

FIRESIDE FOCUS



Fireside Focus – September 8

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From the Admin Desk

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Reminder: New Safety Measures

Reminder: Learning Teams

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Reminder: Lunch Breaks and Recesses

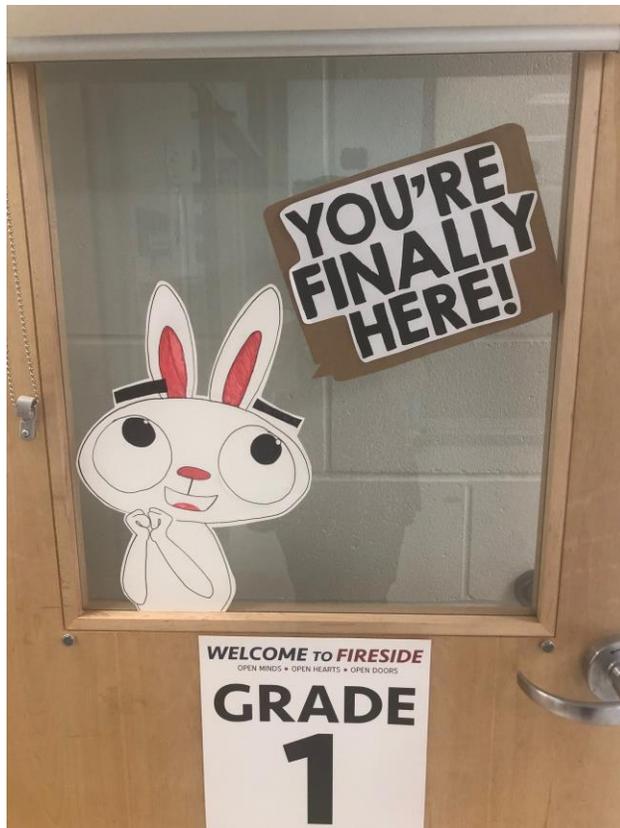
Reminder: Staggered Entry & Door Assignments

Reminder: Drop-Off & Pickup

Reminder: School Cash & PowerSchool

Upcoming Dates

- Friday, Sept 8 – International Literacy Day
- Tuesday, September 12 - Grade 7 & 8 Option Courses Begin
- Wednesday, Sept 13 – School Council (6:30 - 7:30 pm) and Friends of Fireside AGM (7:30 - 8:30 pm) meetings
- Friday, Sept 15 – Terry Fox Run
- Friday, Sept 22 – Photo Day
- Wednesday, Sept 27 - Healthy Hunger (Subway)
- Thursday, Sept 28 – Orange Shirt Day
- Friday, Sept 29 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (no school)
- Friday, Oct 6 – Professional Development Day (no school)
- Monday, Oct 9 – Thanksgiving (no school)



From the Admin Desk

Hello Fireside Families & Friends,

Our week got off to a great start with the staggered entry. Students had the chance to meet their new teachers and classmates and get used to their new classroom spaces before Thursday when all 900 students were here. There were many happy smiles, albeit some tired ones as well, and lots of excitement. We were so glad to welcome students back, for sure!

Funny how things seem to be brand new but also slide back into an easy rhythm, especially for those who have been at Fireside a few years already. It was wonderful to see familiar faces helping new staff and students find their way and know what it means to be a Hawk.



As classes began, students were reminded of Fireside School's commitment to being respectful, responsible, and safe again this year. And, as always, students reflected on ways they can be kind to others. Many classes had great discussions about what learning will look like at their new grade levels, and some classes were already meeting with buddy classes so younger and older students could connect for some fun activities.



Today, we had some extra unexpected excitement. When the fire alarm was being checked, it was set off accidentally. Despite the surprise, all students and staff safely and quickly exited the building and met in the assigned spots for attendance. The Cochrane Fire Department arrived to ensure we were all safe, and students on the field cheered with glee and waved as they blasted their horns on departure. It was a lot earlier than expected, but we're happy to check the first fire drill of the year off our list.

