

Gilbert Paterson Middle School 2020-21
School Year Re-Entry Information Handbook
August 25th draft



Welcome back to all students and families! We are excited to begin this new school year and return to in-school learning for most of our students. Whether you are new to Paterson or are returning, this year will present many new realities and routines. What we hope will not change is the opportunity to connect with students, build relationships and provide quality learning opportunities for all. While we realize our new normal brings challenge and change, we will strive to always make decisions with the safety and wellbeing of students and staff at the forefront. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility as we work through this process together.

Darryl Christiansen – Principal
Staff of Gilbert Paterson Middle School

Guiding Principles for Re-Entry Planning

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is a priority.
- Lethbridge School Division will attend to the protocols established by Alberta Health Services and Alberta Education in all aspects of schooling, with the main focus on student learning.
- We respect that parents are the first educators and primary decision-makers for their children.
- Students and staff who are vulnerable require attention to accommodations.
- Students will have quality learning opportunities that are guided by Alberta Education mandates and the provincial Programs of Study.
- Protocols and practices will be designed for the safety of all and will be communicated to all stakeholders.
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Parent Resources

- Parent Re-entry Guide and Pandemic Planning <https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/our-district/pandemic-planning>
- Lethbridge School Division Q and A that outline details about safety protocols, in school learning structure and at home learning options for families - <https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/283106>
- Self-Screening Questionnaire <http://wms.lethsd.ab.ca/download/292052>

Learning Programs

All schools will have both in-school and at-home learning programs at the start of the year. Parents have been asked prior to designate their wish for at-home learning. All students have been placed in one of these programs. Please note that due to numbers and staffing, French Immersion students wishing at home learning have been placed in the English stream with French Language Arts instruction to maintain language and connection. Please note that students are not able to switch programs until the Division-wide “pivot points” which have been set for November 10, January 29 and March 31.

At-Home Learning

At-home learning will be provided to those students who have chosen to have their learning delivered at home due to COVID-19 concerns while in-school classes have resumed. This support will allow students to remain registered at their home school while receiving course instruction through a format of online instruction, class times and independent work. This learning approach will require parent/guardian involvement and assistance. Students will be assigned to at-home learning teachers from each grade level responsible for instruction for each grade level group of students. The common on-line delivery platform for “at-home learning” will be “Teams” – a Microsoft 365 platform that many students and families became familiar with this past spring.

All students will have a daily and weekly schedule. The level of engagement and rigor will mirror what is expected of a student in school. This does not mean that the entire day will be synchronized on-line (real-time instruction from the teacher), but part of each day will be scheduled and synchronized, and part of each day will be scheduled for independent learning.

Assessment for at-home learning will include formative (ongoing feedback) and summative (graded work) assessment similar to that which a student receives in school. Middle School will be taught by subject specific teachers. Science, Math, English Language Arts and Social Studies will be offered as well as Physical Education and Health. Option activities such as such as Foods, Technology and Art may be integrated in these subjects or offered as independent activities depending on available staff and resources.

Please note that at-home teaching assignments were established after the parent survey and follow up work to organize our students. These teachers will be establishing their programming in the week prior to school. At-home learning teachers will begin connecting with students on Sept. 1 to establish schedules, expectations and most importantly, relationships, before any formal teaching and learning takes place.

In-School Learning

As we strive to put in structures for safety, a **cohort model** of instruction is necessary to ensure minimal contact for students and staff and to allow for contact tracing where necessary. As a result, students at middle school will spend their day together as a homeroom cohort. Each grade level has a teaching team cohort as well as we also provide for minimal staff contact across the school population. This cohort homeroom group will have their core. PE and option activities together as well as breaks and lunch hour. We will also be having teachers move to the specific homeroom classroom to teach to ensure a students’ workspace remains their own for the day. We are currently creating measures for contact tracing while students are outside the classroom space (i.e. bathroom, trips to the office, PE classes). Students will move to the gym or outside for PE classes. Teachers will be looking at ways to provide movement breaks and outside time during the day as well. These routines will evolve as teachers assess safety and student needs and adjust accordingly.

Please note that class cohorts have been created and adjusted taking into academic, social and emotional needs of the students, our prior class lists and a need to balance our learning groups.

Requests for class changes can not be accommodated. We appreciate your understanding and will work with you to support all students as we understand the realities of this new start up.

The focus will be on essential outcomes in the core subject areas (Mathematics, English Language Arts (French Language Arts for French Immersion), Science, Social, Physical Education and Health. There will be a different process for Middle School Options as a result of our cohort model and teacher staffing. We will now have options which are considered Activity Courses. As students must stay in their homeroom cohort, options are now Activity Courses and will be delivered by each grade level's teacher team. Students will get a variety of exposure to different types of option activities that are common for the grade level. These activities will change frequently and be designed to offer variety, movement and engagement but also follow protocol guidelines. Grade levels will communicate further information after start up regarding these programs. We will not return to "regular" options until AHS health protocols and guidelines change to normal operations.

