



# GONZAGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Changing Lives – Fulfilling Potential*

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August 28, 2020

Dear GMS Community,

It has been a busy but good summer and we are now excited to be able to welcome students back this September to full in-class learning. We had three very good Summer Day Camp weeks and some time for rest and relaxation but we were also taking time to develop our plan for the safe return to classes. Our goal is to get back to doing what we do best, teaching and learning, and we can only do this successfully if everyone does their part. At GMS we are all working together to take care of each other!

In the Spring and in Summer Camps we had the chance to learn and practice new protocols but with the return to full in-class learning in September we have developed the GMS Return to School Plan that adds new safety measures and practices in order to keep our students, staff and entire community safe from COVID-19. No plan can reduce the risks to zero but we are aiming to meet or exceed the expectations set out by Manitoba Health and Manitoba Education and do everything possible to keep everyone safe.

Attached, you will find more information on our **GMS Return to School Plan** and the steps we will take to ensure safety, care for the social-emotional mental health and wellness of both students and staff and our plans for teaching and learning. **Please review the document with your family and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.** Keeping everyone safe takes caring, diligence and cooperation. It is our job to keep you safe and your job to keep us safe. Working together we can take care of each other and our families!

**It is very important that you speak with your son/daughter to reassure them and remind them that they have a role to play in this process.** They must be respectful and cooperative regarding new policies and procedures. It will take some time to adjust to our new normal at GMS and it is vital that we have the support and cooperation of our families, parents and guardians.

Please note that one of the changes is the limitation to visitors when school is in session. If you need to meet please phone to make an appointment. We are planning grade level parent meetings after school in the first week back to further answer any questions you may have and to get forms signed. We will send out more information on those meetings at another time.

**In the GMS Return to School Plan, your family will find new safety procedures and modified daily practices. We look forward to the beginning of classes and are confident that we can offer the safest environment possible for our students.** The fact we already have small class sizes, as well as excellent relationships and communication with our families allows us to adapt as needed to meet the needs of our community.

**We have also attached a form we are asking all parents/guardians to sign and return to the school indicating they have read and understood the Return to School Plan. Please have your son/daughter return the form on the first day of classes.** We have also attached a copy of the **Self-Assessment Screening Tool** that we are asking families to use every day before students board the bus. Both of these will also be posted on the front page of our website.

We understand that the past few months have been trying for everyone and that many people are apprehensive the upcoming school year. We also recognize that the pandemic situation can change and we will need to respond to changes as needed. Our planning has taken that into account and we will be ready to respond as needed. We will do our best to communicate any changes to you and we ask that you communicate any changes that occur in your household. New notices and changes to the plan will be posted on the front page of the website also.

**The first day of school for students is Tuesday September 8, 2020.** A member of our staff will be reaching out to you soon to discuss bus pick up times. We look forward to the start of classes and cannot wait to see you again.

Sincerely,



Tom Lussier  
Executive Director



Rachael Andrew  
Principal