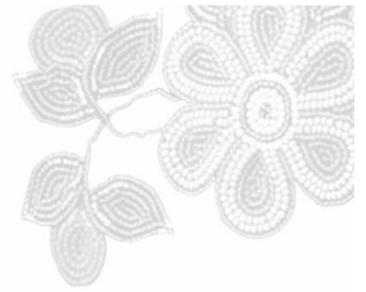




August 11, 2020

To all staff, students, parents/guardians, and stakeholders:

Re: 2020-2021 School Year Planning Update



School boards across the Northwest Territories – including the Tlicho Community Services Agency (TCSA) continue to plan for the 2020-2021 school year. School boards are working closely with the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE), the Northwest Territories Teacher's Association (NWTTA), and the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer on detailed plans so we can safely reopen schools.

In order for schools to reopen, students and staff will have to follow new measures such as; increased physical distancing, screening procedures, engineering controls, administrative controls, infection prevention and control, and the use of personal protective equipment. Detailed plans have been submitted to the Office of the Chief of Public Health Officer for approval before schools can reopen. Our schools are working hard to complete the recommended changes and updates to their plans.

As educators, we are committed to providing the very best education to every student regardless of individual circumstances. We understand that all of our students learn differently and learning does not just happen in the classroom. We also understand that all programs and teachers are important which is why schools are working on creative solutions to continuing culture camps and outdoor learning opportunities. We know our students thrive on hands on experience and will continue to pursue safe learning options.

Priorities and Background

The TCSA's priorities are:

- Maintaining the health and safety of students, staff, and families;
 - o Ensuring all health and safety measures as required by the CPHO and Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission are effectively implemented;
 - o Promoting practices to reduce transmission of the virus and to be responsive and flexible in response to changing health circumstances;
- Maximizing in-person instruction and delivering quality programs to the degree possible;
- Ensuring learning continues for all students, regardless of circumstances; and
- Providing remote learning opportunities and maintaining regular contact with students who cannot attend school in person (must be arranged with school principal).



The Chief Public Health Officer laid out different public health advice and restrictions depending on a person's age. Because young children are seen to be at the lowest risk for getting and spreading COVID-19, there are fewer physical distancing rules for elementary students than there are for junior and senior high school students. One new term is a 'classroom bubble'; this means that we keep students together in a homeroom to avoid mixing students and reduce possible disease transmission.

What to Expect

What to expect schoolwide:

- All staff and students will be screened in following the [GNWT Self-assessment](#). Parents are asked to monitor their children daily for symptoms and not send their children to school if they are sick. If a child becomes sick at school they will be quickly isolated, parents will be notified and they will be sent home.
- Masks are required for common spaces like hallways, entering and exiting the school, walking to washroom, on buses, etc. The school has masks for all students that are personalized and will be washed daily, however you may also provide a personal mask for your child.
- All students will learn healthy respiratory practices, how to take on/off mask, how to wash hands, and how to follow the physical distance requirements. Please encourage these same practices at home. Students will regularly wash their hands and use hand sanitizer while at school.
- Staff will be wearing non-medical masks or face shields when they cannot maintain 2m distance.
- Parents are asked to make appointments to come into the school. Most appointments will be done by phone as we are limiting visitors to the school.
- Entrance and exiting the school will be different – there are directional arrows to allow students and staff to move safely in our schools, and entrances/exits for different aged students. Parents are asked to leave and pick up their child from the outdoor locations only.
- Bus service to EMES is cancelled until further notice. CJBS will have bus service however buses will be designated for age groups to keep students from mixing. Students must screen in before getting on bus, and a mask is required to get on the bus. CJBS will communicate the new bus schedule via Facebook and other community communications.
- Cultural programs remain a high priority and all schools have planned for a focus on land programming early the school year.
- There will be no assemblies or large gatherings.
- Students will receive a kit to keep all their materials at their desk to limit the movement around the classroom. Lockers and clothing hooks will be limited access to avoid mixing groups of students.
- We have increased custodial services in all our schools and older students will be asked to help disinfect equipment/spaces they work in (ex: wiping off shared laptop before and after use).

What to expect in JK-9 classrooms:

- Students will be back full time and spend the day with their classroom bubble

- JK-6 will be allowed to have limited physical contact, and be allowed to play outside together for recess, but will keep physical distancing in common spaces
- Grade 7-9 will keep physical distancing of 1m between all students in the classroom, and 2m in all common spaces
- Recess will be within their classroom bubble and outdoor whenever possible
- Students will need to wear a mask in all common areas including buses, entering/exiting the school, hallways, and other common areas
- Students will stay with their classroom bubble for gym, recess, and eat together (snacks, breakfast, and for CJBS lunch)

What to expect in grade 10-12 classrooms:

- Full time, in person instruction as much as possible. Please expect a blended learning approach (combination of learning at school and at home) at Mezi Community School and Chief Jimmy Bruneau School. More information will be shared by each school over the next week.
- If your child needs access to computer it may be possible to sign out school computers to allow them to work from home.
- Some courses may not be available in order to prioritize 'core' high school courses.
- High school students will be 2m apart at all times.
- Breaks will be within their classroom bubble and outdoor whenever possible.
- Students will need to wear a mask in all common areas including buses, entering/exiting the school, hallways, and other common areas.
- Students will stay with their classroom bubble for gym, recess, and eat together (snacks, breakfast, and for CJBS lunch).
- Students who are 19 years and older will not be permitted to attend in person learning. Online and distance packages, as well as possible tutoring options will be available.

The Director of Education and CEO continue to work closely with our partners to ensure that as new information or changes to the Emerging Wisely plan occur we are able to adapt quickly. Our plans allow for a flexible transition between full time class, blended in person and online, as well as a return to at home learning. If you have additional questions you can email TCSA@tlicho.net or connect with your child's school. Please follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TlichoCommunityServicesAgency> as well your child's school Facebook account.

Masi Cho,
Tlicho Community Services Agency