 SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 38 (RICHMOND)

 **MAPLE LANE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

 7671 Alouette Drive, Richmond, BC V7A 4P2

 Phone: (604) 668-6692. Fax: (604) 668-6694

Mrs. L. Schwartz, Principal

***MAPLE LANE Community***

***The Week Ahead: January 10th-14th, 2022***

Monday: Welcome Back

Tuesday: PAC Meeting @ 6:00 P.M. virtually on Teams

 Drumming with Milton Randall

Wednesday: Drumming with Milton Randall

Thursday: Drumming with Milton Randall

Friday: Drumming with Milton Randall

Black Excellence Day (wear black)

**Welcome Back and Additional Health and Safety Measures**

Welcome back everyone. I am looking forward to seeing you all again. I want to share some details with you about how we are preparing to welcome all students back to school on Monday, January 10. As you know, the Richmond School District has worked closely with public health officials and has carefully followed their guidance throughout the pandemic. The health, safety, and well-being of students, you as families, and staff remains our top priority.

Within our district, we have implemented health and safety measures as advised by public health, and carefully followed the [Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines-addendum.pdf) to reduce the risk of COVID transmission in schools. A few of these measures include:

* Encouraged all eligible members of our community to become vaccinated against COVID-19
* Reminded staff and students to conduct [daily self-health checks](https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1) and to stay home if ill
* Provided a supply of 3-layer disposable masks for staff and students to access
* Updated and modified [ventilation systems](https://facilities.sd38.bc.ca/content/ventilation-systems-overviews) to upgrade filters and maximize air exchange
* Ensured frequent and regular cleaning including daily cleaning of high touch surfaces
* Limited visitor access to schools
* Shared information with students and staff in our school about hand and respiratory hygiene, proper mask use and spacing out as much as possible. Your child will have a health and safety presentation this week that will include the above information.
* Installed portable handwashing sinks in classrooms without sinks, and hand sanitizing stations

This past week staff at our school have taken time to review our health and safety measures and I want to highlight some key items for you as we prepare for Monday:

* **We will continue to use our classroom outside doors to enter and exit the school.**
* **We use the hallways rarely and try to move to other places in the building moving to them from the outside. We are staggering when students collect their lunches and snacks in areas where more than one class congregates.**
* **At this time, our lunch monitor program is on hold (older students will not be in classrooms supervising younger students).**
* **We will continue to hold all assemblies virtually**

Possible Closure of Schools:

The school and the district will be monitoring student and staff absences on a daily basis and responding quickly if we see numbers of absences due to illness rising significantly. It is possible that at some point, a school may need to temporarily close because of the impacts of the Omicron variant. This could occur for one of two reasons:

* A 'health closure' of the school would be determined by public health officials because of the number of staff and students who have tested positive with COVID-19.
* A 'functional closure' of the school would occur if there is a shortage of available staff and we are unable to keep the school open for in-person learning and safely supervise students.

As each case would be handled individually, it is not possible to predict exactly how long a temporary closure would be in effect, however it is estimated that most closures would be for approximately seven days. A number of factors would need to be taken into consideration in determining the length of a closure. What we do know is while we hope that there will not be a need for a temporary closure, we will work hard to ensure we support everyone who is impacted during such a time.

This week, staff spent time planning how to respond should the school need to temporarily close in the coming weeks. In the event of a closure, we will notify families as soon as possible. During a functional closure, we will shift to providing remote learning opportunities for students to ensure continuity of learning and course completion. We also hope to be able to continue to provide in-person support during a functional closure for students with additional needs, such as students with special needs and children of essential workers. This will be dependent on the availability of staff and will be determined and communicated at the time of closure.

We know these days are challenging and uncertain in many ways. You can continue to count on us to keep you informed and do everything we can to meet students’ needs. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to welcoming your children back to Maple Lane as we navigate the upcoming weeks together.

**Daily Health Declaration**

Each morning, please review the Daily Health Declaration to ensure your child is able to come to school. It is more important than ever for all of us to stay home if we are not well. The [CO-VID Health Check App and website](https://www.k12dailycheck.gov.bc.ca/healthcheck?execution=e1s1) is a useful tool. Under the direction of Vancouver Coastal Health, symptomatic students will be sent home.

**Mask Wearing**

We will continue to be diligent about reminding students to wear their masks. We ask that the masks cover the breathing zone (chin to nose) and that they are worn at all times, except when eating and drinking.

**PAC Hot Lunch**

One of the additional Health and Safety measures is to reduce the number of visitors in our schools. Keeping that in mind, we are working on some Hot Lunch days for January, February and March that can be done using our student leadership group. Stay tuned for more details.

**Black Excellence Day (Wear Black on January 14, 2022)**

Last year was the first year that we observed and Black Shirt Day. This year we are shifting our language and focus to “Black Excellence Day”. The term “Black Excellence” was born out of the civil rights movement in the 1960’s and honours great civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who was born on January 15, 1929. Black Excellence is an opportunity for us to learn about the contributions of Black Canadians, and their ongoing civil rights struggle.

**Maple Lane’s Got Talent**

The Maple Lane talent show is on hold.

**Milton Randall Drumming (Whole school experience)**

Our PAC is sponsoring whole school drumming workshops, with Milton Randall. The drumming will be happening in the gym this week. Each class will receive one drumming lesson per day. I spoke with Milton on the telephone this afternoon to familiarize him with our District Health and Safety protocols. This workshop provides a unique study of popular music genres using a combination of African and Brazilian (which has deep roots in West African music) dance, drum, song, and communication. Students will explore the influences of African drumming with our modern popular music and culture of the last century.