We are already starting to see reading lists go up in classrooms, and each day students are engaging in 15 minutes of reading during Literacy Block while they have their snacks. One suggestion for a fun read-together activity at home is to look at a picture book and use the pictures to make up your own stories to tell and share. This activity will work even with well-loved stories you've previously read. We look forward to sharing other reading and literacy strategies, tools, and tips with you in *Focus* throughout the year this year.

Whatever you are doing this weekend, we wish you a lovely one.

Dave Banderk (Principal; dbanderk@rockyview.ab.ca)

Tara Sly (Assistant Principal, Grades K-4; tsly@rockyview.ab.ca)

Jason Ness (Assistant Principal, Grades 5-8; jness@rockyview.ab.ca)

Terry Fox, Friday, Sept 15



THE TERRY FOX FOUNDATION

We are excited to announce that our school will be proudly taking part in the 2023 Terry Fox School Run, scheduled to take place on **Friday, September 15**. We hope that we can continue to show the great strength and resiliency of our school community with your support of one of our greatest Canadian heroes, Terry Fox. Let's all use Terry's message of hope and strength to inspire us during these challenging times.

The Terry Fox Foundation has created an online fundraising page for our school as well as provide student/classroom "Terry" activities. Here are some of the ways you can support your child for this year's Terry Fox event:

Donate online at: <https://schools.terryfox.ca/31246>

- Click the link above to donate or search for our school name at terryfox.org
- There is no minimum donation, every dollar counts!
- Receipts are issued immediately to donors by email

We are very excited to be a part of this year's Terry Fox event. This is our opportunity to "Try Like Terry" and go the distance for this year's event. Please join us to support cancer research while building incredible school spirit for all of our students. Thank you in advance for your support!

Honouring National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Orange Shirt Day, Thursday, September 28



On Thursday, September 28, Fireside School will honour Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by holding a Sharing Ceremony.

Early in the week, classes will explore some key questions about this day, including reflection on why it's important to help everyone feel safe and cared for at school. Each Homeroom Class will also create something special to represent their answer to the questions "What is our classroom learning story?" and "How does my classroom and learning community make me feel safe and ready to learn?".

During the week, Grade 5/6 Leadership students will be reading Indigenous stories and poems with younger students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 during our literacy blocks

Finally, on September 28, classes will come to the sharing space grade by grade throughout the day to share their class's representation. Additionally, each student will put out the individual feathers they created to represent their answers to the question "What does Fireside feel and look like and why is it a safe place to learn?"

Please remember to help your children wear your **Orange Shirt** on Thursday September 28th. And remember that **Friday September 29th will not be a school day**, as it is a day in lieu of Saturday September 30th, which is officially recognized as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. We look forward to sharing photos of our Sharing Ceremony with you in next week's *Focus*.

Friends of Fireside Annual General Meeting, Wednesday, September 13



As we embark on another school year filled with opportunities, growth, and community building, we invite you to become an integral part of our school's journey. We are the Friends of Fireside, the fundraising group for Fireside School. Through our efforts, we've been able to host memorable events, like the Hallowe'en Dance, and support numerous projects, such as the new outdoor learning space and activities that enrich our children's educational experience.

With the collective efforts of our community, last year alone we raised over \$11,000! These funds were put towards the new outdoor learning space, providing helmets for the gym class, and new professional lighting for the music class.

We hope you will join us on September 13th, at 7:30 pm. at the Fireside School, for our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Our meeting will follow the School Council meeting. We're excited to announce that we are looking for enthusiastic parents to join our board! As an executive or general member, you'll have the opportunity to:

- collaborate on organizing fun and impactful school events;
- drive initiatives that raise funds for essential school programs;
- work closely with school staff and other parents to ensure our children have the best resources available; and
- share your ideas, expertise, and passion to make Fireside School even better!

No prior experience is required, just a genuine interest in contributing to our school community. This is also a fantastic way to connect with fellow parents, understand more about our school's operations, and make a tangible difference in students lives.

