



Box 809 • 121 Collins Street
Warman SK CAN • S0K 4S0
Phone: 306-683-2800
Fax: 306-934-8221
www.spiritsd.ca

August 20, 2020

Dear Prairie Spirit families:

Thank you for your continued patience as we prepare for a return to school. Thank you too to those of you who were able to take the time to respond to our survey with information to help us plan and prepare. We take your concerns very seriously. Many of our school staff and all of our students have not been in our school facilities for six months. That in itself is a very unique situation and we recognize there are concerns and questions that come to mind.

Back to School

Back to school for the 2020/21 school year holds a different “supply list” than you may have used in the past. It is an unusual time and we want to make sure that some of the unusual things you may have placed on your list are checked off. We continue to be committed to communicating information regarding updates and the supports we are providing as we prepare for the coming school year.

In our Return to School Plan, we indicated that parents/guests, volunteers and visitors should only be entering the school or Division facility if there is a need that cannot be met another way. All visitors to school will have to complete the Prairie Spirit COVID-19 screening test. Our school division staff, superintendents and Board Trustees will also be considering other ways to provide supports to our schools at this time.

School Plans

The Premier has announced that individual school plans will be posted by end of day, Wednesday, August 26. You may have already been looking for these plans. I want to remind you that Monday, August 24, is the first day back for our teachers and administrators. The school plans will be a priority at this time. Our principals and teachers know their schools, classrooms and hallways best and their school plans will reflect a much greater detail. The plans will also sit under the frame of a ‘green’ document – meaning they will develop, grow and evolve based on updates from the Chief Medical Health Officer, Ministry of Education, Provincial Response Planning Team, local Medical Health Officer and the school division.

School year start

Earlier this week, we learned that our school year this fall will start one week later than originally planned. As a result, students will start school on **Tuesday, September 8.**

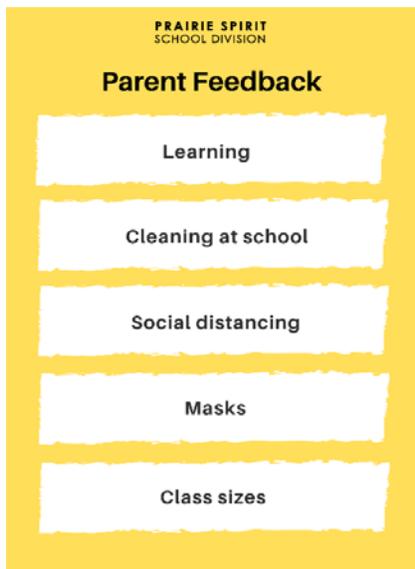
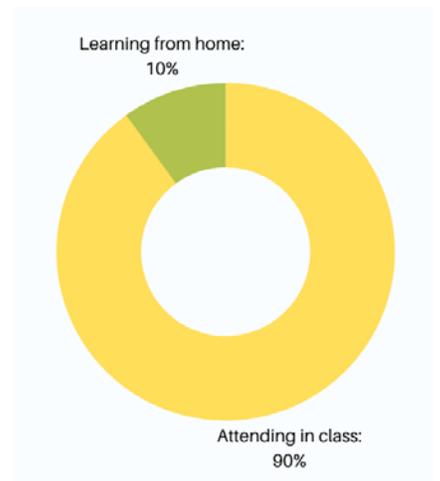
Our school year [calendar](#) has been updated on our website to reflect this change.

Parent survey

Thank you to all those families who completed the **Prairie Spirit – Return to School** survey. The results of our survey indicate that 90% of our families intend to send their children to our schools this fall. This information has provided the data needed for the school division to continue to plan for the fall.

There were many comments provided to answer the question: **As we plan to safely reopen our schools, what is one thing you ask us to pay attention to?**

This graphic provides an overview of the most common responses:



If you didn't complete the survey or would like to make a change in your response, please contact your school directly.

