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J. Warren Killam School

A T.R.R.F.C.C. Place to Be!

March 17, 2021

Dear Families of our Fully Remote Students,

You are receiving this letter because you have chosen to have your child(ren) remain fully remote from April 5th through the remainder of the school year. We know that this was a challenging decision to make and we appreciate the thought that went into it. Not every detail on our end is set, but I wanted to communicate what we do know for sure.

Your children will remain with their homeroom teachers and current classmates. They will no longer be working between classrooms on a biweekly basis. Instead, our fully remote students will be “livestreaming” into the classrooms. This means that they will be joining the instruction in their homerooms through our classroom camera equipment, Zoom, and other instructional technology software that we have been using this year.

Livestreaming will be a new experience for our teachers and students. We are excited by the prospect and know that there will be pieces that need to be adjusted. At Killam, most of our students are returning fully in-person. With this knowledge, our teachers will work hard to navigate the demands of responding to the students in the room with them while also engaging your child in the shared classroom community. This may mean, however, that your child may have some different experiences or that there may be more independent or asynchronous work to best support the workshop model that we use in the classroom setting. For example, in math workshop, students participate in a mini-lesson and then break into various centers. During this center time, most students are independently accessing the materials while a teacher may be re-teaching with a small group of students. For our students in the classroom and remote, the independent time is not synchronous learning. At home, your child may be asked to return to the livestreaming at a specific time and work quietly at home until that time. In other instances, if a video better supports or explains a concept, such as a scientific experiment that shows subtle changes to the human eye, your child may be watching something on their laptop. As our teachers always do, they will work to find the most beneficial entrance to the learning concept for your child.

We do recognize that livestreaming will feel and be different for your child. I wanted to share the language and expectation that came forth from the Department of Education’s “Guidance on In-Person Learning and Student Learning Time Requirements” from March 9, 2021.

“For many districts, this (April 5th return to in-person) will be a substantial programming shift mid-school year. Families should expect that districts may need to make challenging tradeoffs to accommodate the full in-person instructional mode. For instance, if students are currently learning in a hybrid model, the shift to more in-person days may require changes in classroom learning spaces and, in some cases, teacher-student

assignments. If students are currently in a remote model or choose to learn remotely when these new requirements go into effect, the remote learning option may look different than the model offered prior to the implementation of these new requirements...

We encourage districts to use a “livestreaming” or simultaneous instructional model for remote students. In this model, students learning at home participate in largely the same classroom activities as students who are learning in-person. This will continue to allow students to access remote learning if they need to quarantine this spring due to a COVID-19 related issue.”

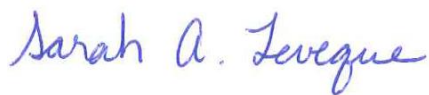
It is our goal to make this as educationally sound as possible, and we know it will feel different than what our students have been experiencing during their current remote learning.

In regard to specialist times (art, PE, music, and library media), there will be a mix of synchronous and asynchronous lessons, depending upon what is being offered. For example, as our PE classes take place outside, we do not have a camera setup to livestream and therefore, PE will remain asynchronous. The specialists and I are still working out the details and we will communicate information once finalized.

Finally, as teachers adjust to the everyday needs and curriculum pacing to support their students, it is most likely that you will need to pick up materials more frequently from school. We will continue to use the bin system, leaving materials outside 24/7. Teachers will communicate if there are materials for you to pick up.

As I shared, this will be a new teaching experience for our teachers, so I do anticipate some growing pains. However, just as we did in the fall, our teachers will continue with their phenomenal work of educating your children and working with them each step of the way in this transition process. We thank you for your understanding as we transition into this new setup.

Thank you,



Sarah Leveque, Principal
J.W. Killam Elementary School