As a result, we have changed our timetable to accommodate the cohort model and the classes that are offered. We now have a 7 block day that consists of a homeroom block for staggered entry and 6 class blocks. Students receive their 4 core classes, option/activity and PE daily from Mon-Thurs. On Friday, they receive 4 core, health and a ROAR/Flex block which will allow for some different types of community building and wellness activities.

Please refer to the next page for our bell times. Note that we have some small changes and a longer day on Friday due to bus times. Staff collaborate planning time is still Wednesday from 2:00-3:00 PM, resulting in the early dismissal.

Daily Procedures

Please refer to Guidelines for Maintaining Safe & Healthy Schools in Response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff and students are required to do the daily Self-Screening Questionnaire to ensure that no unnecessary risk is being taken by attending (see the link on the first page). The following guidelines will be followed at school to respond to an illness. <https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/295115>

Responding to illness at School

The following steps will be taken if a student develops symptoms at school:

- If a child/student develops symptoms while at the school, the child/student should be asked to wear a non-medical mask if they are able to and be isolated in a separate room. The parent/guardian should be notified to come and pick up the student immediately. If a separate room is not available, the child/student should be kept at least 2 metres away from other children/students. The student should be encouraged to access COVID-19 testing by accessing the AHS Online Testing tool.
- If the child/student requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the child/student until the parent is able to pick up the child/student.
- All items the student touched/used while isolated must be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child/student has been picked up. If two or more staff/students within a cohort are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID19, the school should follow outbreak notification procedures.
- Schools must keep records of a student's known pre-existing conditions. If a student develops symptoms in or outside of the program that could be caused by COVID19 or by a known pre-existing condition (allergies), the student should be tested for COVID-19 at least once.
- If two or more staff/students within a cohort are identified as having symptoms consistent with COVID19, the school should follow outbreak notification procedures.

- **Sick Room** – Our sick room will be located across the hall from the main office in the student center. If more than one student requires the space, they will be spread across the room, Masks are required and students will be monitored by office personnel.

Period Blocks	Monday Tuesday Thursday <i>60 min blocks</i>	Wednesday PLC time early dismissal for students <i>50 min blocks</i>	Friday <i>6 period shortened schedule</i> <i>40 min blocks</i>
Warning bell 8:03 Homerom - 1 8:05-8:20	Student entry Drop off materials Announcements 1	Student entry Drop off materials Announcements 1	Student entry Drop off materials Announcements 1
2	8:20-9:20	8:20-9:10	2 - 8:20-9:00
3	9:20-10:20	9:10-10:00	3 - 9:00-9:40
4	10:20-11:20	10:00-10:50	4 - 9:40-10:20 5 - 10:20-11:00
	LUNCH 11:20-11:55 Stagger bell 11:37 Grade levels will have staggered lunch of eating / playing	BLOCK 5 10:50-11:40	6 - 11:00-11:40 7 - 11:40-12:20 Bus pick up 12:20
	BLOCK 5 11:55-12:55	LUNCH 11:40-12:15 Stagger bell 11:57 Grade levels will have staggered lunch of eating / playing	
6	12:55-1:55	12:15-1:05	
7	1:55-2:55 Bus pick up 2:55	1:05-2:00 Bus pick up 2:00 Collab Time 2-3 PM	

GPMS BELL TIMES 2020-2021 Updated August 19

School Arrival and Departure - New School Hours and Procedures

In the past, we have had the school doors open by 7:30AM with our classes starting at 8:05. Students would congregate in the front entry and then spread throughout the halls and classrooms. As we attempt to follow protocols and social distance as best we can, **we will not open the doors until 7:50.**

Students will be designated a specific door to come in based on their classroom location. Supervisors will help guide traffic to classrooms. We are also asking that students **vacate the building by 15 minutes after the dismissal bell each day** in order to facilitate proper cleaning and sanitization. Busses are scheduled to arrive at 7:55. We ask any parents who are able to please drop off or send your child after 8:00AM to help with the staggering of entrance. Please note the following important procedures regarding arrivals and departures:

