

## Chalmers Elementary Newsletter

11315 75<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Delta BC V4C 1H8  
School Office: 604-594-5437  
Absentee Line: 604-594-0269  
Principal: Jeff McCallum  
Vice Principal: Tina Doukas  
Admin Assistants: Anna Dougas  
Stacey Clarke  
School Website: <http://ch.deltasd.bc.ca>



Issue #: 2

Date: September 16, 2020

### Important Dates to Remember:

Sept. 25	PRO-D Day (No School for Students)
Sept. 30	Orange Shirt Day
Oct. 8	Individual Student Photos
Oct. 12	Thanksgiving (No School)
Oct. 21	Parent/Teacher Conferences <i>(more information about the format these will take will be shared soon)</i>
Oct. 22	Parent/Teacher Conferences <i>(more information about the format these will take will be shared soon)</i>
Oct. 25	Provincial PRO-D Day (No School)

### Dear Parents:

We hope that the first week back has gone smoothly for all of our students and their families. It has been wonderful to hear and feel the energy that is created when our classrooms and playgrounds are filled with the excited sounds of children playing and learning together. Our students all seem to be enjoying being back at school and working with their teachers and friends. They are learning and adjusting very well to all the new safety routines that are in place. We are proud of everyone for what they have accomplished so far.

We would like to thank everyone in our community for the patience, flexibility and understanding you have shown as we all

adjust to the new safety routines and expectations that we must adhere to keep everyone safe. It is clear to us that we are all working together!

As we move into the weeks and months ahead, all of us here at Chalmers will do our best to provide our students the best school year we possibly can during this time. A typical school year has a lot of traditional events that take place and it likely will not be possible for all of these events to take place in the ways we have known. This will likely mean that some of the events that are currently listed on our school calendar for this year will need to be revised. We will do our best to communicate the changes and information to you in as timely a manner as possible.

Once again, we welcome everyone to the 2020-21 school year and we look forward to another great year at Chalmers!

Mr. J. McCallum  
Principal

Ms. T. Doukas  
Vice Principal



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### Cohort Information and Staggered Bell Schedule:

In order to reduce crowding in the hallways, on the playgrounds and around the entrance/exit doors we will be assigning all classes to either Cohort A or Cohort B and will use a staggered bell schedule as follows:

	Cohort A	Cohort B
Classes	Smith Klose Galbraith Ardanaz Loodu Bromley Cunnigham Dalgetty Ho Sanghera Waugh ** Hogg **	Cameron Parrott Hobbs Savage/Sabatini Kondo Jhaji (Baghela) Dudzic Hoepfner Beeksmas Notting
Arrive	8:40am	8:50am
Recess	10:25-10:40am	10:45-11:00am
Lunch	12:00-12:35pm (playtime) 12:35-12:52pm (eating time)	12:35-12:52pm (eating time) 12:52-1:27pm (playtime)
Dismissal	3:00pm Wednesday: 2:00pm	3:10pm Wednesday: 2:10pm

\*\* (beginning September 21)

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### Daily Health Check Form



Thanks to everyone in the community for taking the time to acknowledge your responsibility to complete the daily health check with your child every day before sending or dropping them off at school. The BC Centre for Disease Control has simplified the Daily Health Check Form for parents to use as a guide in performing daily health checks with their children. As with many of the guidelines we are following, they may be updated regularly. Please do not use the old health check form any longer. The new form can be found [here](#). We have also included a copy of the form below. Please remember that if you answer 'yes' to any of the questions, keeping your child home and if appropriate, following up with a health care provider is absolutely necessary in order to keep our school environment healthy and safe for everyone.

Daily Health Check			
1. Key Symptoms of Illness*	Do you have any of the following new key symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Nausea and vomiting	YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

If you answered “YES” to one of the questions included under ‘Key Symptoms of Illness’ (excluding fever), you should stay home for 24 hours from when the symptom started. If the symptom improves, you may return to school when you feel well enough. If the symptom persists or worsens, seek a health assessment.

If you answered “YES” to two or more of the questions included under ‘Symptoms of Illness’ or you have a fever, seek a health assessment. A health assessment includes calling 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner. If a health assessment is required, you should not return to school until COVID-19 has been excluded and your symptoms have improved.