Want to stay up to date with what we do? Follow us on Instagram (@friendsoffireside), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofFiresideSchool>) or sign up for our mailing list (<https://friendsoffireside.ca>).

Would you like to know more? Write to us at president@friendsoffireside.ca.

We're looking forward to another great year and your coming support!

Healthy Hunger



Healthy Hunger is back! Our first fun lunch will come from Subway. To order, or view all upcoming Healthy Hunger dates please, please visit the Healthy Hunger Website at www.healthyhunger.ca. If you are new, you will need to create a new parent account and then add your student! Ordering closes one week prior to each Healthy Hunger day, but meals as far as the end of the school year are accessible on the site.

Please note: for all dietary and allergy restrictions we encourage you to reach out to Subway directly.

If your child is away on Healthy Hunger days, please reach out to us via phone or to let us know if you would like the meal/treat to be donated, given to a sibling to take home, popped in the fridge for Thursday, or picked up! We hate to see food going to waste!

There will be no donation button year. That said, we will be supporting any families who might need a sandwich for any reason; please contact the the office or an administrator if needed.



Backpack Program

In partnership with Cochrane & Area Family Resource Network (FRN), Staples and the Kiwanis Club of Cochrane is hosting a Backpack Program, which aims to ease the stress of being ready for the start of school by providing students in Kindergarten to Grade12 with important back to school supplies.

Eligible participants must show proof of enrolment in a Cochrane or West Rocky View County school and provide GST/HST Credit Notice listing dependent children. Applications must be done in-person as you pick up the supplies at the same time. FRN's address is: 127 First Ave. W Cochrane.

Updated: School Council Meeting Wednesday, Sept 13

The first meeting of Fireside School's School Council will occur next Wednesday, September 13, here at the school.

School Councils are a tremendously important piece of a school's operation. Their role is to serve as parent voices and advisors, and School Council meetings are forums where parents can have a direct role in shaping some of the direction and priorities for a school. So that's why we need you... parents interested in having a positive impact on school culture, direction, and future... to consider attending School Council meetings or even being a part of the Council's Executive.

We will have further information in next week's *Focus* regarding positions that are open to be filled this year, as well as items to be included on the agenda. We hope to see you there!

The Friends of Fireside Society, fondly known as FOF within our learning community, will meet after the School Council meeting. This group is our school's amazing fundraising group, also made up by parents who wish to be part supporting programs in the school in a different way, through the fundraising that is engaged each year. Everyone is welcome to attend. There will also be a question and answer session. We hope to see you there!

Updated: Staggered Bus Departure

We have grown so much this school year that all the school buses can no longer fit all of them in our bus lane at the same time. So, we will be loading students in two waves at the end of the day.

First wave of buses include numbers 14, 15, 172, 174, 221, and 258, which will load immediately after school. These buses will depart at 2:30 pm.

Second wave of buses are numbers 26, 195, 227, and the Boys & Girls Club bus. These buses pull in after the first wave has departed. For students on buses 26, 195, 227, and the Boys & Girls Club bus, there are signs with each bus number on the grassy area by the bus lane so students can wait safely off the sidewalk in order for students on the first buses to get on easily.

We ask that waiting students please stand by their sign, on the grass, until the second wave of buses has stopped completely; a supervisor will help them know when it is safe to board the buses. These buses will depart at 2:40 pm.

Updated: Allergy Awareness and Scent-Free Policy

At Fireside School, we want to do our best to keep everyone safe and healthy. We have a number of students and staff who are highly sensitive to certain allergens. We ask that all people entering the school please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, body sprays, scented products, and essential oils. We also ask that nuts and nut products also remain out of the school.

- Please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, or scented products when coming into Fireside School.
- Please do not bring perfumes, colognes, or scented products into our school; most especially, please do not spray them in the school at any time.
- Since we are a Nut-Aware School, please do not bring products with nuts into the school, including in snacks or lunches.

