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Atkinson Bear Community C.A.R.E.S
Challenge ~ Responsibility ~ Self-Control
Acceptance ~ Empathy

August 30, 2020

Dear Atkinson Academy Families:

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! To those families new to our school, we are pleased to have you join our community and look forward to getting to know you. I am excited to begin my sixth year at Atkinson Academy, working now as the Interim Principal. This summer has been one of change. Mrs. Dayotis retired at the end of June, and Mrs. Katie Cipriano has accepted a position in Hampstead as a grade four teacher. Ms. Beth Bisbing is taking a year's leave of absence but plans to return to us next year. We wish them all the best as they embark on new journeys. Our custodial team, Mr. Sean, Mr. Don and Ms. Gail have been working tirelessly all summer and have done an amazing job of getting our school ready. As you know, we are living in uncharted times. I don't believe any of us ever imagined that we would be in the position of teaching and learning during a pandemic. Many of you have reached out over the past few weeks as you have been deciding which path is best for your family to follow. Regardless of your choice, I can ensure you that the entire staff at Atkinson Academy is ready, eager and excited to engage in learning with your children.

As I mentioned above, we have had several staff and grade changes over the summer. Mrs. Nicole Bailey has moved from teaching grade four to teach in grade one, and Mrs. Meredith Bastien has moved from a special education position to become an Intervention Specialist. Ms. Stacy Merriam, also an Intervention Specialist, joined our staff in early March, so many of you did not have a chance to meet her last year. We are thrilled to have four new staff members join us this year. Mrs. Susan McColley will be teaching our half day kindergarten program. Susan has spent many years teaching early childhood education, as well as serving as a preschool director. Mrs. Jane Stewart also joins us permanently as a grade one teacher after substituting for a classroom during remote learning last spring. Ms. Jessica Lacroix, our new grade four teacher comes to us from Danville where she has been working in special education. Ms. Kendra McCarran has worked in the district for the past year. She will be working with many of our special education students in the coming months. We also welcome Ms. Micaela Kiley, a psychology intern from Northeastern University, will be working under the guidance of

Mrs. Gallant and Mrs. McTague. I am excited to welcome these new staff members to the Atkinson Bear Community.

Throughout the summer, our staff has participated in various trainings to prepare to teach your children in person and remotely. For example, staff have attended OGAP Math Training (On Going Assessment Project) and various reading trainings including workshops on helping students develop reading skills through a remote approach to teaching. They have taken courses on supporting Social and Emotional learning and have developed work study practices that will support the various needs of our students. Mrs. Barbara Gallant, our school counselor, and Mrs. Shana McTague, our school psychologist, have worked collaboratively with the district counselors to develop lesson plans that will support our student's re-entry to school. This work will specifically support Atkinson Academy CARES and will be delivered by our classroom teachers in both the blended and remote model.

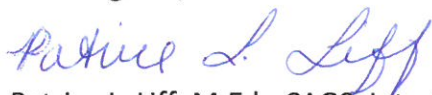
Below are a few housekeeping items:

- For families that are opting to send their students to school in the Blended Model, please follow the safe return to school guidelines that can be found on our website and [HERE](#). Scroll down to see the requirements from the TRSD Health Office COVID-19 Resources.
- Families will receive cohort information sent via school messenger on Monday afternoon.
- All remote classrooms will be taught by Atkinson Academy staff except for half day kindergarten remote students who will be taught by district personnel.
- School hours will remain the same 8:30 AM -3:10 PM. Students arriving after 8:30 AM will be considered tardy.
- Teacher letters will be sent later this week. The envelope will include a letter from your child's teacher and a dismissal form. **PLEASE** complete this form and return it with your child on their first day of school. The letter will also include information about arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Students participating in Remote only learning can pick up their Chromebooks at the school on Tuesday 9/1 between the hours of 9:00 and noon, and Thursday 9/3 between the hours of Noon-3:00.
- Students participating in the Blended Model will receive their Chromebooks on the first day of in person instruction.
- All students will be receiving remote learning bags from classroom teachers and some specialists. These bags will have materials that will help support your child's learning at home. Students participating in the Blended Model will receive these bags on the first day of school, providing all supplies are in. Students participating in the Remote Model will be notified when the bags are ready for pick up.
- All students coming into the school must wear a mask. Masks must be worn on the bus, and when getting out of the car. Mask breaks will be provided for students throughout the day.

- Lunch will still be served and students will be eating in their classrooms.
- If you are driving your child to and from school, the morning drop off and afternoon pick up location is still the same: at the front of the school. However, our procedures have changed due to safety concerns and to allow for social distancing requirements. Cars will now form one line going into the school yard. Please pull all the way up to the stop sign when forming the line. This will extend the car line on both sides of Academy Ave. Police officers will be available to direct traffic, and they are asking that you pull over to the side of the road and wait to be waived onto the school grounds. We ask that you remember the following:
 - All parents must stay in their vehicles. Staff will come to help the children out of the car and to get into the car at the end of the day.
 - In the morning, students will be let out of cars beginning at 8:20. Please DO NOT drop your student at the front door as was past practice. We can no longer have students wait together to go into the classrooms.
 - Please watch for a more detailed communication regarding arrival and dismissal procedures, included with all teacher letters.
- Pre-K, AM and PM Kindergarten students only: Dismissal Changes: Pre-K and AM Kindergarten students will be dismissed to the upper driveway coming out the cafeteria doors at 11:10. Arrival Changes: PM Kindergarten students will arrive to the upper driveway and enter the building through the cafeteria door. Dismissal for PM Kindergarten students will be with the rest of the school in the lower driveway.
- Please watch for a bus survey sent by the district. It is very important that you complete it if your child will ever ride the bus. CDC guidelines will be followed during bus rides.
- Sadly, Open House cannot be held in the traditional manner this year. I will notify you once we have determined a date and safe method to have families meet our staff.

Enjoy these remaining days of summer. We look forward to welcoming students back in the building and remotely on Tuesday, September 8. If I can be of any support to you, or if you have continued questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Kind Regards,



Patrice L. Liff, M.Ed., CAGS, Interim Principal