

Mary Bergeron Elementary - Opening Soon!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Grande Yellowhead is proud to announce that their newest elementary school, Mary Bergeron Elementary, will be open for learning for the 2017-18 school year as scheduled. Although there will be some work that will need to be completed over the fall, the division will be working closely with the construction contractor in order to maintain a productive learning environment during the completion of the last construction phases.

GYPSPD's Board believes that construction of new schools as well as the modernization of other facilities are vital to enable children to receive the educational services to which they are entitled. However, in order to limit any learning disruption that these projects can create, and to protect the health and safety of the staff and students that use a school setting undergoing construction, the division has procedures in place to ensure that health, safety and educational standards are maintained during any school capital projects. Over the last few months, construction on the MBE site has been going at full steam ahead to ensure that the core school is ready to welcome students on September 5th.

"The weather this summer put us a little behind on some of the external work that needs to be completed, but our goal is for the project to be completed before winter hits," noted Carolyn Lewis, Superintendent of Schools. "Inside the school, classroom floors are freshly waxed and waiting for excited students to enter on the first day of school."

Although the majority of the school will be ready, completion of the gymnasium and the new learning commons (library) will not be finished until the end of September/ October. The school will have two playgrounds installed on site: one is scheduled for the last week of August, and the other after the demolition of the A.H. Dakin facility. The new bus lane will then be constructed after the demolition alongside 46th street. Until built, the bus drop-off lane will be temporarily located on 8th Avenue. Parents can use the lane in the front of the school beginning September 5th but everyone is cautioned to watch out for buses and other traffic on 8th Avenue as this area will be very busy in the mornings and after-school until the separate bus lane is constructed. The school will have extra bus supervision during this period as well to help all our little ones stay safe.

"To accommodate the students, fenced pathways will be put in to keep kids safe and out of restricted areas to ensure safe passage as they travel back and forth from the school building to the playgrounds and fields outside," Lewis said. "This is our third major capital project in the division over the last few years with the completion of the new Jasper Joint Facility and the major modernization of Grande Cache Community High School which is just wrapping up its final phase this month. We know that working during construction can sometimes be challenging but our staff have been exemplary in accommodating any inconveniences. We're just so happy and pleased with the approval of these great new learning facilities. Our students deserve it."

Grande Yellowhead stretches from Jasper National Park, east to Evansburg, and north to the Town of Grande Cache. The jurisdiction includes eighteen schools, five Learning Connection Centres, approximately 4,500 students, and 600 staff members.

Mary Bergeron Elementary will remain open and operational for the duration of the final construction phases but multiple and detailed phased logistic plans for both the buildings and the project site will be coordinated on an ongoing basis. Safe access for students and staff for learning and outdoor play is essential. As designated laydown and access areas are likely to change often as work progresses and at times be directly adjacent to areas where learning is taking place, noise and site housekeeping impacts will be considered at all times, and be adjusted as necessary to allow the work to progress with as minimal of an impact to the students and staff as possible.

The Province announced their approval of the new school on October 8th, 2014. Goals for the design were to create a school that was welcoming, and supported strong relationships and collaboration among students, teachers and families. Classrooms needed to be flexible for both today and the future.

“On behalf of the division, I’m very grateful for our community’s support of this project,” Lewis continued. “We are planning to have an open house/ tour of the new facility towards the end of October once all the construction is complete for the public to come in and have a tour of the school. Exciting times ahead!”

The school is open to the public for new student registrations beginning this week. Please also refer to our frequently asked questions information sheet to learn more. Welcome back!