



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LAKECREST INDEPENDENT SCHOOL RELEASES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL REOPENING

August 13, 2020

St. John's, NL - Lakecrest Independent School has released comprehensive recommendations for school reopening for September 2020. The recommendations were distributed to stakeholders on August 10 and were unveiled publicly during a Facebook Live event last night, August 12.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Lakecrest Medical Task Force has been developing a plan for school reopening that will focus on maintaining an environment of safety and well-being for teaching and learning. The Medical Task Force includes volunteer health professionals who have been following the relevant Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Health protocols. Additionally, the task force has utilized the best scientific evidence available, including guidelines issued by The Centre for Disease Control, World Health Organization, the Canadian Paediatric Society, SickKids updated guidelines (July 29, 2020) and the European Academy of Pediatrics.

Highlights of the school reopening recommendations include:

- digital screening forms to be completed daily for anyone entering the school;
- support for individuals who wish to wear masks, without a mandatory mask policy;
- emphasis on physical distancing and consideration for physical barriers;
- moving to virtual assemblies to limit mass gatherings but promote social interaction and recognition of student achievement;
- a plan to move the entire school to remote learning for seven days (in addition to any recommendations from public health officials) if someone at Lakecrest tests positive for COVID-19; and
- modifying specialty classes such as music, physical education, and library time so students can continue to benefit from enriched learning.

The Facebook Live broadcast can be watched here:

<https://www.facebook.com/lakecrestnl/videos/2676755599255977>.

Visit our blog post for the parent summary of recommendations:

<http://www.lakecrest.ca/blog/school-reopening-summary-of-recommendations/>.



Head of School, Mr. Patrick Boekhoud commented on the recommendations, saying “We’ve been instructed to plan for life with COVID-19 and now we have a plan to get back to safe, in-class instruction at Lakecrest this September. The importance of in-person learning is well documented, and after carefully considering the latest research and our local epidemiology, we feel that the benefits outweigh the potential risks. With our strong remote learning platform and plans for stopping the spread of COVID-19 in our community, we will be ready for whatever the new school year brings. As we begin implementing the recommendations we look forward to working with all our stakeholders to ensure our students, parents, teachers and staff have a successful and safe 2020-21 school year.”

Mr. Boekhoud is available for interviews upon request by telephone, in-person at Lakecrest school, or virtually.

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PRESS CONTACT

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BACKGROUND - MEDICAL TASK FORCE BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Angela Ridi (Chair)

Dr. Ridi is Anesthetist and Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Memorial University. She graduated from Dalhousie Medical School and completed post-graduate specialization training at Memorial and the University of Ottawa, after which she began working as an anesthesiologist in St. John's. Dr. Ridi is an executive member of the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society Atlantic Division and sits on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society and the Board of Trustees of the Canadian Anesthesia Research Foundation. She is also an ad-hoc reviewer for the Canadian Journal of Anesthesia and plays an active role in resident mentorship and faculty development with the Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Iram Anees

Dr. Anees is an Internist and an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Memorial University. She trained in Internal Medicine, Nephrology and Transplant Nephrology in New York, USA. Dr. Anees has coauthored a medical book and is a regular speaker at provincial and national medical conferences. She was awarded the prestigious National Kidney Foundation research award and received the highest level teaching award in Department of Medicine at Memorial as a Platinum ACE level teacher with a grant.

Presently, Dr. Anees serves on numerous Medical committees including: the Internal Medicine Residency Training Program, General Internal Medicine Fellowship training programs, and the clinical teaching unit at the Health Sciences Centre.

Dr. Zaina Albalawi

Dr. Albalawi is an Endocrinologist and Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Memorial University. She completed her residency and fellowship at the University of Alberta, along with a masters degree in Clinical Epidemiology. She co-authored a Clinical Practice Guideline chapter for the 2018 Diabetes Canada Guideline. She's currently a member of the Atlantic Collaborative Working group on diabetic foot prevention to develop policy and healthcare recommendations to reduce amputations in the region.

Zaina has two children at Lakecrest, and has been a board member since 2018.