When a **COVID-19 test** is recommended by the health assessment:

- If the COVID-19 test is **positive**, you should stay home until you are told by public health to end self-isolation. In most cases this is 10 days after the onset of symptoms. Public health will contact everyone with a positive test.
- If the COVID-19 test is **negative**, you can return to school once symptoms have improved and you feel well enough. Symptoms of common respiratory illnesses can persist for a week or more. Re-testing is not needed unless you develop a new illness.
- If a COVID-19 **test is recommended but is not done** because you choose not to have the test, or you do not seek a health assessment when recommended, and your symptoms are not related to a previously diagnosed health condition, you should stay home from school until 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and then you may return if you are feeling well enough.

If a COVID-19 test is not recommended by the health assessment, you can return to school when symptoms improve and you feel well enough. Testing may not be recommended if the assessment determines that the symptoms are due to another cause (i.e. not COVID-19).

If you answered “YES” to questions 2 or 3, use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if you should seek testing for COVID-19.

**A health-care provider note (i.e. a doctor’s note) should not be required to confirm the health status of any individual.**

UPDATED: September 11, 2020



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## Helpful Suggestions for a Successful School Year:

Here are some suggestions that will be helpful in establishing school routines and will make this year the most successful one yet for your child!

**Read Together** – Children who read at home with their parents are more successful in school. Show your children that you view reading as an important activity by keeping lots of reading material around the house and set aside time each evening for reading. Also, model reading yourself.



**Establish A Daily Family Routine** – Set a specific quiet time and place every day for homework or general reading. While you should be actively involved in your child’s homework routine, let them do the actual work. Other helpful routines involve assigning responsibilities for household chores, being firm about times to get up and go to bed (most children require about 10 hours of sleep per night), and have dinner together whenever possible. Don’t forget about the importance of a healthy breakfast and lunch to ensure your child has the energy needed to make it through the day productively.

**Talk Together** – Find some time each day to ask your child about school. Ask specific questions that will require explanations. Not only will this provide you with an overview of what your child is learning each day, but explaining their learning to you will heighten their understanding of their lessons.

**Home-School Relationship** – The importance of a strong home-school relationship cannot be overstated. Get to know your child’s teacher(s) and what they expect. Let them know you will reinforce the importance of schoolwork at home and keep them informed of important things happening in your family that may be affecting your child at school. Make sure your child knows that you are interested in their school. This will send the message that what they are doing is important.

**Have High, But Realistic Goals** – Make sure you set goals with your child that are achievable, but not too easy for their age, maturity, and ability. Don’t forget to celebrate when these goals are achieved.



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### Face Masks:



Our grade 6/7 students have now received two re-usable face masks to use if they wish. We are currently waiting on the delivery of the face masks we will be handing out to all students in Kindergarten to Grade 5. While we wait to receive the shipment, any Kindergarten to Grade 5 student who would like a mask can ask their teacher and they will be provided with a disposable one for the day.

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### Student Planners:



While some of our teachers are opting for different ways of communicating between the school and home some will be continuing to use planners. This book is an excellent tool to help students develop effective habits and take responsibility for their learning. Student planners are also an excellent communication tool for keeping parents informed about their child's homework. The student planners cost **\$8.00 each** and students will receive one only after bringing in their payment. Your child's teacher will let you know if they will be using planners this year.

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### PAC News:

Hello Chalmers families! Although this school year won't look like previous years, we hope to forage ahead and do as much as we can for our kids and our school! The Annual General

Meeting, typically held in June, will be held online on Thursday October 1 via Zoom. The details to join this meeting will be forwarded in a separate email. Elections for PAC executive positions will be held during this time.



Do you enjoy delicious entrees and desserts? If so, keep an eye out for an email with information on how to order food items from Neufeld Farms. Orders will be done through [munchalunch.com](http://munchalunch.com) and delivery of food items will be on Thursday October 22.

