**Dear families:**

Welcome to a new school year at Max Aitken Academy. It’s a brand-new year with a few less restrictions. For their sake, I hope it will only continue to improve though they have proven time and again, and through a world pandemic, that they can adapt to this new world. We are so proud of them. Here are a few key points about this school year.

**Masks**

Your child will be reminded to wear a mask in common areas and the hallways. They are permitted to take them off in the classroom.

**Water Bottles**

Students must bring a water bottle to school as they are not permitted to use the mouthpiece on the fountain again this year. Bottle refills only.

**Gym Clothes**

Your children have Phys. Ed. On Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please have them bring clothes on those days as well as items related to maintaining good adolescent hygiene.

**Book Orders**

Scholastic book orders will be sent home monthly. This is a great opportunity to build your child’s library. Your orders also help us earn books for our classrooms. If you wish to order online, my class code is **RC187752**.

**Homework**

Reading will be my #1 homework. Students will be expected to read 20 minutes daily throughout the week and I’ll be regularly tracking their progress on an individualized book list. Reading is a great way to wind down before sleep. Please treat this as homework. Students will be encouraged to read at their own levels with a primary focus on nurturing a joy of reading as students transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”

Students may be required to do some draft writing and research at home but I hope to do the bulk of work at school, as much as possible. I have made a homework agenda in which your student can keep track of assignments. The homeroom teacher is not able to do this as the students will travel from class to class. Students will be required to carry their agendas from class to class with them.

**Typing**

I will be signing students up for a free “learn-to-type” program and logins will be available in the coming weeks. Typing and knowledge of how to use a keyboard is now a life skill that will serve them well, even beyond school, in this technological world.

**Microsoft TEAMS**

Teams is the Microsoft Office tool of choice for online learning for our students. I will be using “TEAMS” and my teacher page, <http://maa.nbed.nb.ca/teacher/mrs-mclean> to communicate with students and celebrate learning. I know that some students have already learned to use TEAMS but I will certainly give support to those who are just beginning.

**Lunch and Breakfast Program**

A variety of breakfast items will be provided in the cafeteria each morning.

Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria. Orders will be placed in the morning and students in middle school **pay at lunch**, when they get their food. They have a menu (until December) in their homework agenda. Your child’s lunch is 11:45-12:05.

**Activity Periods 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.**

Middle school students will have an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities throughout the year. They will not always get their first choice in the first round but will have a chance to get the first pick in other rounds. Activity periods will change every 6 weeks. Students are also able to go home at 2 p.m. if they choose not to participate in activity period, if the bus (or other) transportation is available.

**Other information**

* Please send a note if your child is absent or when there is a change in the child’s routine. District policy requires that your child be send on the bus if I do not have communication stating that they should not take it.
* No toys please as they may be lost, broken or a distraction.
* Treats: please let me know if there are things your child should not eat.
* Bathrooms: students may use the bathroom when needed. I usually encourage them to wait until after a lesson is taught and to go during the work or activity time following the lesson so they don’t miss. This usually does not require them to wait long.
* If you wish to speak with me and the message is time-sensitive (such as a change in routine), please call the main office at **627-4086** as they will make sure I get the message in a timely manner. I don’t always have time to check my emails until the end of the day so I may not get your message if there is a change in a child’s afterschool routine.
* I teach from 8:10-3:00. Please feel free to contact me or request that a contact you when needed; likely after school. You can also email me at Kendra.mclean@nbed.nb.ca.

We’ve got them! We will care for them, address their needs, support them and keep them safe. Please keep lines of communication open because sometimes they are shy to ask or talk. We can help best when we know what they are thinking. When they don’t have the words, sometimes we need you to be their words for them. At the same time as they grown and mature, we encourage them to communicate to us on their own behalf as much as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to call 627-4086 to have me call you or email me at Kendra.mclean@nbed.nb.ca. I genuinely believe all children have special talents and can learn in their own, unique way. I plan to have a fantastic year with them!

Kendra McLean

Kendra.mclean@nbed.nb.ca