



June 12th, 2020

Dear Parents,

It is hard to find words to begin a letter that ends this year while looking to next with uncertainty, difficulty, but ultimately hope. As a school, we were thrown into a new reality of learning that asked everyone to assume new roles with very little warning, training, and no consent. None of us had a say in the matter. Fortunately, the school had foresight to see that things were not going to be quite the same after Spring Break and we took action to send items home with students. Teachers spent their Spring Break preparing for a new kind of learning and everyone was uncertain how this was all going to play out.

What has transpired over these last 11 or so weeks has been a feat of resilience for our children, the staff and you, the parents who became deeper and more essential partners in the education of your child. What we accomplished together was outstanding. Was it perfect? No. Was it as good as what was provided prior to Spring Break? No. I say it was outstanding because we were able to accomplish educational tasks that we never thought could be possible in a way such as this. I say it was outstanding because our community came together in a way that showed tremendous support and understanding. It was outstanding because we rose to the challenge, succeeded against the odds and came away a stronger community that when we entered. Think about all the learning that happened outside of the textbooks, worksheets and quizzes. Students learned about Catholic Social Teachings when the PEC put together videos for front line and essential service workers. We all learned that we are a special community when we all came together to celebrate each other in a drive by parade. We learned that education can be difficult for our emotions and feelings, but teachers and staff are there to guide and support whenever we are called upon. And we learned that we do not walk alone, that you are not just a “kid in a seat”, but someone we love and care for. These last 11 or so weeks have been nothing short of an emotional rollercoaster that, for many of us, has heightened our anxieties and fears. Yet, through it all, we stuck together and supported each other as best as we know how.

And that has brought us here. Looking to end the year on a positive note while looking ahead to next year. When we come back to school in the fall, this experience will have a lasting positive impact. We are going to come back more grateful, more understanding and more resilient to whatever may come next. In previous letters during this time of the year I have said “each year we grow stronger as a family which allows us to celebrate who we are, find strength when we are faced with challenges and conflict, and give support to those who need it the most”. Never has there been a year in which that was truer.

As we look to next year, there are a few items that are of an important note to returning and new families.



1. Return to School

We don't know what September will bring, but if we had to make an educated guess, we would suspect that based on how the pandemic is unfolding as of writing this, that we will return to 100% in class learning for Kindergarten to grade 7. We were very fortunate to have adapted google classroom several years ago, which served us well during this remote learning period for many of our grade levels. Next year, you can expect families to use the following online platforms to compliment your child's education and prepare them in the event that a disruption to face-to-face learning resurfaces. The main platforms we will be using are:

Kindergarten – Grade 3 – SeeSaw and Raz Kids

Grade 2 – 7 – Google Classroom

Grade 3 – 7 – Spinndle

There are other programs such as IXL, FlipGrid, Mystery Science, StarFall, ABCya!, Kahn Academy and other online platforms and sites that individual teachers may access throughout the year. Teachers continually research best practice and evaluate the resources they bring into the classroom.

2. Seismic Upgrade

Our school is in the final stages of approval to begin seismic upgrades to the school. These upgrades will not only increase the safety of our students, but it will also improve the overall look and appearance of our exterior. There is a possibility that construction could begin as early as June of 2021. If that is the case, we may have to make adjustments to the school schedule and calendar. We will cross that bridge when we come to it.

3. School Calendar

For our 2020-2021 school year, we will once again only be using the Google Calendar in our school. We ask families to go to our website to view our calendar that is updated regularly. You can add our calendar to your own Google calendar. You can find it under our "School Life" tab. Our Google Calendar is a living document and dates will be added and changed throughout the year, so please check the calendar often.

4. Office Hours

Our office will be open until Friday July 2nd (closed July 1st for statutory holiday). The office will re-open again on Tuesday August 30th. During the first week of July and the last week of August the office will be open from 9am to 3:00pm. The office will be closed from noon – 1pm for lunch.



5. Stingers Activity Club

We are very excited to have Ms. Sheila Vader return as our coordinator along with Ms. Rochelle D'Costa and Ms. Manuela Pimentel who help run the Stingers Activity Club. The club is open to all students of St. Bernadette's and it offers fun activities and learning opportunities beyond the classroom. For more information, please contact the office or Ms. Vader at stingersclub@stbernadette.ca. We are working with the Ministry of Education to see if we are permitted to run before and after school care come September. Please let Ms. Vader know if you require use of the club for next year. We hope to have forms out in the week prior to school opening in September.

6. Welcome Back Pancake Breakfast

This fall would have been our 5th annual Welcome Back Pancake Breakfast. We are uncertain if we are able to host it again next year. Based on current restrictions, this does not look likely. Hopefully we will have a better sense of what we can do come September by mid-late August.

7. Fundraisers

Fundraising is an essential part of our operational budget. Fundraising keeps tuition low and helps us purchase items that benefit your child's education. We don't know what fundraising is going to look like next year. Our goal is to provide every child with a Chromebook. We hope that through ingenuity, resourcefulness and generosity we can meet our goal and see the benefits for the students.

8. Waste Free Lunches

Once again children will be required to pack in and pack out their lunches. Students will bring their leftovers and wrappers back home. A benefit of this program is that parents will have a much clearer idea of what their child is eating on a daily basis.

9. 2020-2021 Teaching Assignments

We are welcoming 3 new staff members to our team next year. Ms. Kathlyn Buenvenida will be teaching grade 1. Ms. Hillard will be moving from grade 1 to partner teach with Ms. Stuart. Ms. Caroline Winship will be teaching in Grade 2. We also welcome Mr. Nathan McMurchy-Barber to take over as Athletic Director and assume the position of our PHE teacher. We wish all the best to Ms. Heaman, Ms. Symak and Mr. Godenir as they continue onto the next stage of their careers.

Principal – Mr. van der Pauw
Vice-Principal – Ms. Kosman
Learning Resource – Ms. Bennett
Physical Education – Mr. Barber
French – Ms. Fraser



Kindergarten – Ms. Schollen
Grade 1 – Ms. bienvenida
Grade 2 – Ms. Winship
Grade 3 – Ms. Misiti
Grade 4 – Ms. Stuart/Ms. Hillard
Grade 5 – Ms. Bourassa
Grade 6 – Ms. Peck
Grade 7 – Ms. Kosman

10. Additional Staffing

We wish all the best to Ms. Tamara Leslie who will be on maternity leave starting in September. Below are the assignments for the support staff of St. Bernadette's.

Educational Assistants:	Ms. Ausmus
	Ms. D'Costa
	Ms. Flores
	Ms. Green
	Ms. Junk
	Ms. Landon
	Ms. MacRae
	Ms. Melo
	Ms. Pimentel
Office Administrator:	Ms. Spanjers
Human Resources/Bookkeeper:	Ms. Gelz
Stingers Activity Club Coordinator:	Ms. Vader
Stingers Activity Club Staff:	Ms. D'Costa
	Ms. Pimentel
Custodian:	Mr. Barry

Yours in Christ,

Michael van der Pauw
Principal