

September 10, 2021

To: BRSD families
From: Dr. Rita Marler
Superintendent of Schools

Re: Welcome to the new school year!

Hello everyone.

A new school year always feels like a chance to have a fresh start. It's been wonderful for BRSD staff to welcome students back into schools and classrooms this week. They are looking forward to having a positive year of learning, teaching and growing together.

What's new in 2021-2022

One of the things that is new in Battle River this year is our student information and gradebook system. For several years we have used a system called Maplewood, but this fall that is being replaced by a new system, called PowerSchool.

This new system has a lot of flexibility and will make it possible for parents to regularly look up information about their child's school experience. But because we're just in the early stages of getting PowerSchool up and running, you won't be able to access your children's marks for a few weeks – likely until early October. Schools will be sharing more details about the new system in the weeks to come.

A big focus for schools this year will be in supporting students literacy and numeracy development, at all grade levels. We want to be sure that all students are on track with those very important skills.

In addition, we feel very strongly about providing programs that promote and support mental wellbeing. The last 18 months have been a challenge for everyone and we will do all we can to help both students and staff be healthy and well.

COVID update

We are getting more and more calls to let us know about people connected to one of our BRSD schools that have been designated as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or that someone has tested positive themselves. We are grateful to those who are letting us know their circumstances and we are happy to support students in continuing with their schoolwork if they must remain at home temporarily.

Under the current Alberta Health Services guidelines, only people who have tested positive are required to be at home. AHS does not require close contacts to isolate unless they begin to experience symptoms, schools are no longer notifying classmates of positive cases and no contact tracing is being done. Please remember to monitor your children for symptoms and ensure they stay home if they are not well.

The first week of the year is already wrapping up. We wish you and your family all the very best for 2021-2022!

Rita Marler