



# Helen Gorman Elementary School

## Home of the Cougars

Friday, August 28, 2020

Welcome back! We hope that you had an amazing summer full of fun, relaxation, and sunshine. We are gearing up for another great year at Helen Gorman Elementary. Our staff are grateful to work with such a terrific group of students, parents, and school community. I feel privileged to be principal of this fantastic school. Thank you!

Dr. Bonnie Henry (Provincial Health Officer) and Hon. Rob Fleming (Minister of Education) stated that schools are safe to re-open in Stage 2 in September. This Provincial goal means that most students will have access to full in-class instruction and its benefits to their overall health and wellbeing. This week, our School District released its [Return to School plan as well as an Updated Staff and Student Safety Plan](#). I have heard from parents that they are both excited and uncertain about this development. Families have told me that they are eager for the return of the regular rhythm and routine of the school year, yet they want more information about start dates, health and safety measures, and what all of these developments mean for their children. I would like to thank those families who have reached out to me with your questions and concerns. Along with the contributions of school staff, your perspectives help shape our planning for a safe return to school. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we plan the return to in-class learning at Helen Gorman Elementary. This newsletter will begin to answer some of your questions.

**The safety of your child, our staff, and school community remains a top priority.**



### ORIENTATION WEEK - SEPTEMBER 8-11

The Ministry of Education has delayed the school year to help facilitate an orientation week.

- Sept. 8 & 9 - School staff meet to learn how the new safety measures work at HGE (no students)
  - On Wednesday, Sept. 9, families will receive an email from HGE identifying their child's class placement. The email will include additional information about their child's orientation.
- Sept 10 - Only Gr 1-5 students with last names A-K return for full day orientation with their new teacher. Kindergarten mini-sessions begin (see below for more details)
- Sept 11 - Only Gr 1-5 students with last names L-Z return for full day orientation with their new teacher. Kindergarten mini-sessions continue.
  - During the welcome back orientation, students will:
    - meet with teacher, classmates, and learning group members
    - practice their new routines
    - learn how to safely move around from class to outside and common areas
- **All Gr 1-5 students attend school for a full day on Monday, September 14.**

Early next week, the School District plans an additional update to its [Return to School and Staff and Student Safety plans](#). Shortly after that update, I will send you information specific to Helen Gorman Elementary School in regards to learning groups, school day procedures, and health and safety considerations.

### KINDERGARTEN MINI-SESSIONS

Our intention was to have the schedule for Kindergarten mini-sessions in the hands of families well before this week. Unfortunately, this pandemic situation has not made this goal possible. We understand that Kindergarten parents work very hard to juggle childcare, holidays, and work obligations to make their child's participation in the mini-sessions work. We sincerely apologize for the delay. Today, we can tell you that we have made an adjustment to the Kindergarten mini-session schedule.

- The first of the five days of mini-sessions will now be Thursday, September 10.
- The first full day of school for Kindergarten will now be Thursday, September 17.

Kindergarten families will receive a separate email with additional information. Watch your inbox.

*Learning Together*

## STAFF UPDATE

Please join me in welcoming the following staff members to the Helen Gorman Elementary team this year.

- **Ms. Allana Faulkner.** Ms. Faulkner is joining us from Glenrosa Middle School and along with the rest of the custodial crew has done an amazing job with keeping our school safe and clean this summer.
- **Ms. Margot Floer.** Ms. Floer will be joining our CEA team to provide support at the Kindergarten and primary levels.
- **Ms. Jayne Jansen.** Ms. Jansen is our new Indigenous Advocate. She is coming to us from George Pringle Elementary and is taking over from Ms. Erdman.
- **Ms. Jocelyn Airey.** Ms. Airey will be our Teacher Librarian as well as a Social Studies teacher to many of our classes this year. She takes over from our longtime Teacher Librarian, Mrs. Noble, who has retired. We wish Mrs. Noble all the best in her new adventures!
- **Ms. Danielle Ball.** Ms. Jean will be on leave for about the first six weeks of the school year, and Ms. Ball will team with Ms. Kerr and Mrs. Pendergast to help welcome our new crop of Kindergarten students.
- **Mrs. Sarah Mcnaueal.** Mrs. Mcnaueal will be teaching Grade 4/5 this year. On top of being a teacher, she is a terrific artist. Mrs. Mcnaueal takes over from Mr. Meier, who we wish all the best. You might remember that Mrs. Fuller held this position last year before winning a posting at Cst. Neil Bruce Middle School in June.



We also would like to welcome back all of last year's teachers and support staff.

### GETTING READY FOR STARTUP

In preparation for our first day of school, our staff have been working hard to get things ready. Many thanks to our custodial staff, Mr. Gurakowski, Mrs. Faulkner, and Ms. Kovach, who worked diligently to help our school be safe and healthy for our returning students and staff. The teaching staff has been preparing and planning for a successful year for each and every student. Mrs. Dornian, our admin assistant, has been instrumental in helping things go smoothly in the office. A big thank you goes to our PAC president, Jaclyn Jaeger, for collaborating with us and representing the voice of our parent community. Our current enrolment is approximately 238 students with several additional students on a waitlist. We have 11 classroom divisions with grades K – 5.

### ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Central Okanagan Public Schools does not insure expenses for **student injuries** that occur on school grounds or during school activities. Parents and guardians can voluntarily purchase private accident insurance. The Kids Plus Accident Insurance Program that was previously offered to our students was discontinued in 2019. The IA Financial Group now offers the Family Accident Reimbursement Plan (FARP) which is a voluntary plan that provides coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses and critical illness. To apply for the Family Accident Reimbursement Plan or to find out more, visit <https://www.solutionsinsurance.com/aonbc>

If there are any changes that happened during the summer to your child/family that we should know about, please don't hesitate to contact me at [Rob.Aviani@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:Rob.Aviani@sd23.bc.ca) or by phone at 250-870-5116. Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns as well.

All the best,

Rob Aviani  
Principal