We thank you for your attention to and respect for these health concerns and for helping us to keep everyone safe from allergic reactions this school year. If your child has allergies, please bring them to the attention of the Homeroom Teacher so that we can be aware of those allergy cautions as well.

Reminder: New Safety Measures

Feeling safe is foundational to overall wellness, and we are committed to ensuring our school is a safe place to learn and work for all students and staff. To enhance safety in all Rocky View Schools' schools, new protocols and systems have been introduced for how schools and facilities are accessed, and we wanted to be sure to share them with our Fireside Families.

The RVS Board approved the safety practice of locking all outside doors, except the main entrance, throughout the school day. This means students entering the building after the start of school will need to come through the main entrance. All visitors need to enter the school through the main entrance/office doors. This aligns with safety practices in many Alberta school divisions and helps ensure all visitors enter through the office and not through another part of the building. At recesses, staff will assist students in re-entering through their assigned doors.

Reminder: Learning Teams

Learning Teams support students and families alongside classroom teachers toward the growth and development of children. While the classroom teacher is your primary point of contact for discussing your child's learning, each grade grouping is also supported by an Assistant Principal (student conduct & administrative concerns), a Learning Support Teacher (academic and behavioural supports), and a Child Development Advisor (social/emotional development). Please feel free to reach out to these individuals if you have specific concerns or questions.

- Kindergarten & Grade 1: Assistant Principal Tara Sly, Learning Support Teacher Leslie Hall, Child Development Advisor Corey MacDouell
- Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4: Assistant Principal Tara Sly, Learning Support Teacher Kirsty Reade, Child Development Advisor Corey MacDouell
- Grade 5: Assistant Principal Jason Ness, Learning Support Teacher Kirsty Reade, Child Development Advisor Kelsea Soch
- Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8: Assistant Principal Jason Ness, Learning Support Teacher Sinead Holzer, Child Development Advisor Kelsea Soch
- Child Development Advisor Charlene Abrahams's role includes being a connection point and support for new students and their families. Additionally, she has a focus on community connections and student leadership opportunities for younger students.

Reminder: Cell Phones in Class

Cell phones may not be used by students during instructional times. These devices must remain in lockers while classes are in session (except in cases of specific medical needs). Students are welcome to use them during recess and lunch periods. Should a student be using their phone during class, they will be instructed to return it to their locker. If this is not a viable option, or the requests have been made repeatedly, the phone must be secured in the office and may need to be retrieved by the phone's owner (typically parents).

Reminder: Fireside School Bell Times

Grades 1 to 8

7:50 to 8:05	Student Arrival and Entry
8:05 to 10:15	Instructional Time
10:15 to 10:45	Recess/ Literacy Time
10:45 to 12:10	Instructional Time
12:10 to 12:50	Lunch/Recess
12:50 to 2:20	Instructional Time
2:20	Student Dismissal
2:30 information)	Bus Departure (first set of buses; please see Staggered Bus Times above for more information)

Kindergarten

AM Classes

7:50 to 8:05	Student Arrival and Entry
8:05 to 10:47	Instructional Time
10:47	Student Dismissal

PM Classes

11:35	Student Arrival and Entry
11:35 to 2:17	Instructional Time
2:17	Student Dismissal
2:30 information)	Bus Departure (first set of buses; please see Staggered Bus Times above for more information)

Reminder: Lunch and Recesses

Everyone can benefit from fresh air and unstructured play. Students head outside for *at least* 35 minutes each day. We strongly encourage families to take note of the weather forecast each day and ensure students have appropriate clothing for the time they'll be spending outside.

Students in grades 1 to 8 have designated times as grade groups for two recess periods each day. Students staying at school for lunch will eat in their classrooms. As was the case last year, students are permitted to go home for lunch with parent/guardian permission. If your child will be going home for lunch, please inform the Homeroom Teacher. Please note that for safety reasons, we require this to be a consistent choice. Students who leave school for lunch must do so every day and may not choose when to stay and when to go.