Join the Chalmers PAC facebook page for updates and information on Chalmers PAC happenings. Please email [chalmerspac@deltasd.bc.ca](mailto:chalmerspac@deltasd.bc.ca) for information or if you would like to help out. Also check out the Chalmers PAC website at [www.chalmerspac.weebly.com](http://www.chalmerspac.weebly.com)

Welcome back and stay safe!

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### School Organization:



We start the year with approximately 490 students spread into 22 divisions. Staff are excited to get underway with a year filled with inspiring educational experiences, and we look forward to working together with you so we can have your children be the best that they can be!!

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### New Stinger Staff:

While many of our staff are returning from last year, there are a number of new faces joining (or re-joining) the “Stingers” team. Please join me in extending a welcome to the following new staff members:

- Mr. S. Parrott (Grade 6/7 LFI Teacher)
- Mr. J. States (Grade 4/5 Teacher – will take over for Ms. Hobbs when she starts her maternity leave later this month)
- Ms. S. Jhaji (Grade 3/4 Teacher – covering for Mrs. Baghela until after Spring Break)
- Ms. G. Sanghera (Grade 3 Teacher – covering for Mrs. Sidhu until after Spring Break)
- Ms. R. Woolford (School Psychologist)
- Ms. S. Weber (Education Assistant)



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### School-Wide Medical Alert:

Several of our students have life-threatening allergies to eggs, peanuts, nuts (cashews, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, Brazil nuts, pecans, macadamias), and sesame seeds. Exposure to even tiny amounts of nut particles – residue on a desk, a book, a door handle, a computer keyboard, or a drinking fountain – may be enough to trigger a reaction. Please help us create a safe environment for them by keeping foods containing eggs, nuts, peanuts, and sesame seeds at home. Several companies are now making nut-free snacks and we encourage you to look for these new products when shopping. Other names for peanuts and other nuts include: arachide, arachis oil, beer nuts, goober nuts, goober peas, ground nuts, kernels, mandelonas, nut meals, valencias, anacardium nuts, calisson, marzipan, pinion, Queensland nut (macadamia). Label reading is the key to sending safe, egg-free and nut-free foods to school. Please do your part to ensure our school environment is a safe one for all our students. THANK YOU!!



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### Staff and Student Safety:



Safety is always at the forefront of our decision making. For this year, all school doors will remain in the locked position. Only staff and students will be permitted in the building during the school day. If a parent requires a meeting with a teacher or the principal, we ask that those take place over the telephone or by appointment so arrangements can be made to accommodate safety measures.

Occasionally, staff will be absent due to illness or other reasons. To limit the number of people entering schools, Chalmers will have a Teacher on Call (TOC) assigned to our building who will work here and in a limited cohort of schools if needed. In addition to this, the school district is

clustering groups of Teachers-on-Call and assigning them to a small group of schools to limit the number of people working in our school.

Any staff, such as Education Assistants, Learning Support teachers, Administrators, or Teachers-on-Call who need to enter a learning cohort they are not assigned to will be required to wear a mask if physical distancing is not possible.

If a child becomes ill at school, they will be given a mask and will be isolated in a medical room until picked up. They will not return to school until healthy or medical advice has been sought as per resources indicated on the daily health check. Please make arrangements to have someone available to pick up students at any time throughout the day should it be necessary.

As parents are not allowed in the building at this time, students must bring their snacks and lunches with them in the morning as lunch drop offs will not be permitted. Should a student forget his/her lunch, they will not go hungry. We will have some food supplies on hand for emergencies. Students will not be permitted to share food with one another and please do not send treats on your child's birthday.

Staff will continue the practice started last year of wearing district identification badges so that they are recognized as safe adults for students in the school and on the playground. Also, staff on supervision outside before school, at recess, lunch and after school will wear high visibility vests to make them easy for students to locate should they need assistance.

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### **Administration of Medication:**



Schools are required to maintain a safe procedure for dispensing medications. We would like to have information regarding medication administration within the first two weeks of school. If your child is required to take medication at school, please request a Request for Administration of Medication at School form from the office. These forms must be completed each year and are required to be signed by your physician.

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### **Scent Sensitivity:**

At Chalmers, we have staff who suffer from respiratory difficulties that are made worse by scented products. We ask that students, parents, and staff do what they can to avoid using scented aftershave, hair spray, cologne or other scented personal care products.



