



Canadian Rockies School Division

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January 6, 2021

Dear CRPS Staff and Families of BCHS and CCHS:

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday and restful break. We continue to thank our students, parents and staff, for their resilience in responding to the challenging circumstances in which we find ourselves. We are confident that our staff are doing an amazing job of providing a rich education to all of our students despite the challenges and disruptions. Likewise, we are certain that our students are engaging in their education and achieving their best under these difficult circumstances.

We have made the decision to use a “hold no harm” system in grading our January Final Assessments for our Grade 11 and 12 students. Final assessments will take place in regularly scheduled class time. The students’ final grades may only go up and may not go down as a result of their performance on the final assessment (eg. a student with a 75% in the course who receives a 70% on a final exam, the exam mark would not be used. If the student received an 80% on a final exam, then the exam mark would be used toward raising the student’s mark in the course). The weighting of the final assessment will be 20% for Grade 11 and 30% for Grade 12.

Our Grade 9 and 10 classes are yearlong and so students will not write mid term exams in January. Our Grade 9 and 10 students will continue with their classes and may have assessments as a part of their regular classes (unit final assessments, mid year check-in etc.) but will not write the January exams originally scheduled. The grade reported on the Grade 9 and 10 February report cards will reflect the students’ mark as of January 25th.

Students will continue to attend in-person classes through to January 26th. By not having an exam week, students will have the added benefit of extra in-person classes for the remainder of Quarter 2. There will be **no classes** for students in Grade 9-12 January 27 and 28th. January 27th will be a make up assessment day for Grade 11 and 12 students and January 28th will be a turn around day for the school. In-person classes will resume for all Grade 9-12 students at the start of Quarter 3 on January 29th.

Under normal circumstances we would not be making this decision. However, COVID-19 has impacted how surrounding boards are approaching student assessment. We want to ensure that the students of CRPS are not disadvantaged in any way. As a result of the decision being made by other boards, we fear that some of our students may be at a disadvantage when competing with these other students for both scholarships and university entrance. Additionally, we have had more disruptions to learning than usual due to COVID, and the “hold no harm” final assessments will help alleviate pressure on students

who have been impacted. We would like to make it clear that we strongly encourage students to prepare well for final assessments for a host of reasons:

- Final assessments can positively impact final grades;
- Final assessment preparation helps to consolidate learning;
- Final assessments give students experience mastering the summative assessment preparation process they will experience for their remaining years of secondary school and post-secondary school;
- Final assessments are used by teachers as a source of information when making recommendations about which high school courses students should take;
- Final assessments are one of the many measures to ensure our students are learning and they also identify gaps in learning;
- Final assessments help us assess the effectiveness of our live-streaming used to maintain continuity of instruction due to COVID disruptions: and
- The most common concern we heard from teachers and parents during last year's COVID disruption was the desire for increased rigour and the concern about students "checking out" of learning; final assessments are one of many strategies, albeit imperfect, to maintain student motivation and engagement.

Teachers are to use their professional judgement in designing final assessments, ensuring they are fair measurements of what was taught by the teacher.

Final assessments in Quarter 3 and 4 will follow the same format as Quarter 2 unless there are unexpected developments that require further changes.

Sincerely,



Christopher MacPhee
Superintendent of Schools
Canadian Rockies Public Schools



Chris Rogers, Principal
Banff Community High School
Canmore Collegiate High School