

December 9, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Restrictions Exemption Program

Earlier this week, the Alberta government granted Westwind School Division permission to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) for extracurricular activities only in our schools, specifically, concerts, drama performances, and sporting events that occur outside of the regular school day.

Various facilities have successfully implemented the REP program across the province, and we are grateful that this program will allow schools to safely welcome additional spectators to extracurricular events. Westwind School Division facilities were intentionally designed to accommodate large crowds that create an atmosphere and ambiance that I believe every high school student should experience during their high school career.

After discussions with school principals, it was decided that individual school leaders will determine when and if their schools will implement the REP. Schools choosing not to implement the REP will continue to operate under the 1/3 capacity and physical distancing guidelines, while those choosing to implement the REP will follow the processes outlined below. Please check with your school or the school you plan to visit to understand the requirements for entry into an extracurricular event. Events will be live-streamed whenever possible.

We continue to request those wishing to attend extracurricular events at any Westwind school self-screen using the Alberta Daily Health Checklist and stay home if they have any symptoms of COVID-19. As a reminder, all attendees/spectators must wear masks at all times in schools; however, spectators may temporarily remove masks to eat or drink while seated.

Schools implementing the REP will require all attendees/spectators 12 years of age and older at indoor extracurricular activities to provide valid photo identification before entry, along with:

- A valid Government of Alberta (GOA) vaccination record with a QR Code demonstrating the attendee is fully vaccinated with two doses of a two-dose series, with the second at least 14 days prior OR
- Proof of a negative privately-paid test result from a sample that was taken within the last 72 hours.

This requirement applies to all attendees, spectators, coaches, trainers, team managers, and volunteers 12 years of age and older.

PLEASE NOTE: Students participating/playing in extracurricular activities will NOT need to provide proof of vaccination as a participant; however, if at any point the students become audience members or spectators, they will need to provide either proof of vaccination or a negative test as detailed above.

As a reminder, spectator/attendance compliance with COVID health orders is expected while at Westwind events. Defiance, hostility, confrontation, and/or failure to comply with provincially mandated health measures may result in immediate removal from the event and suspension from all future Westwind events. Please respect our school administration and volunteers and their efforts to provide these opportunities for our students.

I am grateful for our board and school administration's continued efforts and leadership as we work with the Alberta government and AHS to follow the public health guidelines and work on behalf of students. I also wish to acknowledge and express appreciation for the efforts of Cardston Siksika MLA Joseph Schow, who has been a strong advocate for Westwind and our division's eligibility in the REP program.

We understand our families will have questions about the specifics of the REP program, and we will share more information with our families as we receive additional guidance. We appreciate your patience and ask that you reach out to your school with any additional questions.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darren Mazutinec". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Darren Mazutinec
Superintendent