catholic School and welcoming back our students! I am very excited to join the St. Nicholas school community. St. Nicholas is such a vibrant school community with outstanding students, excellent teachers, dedicated support staff and a supportive and engaged parent community. In this email I would like to outline a number of items pertinent to ensuring everyone's well-being for this school year.

As we are gearing up for school to resume, we are deep in detailed planning, not only for learning, but also to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Our school division has posted our detailed relaunch guide on the [Elk Island Catholic website](https://www.eics.ab.ca/coronavirus-information-in-eics) and you can read more about it here:

<https://www.eics.ab.ca/coronavirus-information-in-eics> or simply click [here](#).

In addition to the increased cleaning, sanitizing and the many other Alberta Health Services recommendations, we will have new routines specific to our school in order to keep students and staff healthy and safe.

Some of those items specific to our school will include the following:

- Changes to drop off and pick up procedures for buses and parents
- Changes to entrances and exits that students will use
- Changes to use of lockers and movement of students around school for class changes and breaks
- Recess and lunch times will be organized to maintain cohort groupings
- Establishing student and teacher cohorts (grade groupings)
- New visitor/parent visiting school policies
- Everyone entering the school will need to answer the screening questionnaire and will need to sign in at the office for contact tracing
- Mandatory masks for students in grade 4 and optional but highly recommended masks for students in kindergarten to grade 3
- Extra cleaning of school common areas and regular sanitizing of student spaces during the day
- Social distancing during the school day

I am looking forward to working collaboratively with our parents to ensure we are all in a safe and caring environment. I am asking parents to screen your child for symptoms every day before sending them to school. Students with symptoms should **not** be coming to school. We have a screening guide and would ask that you use it to ensure that if your child has symptoms they will stay home. This is an Alberta Health Services rule and it is critical we all do our part to ensure we are following it. Our staff will be doing the same for themselves and we have a process to follow before students or staff return to school if they do experience any symptoms. I have attached the screening tool with the list of symptoms at the end of this letter.

There will be changes to our routines and other processes for this school year. **In order to be able to work through all these new changes, all the schools in EICS are planning a staggered school start this year. The first full day for all students will be Tuesday, September 8. This staggered start will help us make all of the**

adjustments to our daily routine. I will send out more information on this staggered school start next week.

Finally, I have spoken with some parents over the last while who have exceptional family situations that involve family members who are immune compromised. EICS is providing an online alternative for families from Grades 1-12. **If your family is in this situation, please contact me as soon as possible so we can talk about your situation and options available to support your child.** The school office is now open, so please contact me directly at peterr@eics.ab.ca with an email outlining your request and a phone number that you can be reached at so as we can have an open discussion.

I appreciate the support of each of our families as we navigate during this difficult time. I want to thank you in advance for making the daily screening part of your morning routines. We all will be doing our part to keep our school safe. I want to encourage you to contact me with any questions or concerns and thank-you for your prompt response to let me know if you have a high risk family situation that needs some individual problem-solving.

This year the faith theme we have chosen, as a Division, is “Choose Joy”. Our intent, even in the midst of much uncertainty, is to model Christ’s Joy to our community. We will be providing you with more information as it becomes available. In the meantime, as we still have a couple of weeks before school starts, please enjoy the rest of summer! Have fun and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Peter Rachmistruk
Principal
St. Nicholas Catholic School

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Screening Questionnaire

PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS MUST USE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DAILY TO DECIDE IF THE STUDENT SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL

Risk Assessment: Initial Screening Questions

1.	Do you, or your child attending the program, have any of the below symptoms:	CIRCLE ONE	
	• Fever	YES	NO
	• Cough	YES	NO
	• Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing	YES	NO
	• Sore throat	YES	NO
	• Chills	YES	NO
	• Painful swallowing	YES	NO
	• Runny Nose / Nasal Congestion	YES	NO
	• Feeling unwell / Fatigued	YES	NO
	• Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea	YES	NO
	• Unexplained loss of appetite	YES	NO
	• Loss of sense of taste or smell	YES	NO
	• Muscle/ Joint aches	YES	NO
	• Headache	YES	NO
	• Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	YES	NO
2.	Has the person attending the activity/facility travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3.	Have you/your child had close <u>unprotected*</u> contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/6 feet) with someone who has travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days and who is ill**?	YES	NO
4.	Have you/your child attending the program or activity had close <u>unprotected*</u> contact (face-to-face contact within 2 meters/6 feet) in the last 14 days with someone who is ill**?	YES	NO
5.	Have you/your child or anyone in your household been in close <u>unprotected*</u> contact in the last 14 days with someone who is being investigated or confirmed to be a case of COVID-19?	YES	NO

* "unprotected" means close contact without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

** "ill" means someone with COVID-19 symptoms on the list above

If you have answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, please **DO NOT** enter the school at this time. You should stay home and use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine whether you need to be tested for COVID-19.

If you have answered "No" to all the above questions, you may attend school.