Learning in Prairie Spirit

In Prairie Spirit, we believe that the best place to learn, for most students, is in our schools with their teacher(s). We also recognize the unique needs of students and their families that mean that families may be looking for other options either for the short-term or for longer periods. We have used the feedback we received through the survey to finalize some learning options available to our students. Please note the changes to the Division's online learning school, which will now be offered to **Kindergarten to Grade 12** students.

Please see the following options available to families in Prairie Spirit:

Blended Learning

Blended learning allows for students to learn at school or at home and permits flexibility to move between learning at school and learning at home. Wherever possible, we recommend that families remain with their local school for blended learning.

Learning at School

- Attending at your local Prairie Spirit school.
- Staff will be closely following the provincial and Prairie Spirit guidelines for sanitizing and minimizing contact.
- Schools will offer the full provincial curriculum.

Learning at Home

- For families requesting remote learning for a medical accommodation:
 - o Register or remain registered with your local Prairie Spirit school.
 - o Refer to [AP 617](#) – Homebound Students.
- For families wishing to begin the school year with learning at home or for students required to stay at home **for a short period of time:**
 - o **Contact your local Prairie Spirit school.**
 - o Efforts will be made to connect your child to a teacher from their local school but, based on the demand, they may be connected to another Prairie Spirit teacher.
 - o Children can resume attending at their local school as soon as they feel ready.
 - o Learning at home will be a blend of connecting online and materials provided by a teacher to work on independently.
 - This is intended as a temporary arrangement. Families wishing to register for full online learning for the year should contact ***Spirit eLearning***, Prairie Spirit’s online school ([Peggy Mattila-Bains](#), Coordinator).

Online Learning – K-12: *Spirit eLearning*

- Prairie Spirit’s online school is ***Spirit eLearning***.
- Online learning includes synchronous (live) and asynchronous (self-directed) instruction.
- Families of students in **Grades K-12** may choose to register with ***Spirit eLearning***, Prairie Spirit’s online school.
- Immune compromised and medically fragile students who need to learn at home may register with ***Spirit eLearning***.
- Instruction will be provided by teachers within Prairie Spirit and, possibly for certain electives, from across the province.
- Depending on demand, course enrollment may be managed.
- Students registering with ***Spirit eLearning*** are committing to at least one semester of learning online.
- Students registered with ***Spirit eLearning*** have access to some services and opportunities at their local school, where offered, including: Practical & Applied Arts (PAA), Band, Driver Education and extra-curricular activities.
- Online learning is not a good fit for all students. Contact your school principal or [Peggy Mattila-Bains](#), Coordinator, to discuss this further.

If families have already paid a deposit to another online provider but want to remain with Prairie Spirit, Prairie Spirit will work with other online providers to secure a refund.

Home-Based Learning

- Contact Home-Based Education Facilitator - [Janet Jeffries](#).
- All instruction, planning and assessment is done by the parent.
- Parents are required to submit a learning plan.
- Home-based learning courses in grades 10-12 do not meet the criteria for grade 12 graduation.
- Provincial [guidelines](#); Division [procedures](#).

Facilities update

Our Facilities department has been working throughout the summer to prepare supports for staff and students this fall.

- Facilities has a supply of disposable face masks which will be delivered to each school this next week. There is another large order of face masks and an order of face shields for staff which will be distributed in early September.
- All caretakers will be trained on the appropriate method and timeline for sanitizing schools.
- Heating and ventilation systems:
 - All mechanical equipment has been maintained and readied for operation throughout the Division.
 - Additional contracted services have been procured to calibrate our pneumatic control systems to maximize outside fresh air into the buildings.
 - Filter change schedules will be enhanced, and all styles of filters reviewed to ensure we are installing filters with maximum filtration.
 - We will review options for additional air filtration, such as standalone HEPA filtration.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed at all school entrances: one independent stand at each front entrance and wall mounted at all student entrances. Hand sanitizer will be provided for each teacher desk and all offices in the Division.

At this time, we continue to be committed to communicating to our families in Prairie Spirit School Division at least once a week. We know that once our school staff are back, they will also be communicating on a regular basis.

We are working hard to create a safe and smooth transition back to school and we will do that with care and creativity – together.

Sincerely,



Lori Jeschke
Director of Education