- Please have arrangements for pick up made with your child. We are asking that for older students, you consider a pick up or drop off point around the school that works for your family. We are also encouraging parents to drop off and pick up on the west side of the school (we will be utilizing our expanded staff parking lot and attempt to leave the side street free for parents), or 11th Avenue along our playground/ north field. Please stay in your cars as you wait. After the first day, students will know which entrance and exit they are using and you can you're your pick up / drop off routine accordingly
- If a student must wait in the foyer for pick up due to circumstances, they are to wear a mask and socially distant
- Students are expected to wear a mask while on school grounds while arriving or leaving and are expected to not linger and congregate on the school grounds. Please discuss with your child the reasons for this and what works best for your family.
- We are a closed campus. Students are expected to stay on campus over lunch and are not permitted to leave unless a parent signs a lunch contract that ensures they are going home for lunch.
- Bus Students - Once students have exited the building, following social distancing practices, they are to line up near their typical bus pick up with masks on. Once on the bus, please follow the instructions of the transportation provider. There will be general supervision in the bus area to help ensure an orderly bus process
- Please note that we will re-evaluate all arrival, dismissal and bus routines regularly to ensure safety and efficiency

Student Sign-in and Sign-out

- Late arrivals – if a student is late to school, they are to enter by the front entrance, ring the buzzer to be admitted into the building and report to the office.
- Leaving early – if a student is leaving early from school, a parent/guardian will notify the office, the student will then report to the office, sign-out and then proceed out the front doors.

Closed Campus

All schools will be closed to the public.

At this time, a closed campus is extended to include parents/guardians or volunteers. This means that you will not be able to enter the building except in emergency pick-up situations without a pre-arranged appointment. Parents/Guardians who need to come to the school are to call the school first (403-329-0125) and will be limited to going to the front entry area where you will be required to sign-in. As stated earlier, students are not permitted to leave school grounds during the day.

Mask Requirement (as per the August 4th, 2020 provincial update)

It is mandatory for all Grade 4 to 9 students and staff to wear non-medical masks in common areas, hallways, and busses. While wearing non-medical masks is not required in the classroom except when physical distancing is not possible, and there is close contact between individuals, our current student numbers in classrooms and the limited spacing will require students and staff to wear masks in the classroom setting.

Although the government has stated that it will be providing two reusable non-medical masks We encourage all families to make non-surgical medical masks or reusable options part of your back to school preparation and supplies. We will also have non-medical masks available when needed in the building. Additional Alberta Education information about this can be found:

<https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx>

We understand mask wearing will be a challenge not only for students but adults as well. If your child has a medical reason for not wearing one, please provide school administration and your teachers with this information as soon as possible. If this is the case, please understand that your child's seating and movement will be adjusted to provide social distancing.

We intend on working with all students to understand the expectations and reasons for face masks. It is important that all students and families understand that compliance is an expectation. If a student refuses to wear a mask, administration will make all efforts to find out the reason and work with the student and family. But at the end of the day, it is an AHS directive and it is not an option. For families that feel this option does not work for them, at home learning may be the appropriate option. Students who refuse to wear masks for non-medical reasons will need to work elsewhere within the school. Remember, we will be wearing a mask to protect you and we need you to do the same. We are a community that needs to take care of each other. At the same time, we understand that this is new and challenging. Please be assured - we will not confuse middle school forgetfulness or slip ups with defiance and will treat everyone with respect and care when dealing with mask issues.

Regular hand washing or sanitizing is essential in taking masks on and off. Ensure that you have reviewed the following protocols shared by Dr. Hinshaw. o How to wear a mask by Dr. Hinshaw
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=6MojzHFStNs&app=desktop>
Other PPE such as masks, gowns and gloves will be available on site when required.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing Stations

Each entry and exit into the school will have sanitizer for use as one enters and exits the building. Each classroom entryway will have sanitizer for use as one exits and enters a room. We also encourage students to bring their own personal hand sanitizer for their desk, being mindful of the sensitivity of others to those extra strong smells. Each class will have a dedicated washroom to try to spread traffic out.

Near Normal School Day Proceedings

As stated earlier, students will remain in their closed cohorts throughout the day. Below are many of the protocols and procedures that are part of the day to day routine

- **Breaks** - based on grade level, students will have different break times. There will be no school wide common break
- **Student Movement** - During the first days of school, students will be taught how to follow the movement protocols and directions to assist with the flow of student traffic in the hallway. Hallways will have signage to support bi-directional movement. Each class will have a designated outside entrance/exit, stairway if applicable and washroom. Some high traffic areas will have specific instructions, others will be bi-directional with arrows to remind. Teachers and staff will lead classes when moving. Everyone is to support social distancing practices and masks must be worn at all times

