

Dear Riverdale Community,

What a year it has been. We are nearing the end of a school year that some questioned would even happen. It was a year of sacrifices and much talk of hand washing, sanitizing, social distancing, cohorts, exposure notifications, isolations and daily health checks. It was also a year of great successes here at school. Students were able to continue to come to school, learn with their classmates, interact with each other and play together. While many of the regular school activities weren't able to take place, all of us here in the Raven's Nest feel that despite the challenges it has been another great year at Riverdale.

Next week is being called **Raven's Week** and not only is it a Spirit Week here at the school it is an opportunity to introduce you all to some hard work staff are doing in an effort to continue building our school community and give more opportunity to our students. We have worked hard to clearly identify what our core values are for our school community. These we now refer to as our "non-negotiables."

Our Non Negotiables are that Riverdale Ravens are:

- **Kind** and show it to themselves and others.
- **Honest** and know that trust helps build and maintain relationships and keeps us true to ourselves and others.
- **Empathetic** and See Things from Different Perspectives
- **Respectful** and Take Care of Our School and Learning Environment
- **Resilient** and Overcome the Challenges We Face
- **Unique** and Value the Diversity Each of us Brings to Our School Community

Our team has created posters and other activities for students and families to become familiar with our non-negotiables and be able to explain what they are and give an example of each. We will have posters in both French and English.

An example of a poster is:



We have also decided, in an effort to bring more excitement to school community and school wide activities, to design and implement a 'House System' at Riverdale. Each House is named after a Canadian who represents an aspect of Canadian values and culture that we want students and community members to understand and emulate. Also, each house is associated with one of the colours of the rainbow.

The Riverdale House Teams and Colours are:



Teachers have been assigned to houses and students have been too. Students will get their house colours on Monday as part of our Spirit Week. Spirit Week is starting with "All the Colours of a Rainbow" on Monday.

The other days are:

Monday – All the Colours of the Rainbow

Tuesday – Tropical – Hats and Sunglasses

Wednesday – Sports Jersey Day

Thursday – Raven's Spirit Wear

Friday – House Colours Day – Students wear the colours of their new house.

As we look forward to next year we are going to start the year (COVID willing) in our house groups, learning about the non-negotiables and creating house banners and chants for our Welcome Back Assembly. We plan to meet in house groups throughout the year in different activities and assemblies. We also plan to merge 'Sports Day' and 'Fun Day' into what will be called 'Raven's Day', allowing us to keep some of the competitive parts of 'Sports Day' and the great parts of 'Fun Day' that we started in 2019. We recognize the value of both and see Raven's Day as being a way to give all students an opportunity to participate in the way that is best for them.

Your child will be assigned a House Team for Raven's Week and we look forward to using this next week as our Grade 7 students have created a 'Sports Day in a Box.' Classes will be taking part in these activities as class groups and collecting points for their house. Ask your child how it's going for them!

Ultimately, we feel that these new / revamped structures will help support the growth and development of our students as well as continue to build a strong sense of community that is an important part of what it means to be a Riverdale Raven.

We look forward to seeing where this takes us in September!

Let us know if you have any questions. We'd be happy to share our thinking with you!

Sincerely,

The Riverdale Staff!