Fireside School is a closed campus. As such, students may not leave the premises unless we have confirmation that they are going home every day for lunch. Please note: lunch time this year is from 12:10 pm to 12:50 pm.

Reminder: Drop-Off and Pickup

Fireside continues to grow, and with more than 900 students enrolled this year, arrival and dismissal times will be very busy. Safety is our highest priority, and we'd like to ask drivers to keep their speed down and watch carefully for pedestrians. We encourage those students who are able to walk, bike, and scooter to school to do so, with bike racks at the front of the school for students to store their "rides."

The "Kiss-and-Go" lane at the front of the school is meant for quick drop-offs and pickups. We ask that families not use the lane as a parking or waiting zone.

The parking lot at the back of the school is not meant to be a pickup or drop-off zone. Additionally, please bear in mind that we have a number of students who require the use of the accessible parking and loading zones. Please keep these spots available.

School bus parking zones on the north side of the building will no longer accommodate all the buses we need this year. Some buses will be picking students up on Fireside Parkway (along the field fence). Once Rocky View Transportation has given us route information, we'll communicate bus locations for end-of-day pickup.

We will again have crossing guard students controlling the crosswalk at the front corner of the school on Fireside Way. Please listen for their signals and help all our students stay safe this year.



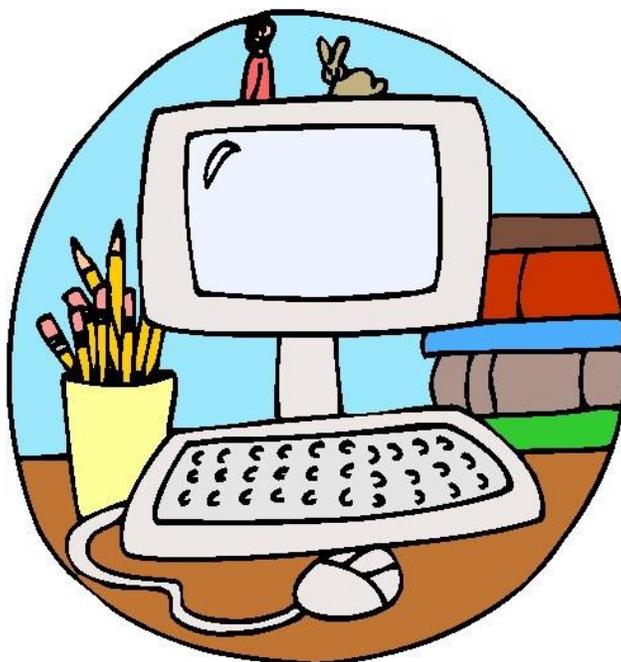
Reminder: Absences

Please report all student absences using the Safe Arrival app or website. Information can be found on the RVS website [HERE](#).

If a student will be picked up for a scheduled appointment, it is helpful to have the student's teacher made aware in advance with a note or an email. Students must be signed out at the office and may only be signed out by parents, guardians, or adults that have been approved in the student's PowerSchool information. Either of the two iPads at the front of the office can be used to sign a student out. Students must also be signed in if they are returning later in the day or are late for school. If there are individuals who are restricted from picking students up, please inform the office.

Students are not allowed to leave the school premises unless they are picked up by a guardian or have a signed permission form (grade 7 & 8 only) at the office. Permission forms are found in [School Engage](#) or at the office. All students must check in and out at the office.

Reminder: School Cash, PowerSchool & School Engage



Each student has a [SchoolCash Online](#) account that is used to pay for any school fees, field trips, or other school-related expenses. We cannot accept cash or cheques at the office.

All parents have access to RVS' PowerSchool Parent Portal, where student class assignments and achievement are reported. More information can be found on [our website](#).

Permission and demographics forms can all be filled out in School Engage, which can be accessed from within PowerSchool or with [this link](#).

Contact Us!

Fireside School

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<http://fireside.rockyview.ab.ca>