

Dear ASD-S High School Families,

We are into our second full week of this very unique school year and I want to thank you for your support as we navigate this unfamiliar start up. We know that you have on-going questions and concerns and we appreciate your patience. Our staff have done an exceptional amount of work to prepare to welcome students back and we have had excellent student co-operation and compliance with the many safety protocols including wearing community masks outside of the classroom and on buses. Each school is monitoring their Operational Plan and making necessary adjustments.

This year's return to school has not been without challenges. Having students learn in school one day and from home the next is new in the history of NB public education and it is going to take some time. We know that there have been some complications with access to technology due to shipping and delivery of laptops, but as of today most devices ordered by families have been delivered, and we will be loaning school laptops to others who do not yet have a device. There have been some start-up challenges regarding access to the wireless network in some schools and this will also be addressed.

Teachers are determining the best ways to connect with all students each day. Blended learning, tracking daily attendance and working with students who are both at school and at home is a new practice for our teachers and students. Teachers need time to become more skilled with technology and new ways of teaching. Blended learning for one subject or course may look very different from another, depending on the content, the students, and the teaching approach. This may include lecture, small group instruction, working with a peer group and time for independent practice. The goal is not to have our students spending full days in front of a screen, but to provide varied learning opportunities and means of connecting so that students are engaged and learning even on the days they are at home. Teachers and students will learn together as we establish what works best for different types of learners, in different subjects and teaching environments. There is a tremendous opportunity for students to develop new competencies and skills as learners.

Thank you for your support, cooperation, and understanding as we work to continuously improve. Our number one priority is delivering a quality education while keeping our students, staff, and community safe and we are looking forward to an exciting year ahead.

Zoë Watson,
Superintendent