

May 3, 2021

To: BRSD families  
From: Dr. Rita Marler, Superintendent of Schools  
Re: Welcome to May!

Hello everyone! What a treat it is to enjoy the sunshine and warm weather that this month brings!

### ***Mental Health Week***

Being outside is good medicine, but it's not the only medicine. As we mark Mental Health Week, I encourage families to do whatever you need to do to take care of your mental wellbeing. It's important to acknowledge that this is a very stressful time. Whether school is in person or remote we're here to help you help your children. I encourage parents to make it a priority to take care of themselves as well.

### ***Education Week***

This is also Education Week. In spite of the challenges we've all endured, school staff continue to focus on helping children learn, grow and develop. Every day a student is mastering a new skill, building a relationship or succeeding where they previously could not. I hope we can remember and focus on that reality, too.

### ***Curriculum***

BRSD has already decided we will not be piloting Alberta Education's draft curriculum next school year. But we want to encourage everyone to do their own research and make their own decisions. Alberta Education has sent a letter asking us to let parents know that you can read the full draft curriculum at [alberta.ca/curriculum](http://alberta.ca/curriculum). They've also asked us to make you aware that Alberta Education is holding online information sessions to share their perspective and answer questions. The full schedule of sessions and information on how to register is available at <https://www.alberta.ca/curriculum-have-your-say.aspx>

### ***COVID update***

While we are not considered a 'hot spot' in the province, because of our smaller population, the communities of Battle River School Division continue to see high numbers of COVID cases. BRSD has dealt with more than 50 COVID cases in the four weeks since Spring Break.

We have had seven different schools switched temporarily to remote learning because of operational issues related to the number of staff and students who either tested positive or were in quarantine. These schools are in multiple communities, spread across the division. Two schools have been able to return to in-person classes. There are currently three schools in which all classes are learning remotely and two more in which the junior / senior high students have switched to remote learning for the next two weeks.

We all recognize the anxiety and disruption this causes for families, for staff and for learning.

I look forward to case numbers dropping, so we can finish the school year in person, together. I know you look forward to that, too. Take care and stay safe.

*Rita Marler*