- **Lockers** will NOT be allocated at this time, so students will need to bring their bags/backpacks to their classrooms and store them under their desks and coats on their chairs. We ask that students limit the supplies that they bring. There will be no changing for PE activities, so we ask students to wear active footwear each day.
- **Lunch** - Students will eat in their classroom and no food service will be available through the Tiger's Den or vending machines at this time. Shared microwaves are also not available. Students need to bring their own lunch each day. We will still be supplying food options for students who require assistance. Students will be sanitizing before and after lunch and cleaning their desks down. Masks will not be required while eating.
- **Classrooms** will all be set up with individual desks facing in the same direction. Extra furniture will be removed and all efforts to social distance as best as possible in a full classroom will be made. Teachers will have a seating plan recorded that students will follow.
- **Gymnasiums and outdoor spaces** - The gym and our outdoor spaces will be used for Physical Education classes. Shared items will be disinfected after student use. Physical Education teachers will be adapting lessons to limit the usage of equipment. All students will have to sanitize their hands before and after entering the gym.
- **Band, Choir, Drama, Foods Rooms** – we will not be utilizing these rooms under the current scenario and will re-examine the programming after the first pivot point on November 10, 2020.
- **Washrooms** will be limited to a certain number of students to meet social distancing protocols. Homeroom cohorts will be assigned designated washrooms that are located within proximity to their homerooms.
- **Learning Commons** – The Learning Commons will not be used for student activities at this time. We are working on a bookmobile or book bin type model where our learning commons facilitator visits classrooms and provides materials to each child with input from the students that will be “quarantined” before they are shared with the next group. Books will not be taken home.
- **Computer Lab/Carts** - Electronic devices will be cleaned and disinfected after use.
- **Cell phones** – We were planning to utilize a cell phone policy asking students to keep them in their lockers during instructional time this year. With no lockers available, we are asking students to keep them in their backpacks or bags (not clothing pockets) and not share use with each other. If a teacher uses one at their discretion for an activity, students will follow directions and where and when. Cell phones are to be left in backpacks during PE and breaks and classes will be locked. Students can use them at lunch once eating is completed.
- **Water Bottles and Hydration Stations** - students are encouraged to bring a full water bottle to school. We have new hydration stations that are being installed along with our current ones to provide this service in all areas of the school.
- **Assemblies and Gatherings** - following guidelines that are currently in place, we will not be having any large gatherings, assemblies or intramurals as our student numbers exceed the limits within a confined space. One of our challenges will be to develop activities and events that meet protocols and still build connections, relationships and FUN so please be prepared to try something new!
- **Co-curricular Activities** - All School Division co-curricular activities are suspended until further notice. This may be subject to change based on divisional and jurisdictional requirements. All current fine arts groups and productions are suspended; a decision regarding the 2020/21 school production will be made later. We are looking at some afterschool virtual band and choir opportunities but need to focus on our new start up for the beginning of September.

- **Field Trips** - only field trips within school boundaries will be allowed. No field trips that involve bussing will be permitted.
- **Clubs and Groups** - all clubs and school-based youth groups are suspended at this time but will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.
- **Counselling** - individual counselling and student and family support along with wellness programming and initiatives are still an important part of our school. Our Wellness Team continues to work out the details of their protocols and scheduling
- **School Fundraiser** – we will not do a school fundraiser this fall as we focus on our other areas and give families a financial break. We may look at a spring fundraiser if appropriate.
- **School Council** will still meet as we iron out the social distancing protocols and a virtual attendance option as well. Please watch for details
- **School Fees** – Students will not be charged for activities and specific options that do not take place. All students do have a general activity fee of \$20 that will still be applied to your School Cash Online
- **Meet the Teacher Night** – We will not be having an evening drop in to meet the staff this year. Teachers will reach out in the first week of school to make contact via phone with you and let you know how best to communicate and share information and stay up to date on your child’s progress.

Attendance, PowerSchool and School Cash Online

Please make sure that you have up to date parent / guardian contact and emergency contact information on file with us. Please make sure you are registered for PowerSchool as all reporting and information about student progress will come through PowerSchool.

Please check our website to sign up Safe Arrival and School Cash Online. If you have problems, please call the office at 403-329-0125. Just a reminder that to enter an absence, you need to call the toll-free automated number at 866-879-1041.

Classroom Assignment

You will receive an email from your child’s classroom teachers by Friday August 28 to welcome you to the school and outline directions on where to meet on the first day. Please remember our staggered start:

- **GRADE 6 ONLY** – Tuesday September 1st
- **GRADE 7/8 ONLY** – Wednesday September 2nd
- **ALL STUDENTS** – Thursday September 3rd

Communication

Now more than ever, communication will be key between school and home. We will do our best to update you regularly about new routines or important information. If you feel there is something else that you need to know about that we haven’t shared, chances are you are not the only one. Please let me know through email darryl.christiansen@lethsd.ab.ca or at 403-329-0125. Watch the website and synvoice email messages regularly and let us know if you are not receiving them. In the past, I have sent home a Paterson Press every two weeks that outlines the important dates and activities and other information about school happenings. We will send home a weekly update each Friday to start the year as there will be lots to share. Please also check the website regularly for updates.

Together, we will navigate the challenges and opportunities of this new school reality. Things will look different. At the end of the day, we are committed to building student connections and positive learning experiences for all in a safe environment that promotes a sense of shared responsibility for each other.

Darryl Christiansen - Principal