## Chalmers Code of Conduct:

Our school motto is: **“Bee The Best You Can Be”**

To help students “Bee The Best You Can Be”, we have set the following behaviour guidelines:

At Chalmers, students will be expected to:

### Take Care of Themselves:

- Be prepared to learn each day
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Dress in a manner appropriate for their age and occasion
- Adopt healthy living habits:
  - Get regular sleep
  - Make healthy food choices
  - Participate in regular exercise
  - Practice healthy hygiene habits



### Take Care of Others:

- Be respectful in words, tone of voice, actions, and body language to others
- Be respectful of the rights and property of others
- Be respectful of the thoughts and feelings of others

### Take Care of This Place:

- Clean up after themselves
- Leave areas in the same or better condition than how you found them
- Report unsafe conditions on the grounds or in the building
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle

*Please help us instill these guidelines in your child by reviewing them at home on a regular basis.  
Thank you.*

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### Lost and Found:

At Chalmers, lost and found clothing items are stored on a laundry line located in the hallway alongside the gym. The school has the following policy with respect to lost and found clothing items. Students and parents will have until the last Friday at 2:45 pm of every school month to claim lost and found clothing items. Clothing items not claimed after 2:45 pm on the last Friday of every school month will be donated to charity.





## Strong Start Program:



Strong Start is a free Parent Participation Early Learning Program based at Chalmers Elementary. You can help your child learn early literacy, social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through play with carefully selected materials and activities under the guidance of an Early Childhood Educator. Our current plan is to resume remote support for families the week of Sept. 21. Our Strong Start facilitators will each host daily zoom sessions for families. Zoom sessions will include both facilitator-led activities and quick activities for kids and families to try in and around their home. We are also thinking about how we might resume some in-person sessions this fall. For now, Delta Strong Start centres will remain closed. We ask for your patience as we figure out how to safely and effectively resume programming. In the next week or so facilitators will be reaching out to connect with families. We will be in touch with more detail as soon as we have more information to share.

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## Parent Connect:

### *Updating Family Information Using the Parent Connect System*

The Delta School District's Parent Connect program is a piece of online software that provides parents with the ability to update personal family information, and monitor your child's school records and attendance.

Please remember to update your family's emergency information online throughout the year. This includes changes to cell phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc. The only change that cannot be completed online by a parent is a change of address (which can be done by bringing this information to the school office).



For the convenience of our families, a quick link to the Parent Connect program has been placed on the Chalmers Elementary website (Home Page). Alternatively, parents can log into the Parent Connect program using the address:

<https://cimsweb.deltasd.bc.ca/schoolconnect/parentsignore.aspx>

Please contact the school office if you have any questions regarding the use of the Parent Connect program.

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## District Recycling Program:

Six years ago, all schools in Delta began recycling organic waste. To support this initiative, all classroom garbage cans were removed by district staff. Each classroom now has a mixed paper recycling bin, and each pod hallway has a recycling station for organic waste, mixed paper recycling, refundable drink container recycling, and garbage disposal. As you can imagine with only one recycling station per pod hallway, there is the potential for significant access problems as students from many classrooms line-up in the



hallway to dispose of their organic waste and garbage. To resolve this, Chalmers Elementary will once again be implementing a “Pack it In... Pack it Out” lunch program. Students will be expected to bring home whatever garbage and organic waste they bring to school in their lunch bags. The students at Chalmers have done a fantastic job of supporting litterless lunch initiatives in the past, and the staff are confident that students and parents will be able to support these practices on a daily basis at our school. While it is easy to say, “let’s have a litterless lunch”, how can this be accomplished in a “low impact” way? Here are some suggestions:

- Use a reusable lunch bag or container (not a single use plastic bag or disposable container)
- Pack food in reusable containers (no plastic wrap, foil, plastic bags, or pre-packaged foods)
- Pack beverages in reusable containers like a refillable water bottle or thermos (recyclable containers are acceptable but discouraged)
- Organic waste (apple cores, banana peels, etc.) should be taken home for composting
- Cloth napkins and non-disposable cutlery can be packed if necessary



***Pack a litterless lunch!***