



COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

September 23, 2021

To: All Parents/Guardians

From: Cheryl Gilmore, Superintendent

Dear Parents / Guardians of Lethbridge School Division:

Update: Spectator Restrictions for Extra-curricular Sport and Recreation Activity

Outdoor Extra-curricular Sport

On September 16 communication was sent to parents regarding **temporary restrictions** on spectators at our high school football games, an outdoor activity hosted at the University of Lethbridge Community Stadium. It was determined that it was not operationally feasible to accommodate spectators in a manner that was thorough, safe and could satisfy provincial health guidelines at that time.

Since that time secondary school administrators and division office leaders have been meeting to review our COVID-19 context and whether or not it is feasible to meet health guidelines as established by the government of Alberta in a manner that is operationally sound in an outdoor setting, placing health as a priority.

The school division is in the process of developing a plan that meets the requirements of the "Alberta Restrictions Exemption Program" for extra-curricular events. Schools are working with individuals from the University of Lethbridge who have oversight over the Community Stadium to finalize details of the plan. Our schools need to finalize the operational details of the plan to ensure they have the capacity to effectively implement the plan. Having the appropriate level of capacity to meet the plan requirements is directly connected to health and safety. It is the goal of the high schools to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for football at the U of L Community Stadium starting October 1.

The following are core aspects of the plan that will be followed:

1. All coaches, managers, volunteers and spectators from the ages of 12 and above will need to provide **one** of the following:
 - a. Valid Proof of Vaccination according to the rules set forth in the government REP program. Link: <http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/367021>
 - b. Valid negative PCR test as defined by the government REP program within 72 hours prior to entry (link above).
 - c. Valid Medical Exemption as defined in the government REP program (link above).
2. Individuals 18 years or older will need to produce valid personal identification as defined in the personal ID section of the government REP program (link above).

Note that the details can be found in the Alberta Restrictions Exemption Program link. The final Restrictions Exemption Program for the School Division will also outline the same details. This plan will be posted on our website on completion. Notification will be sent via School Messenger when the plan is complete.

In addition to #1 and #2 above, the plan may include further health measures such as social distancing.

Indoor Extra-curricular Sport and Performance

Parents also received communication on September 16th regarding indoor extra-curricular sports and performance events. It was conveyed that spectators would be restricted from indoor events. This will remain in effect. The Division Restrictions Exemption Program will provide a foundation for building the capacity for indoor sport and performance events. Given the high number of COVID positive cases in Lethbridge at this time (445 active cases as of Sept. 22) and the higher risk level of transmission at indoor events (as compared to outdoor events), school and division office leaders unanimously agreed that putting student and community health at the forefront of decision-making demanded that schools pause in moving forward with spectators at indoor events. The decision to continue with the “no spectator” restriction for indoor extra-curricular events will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. The value of parent, student and community spectators in the lives of our youth in sport and performance is recognized, but the difficult decision is grounded in the context of high risk for indoor events at a time of unprecedented positive cases in Lethbridge and area. It is our goal to keep students active, healthy, and in school. We thank you for your patience. We are hopeful that we will move into a context that allows for safe implementation of the Restrictions Exemption Program for indoor extra-curricular events in the future. Schools will continue to livestream indoor extra-curricular events at this time.

Take care,

Cheryl



Dr. Cheryl Gilmore

Superintendent

Lethbridge School Division

433 15 Street South | Lethbridge AB | T1J 2Z4 | 403.380.5301

cheryl.gilmore@lethsd.ab.ca | www.lethsd.ab.ca