



# River Valley School

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*A safe and happy place to learn*



May 17, 2023

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

Re: Information regarding Air Quality @ RVS

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As we experience a dry Spring and more forest fires unfortunately become a reality, there can be a significant impact on air quality. Depending on prevailing winds and precipitation this can also rapidly shift and change. As we moved through the pandemic, air quality also became very important. To share how “air” works within the RVS building, and how we make decisions on how to navigate air quality, the following information may provide some insight:

- Intake air goes through two MERV 8 filters (85% effective at catching virus sized particles) and then another 12” filter
- Recirculated air is then filtered again through another MERV 8 filter
- To minimize smoke from coming into the building, sometimes the air handling units are shut down. The building still circulates air within the building in this scenario and the filters are still operable
- The [Alberta Air Quality Index Map for Alberta](#), is where we obtain information regarding air quality
- We, and the School Division, utilize recommendations from [Air Quality Health Index](#) to determine how to navigate things like recess, track meets, field trips and so on.

Currently the air quality is sitting at an 8 for our area. According to the [Air Quality Health Index](#) this level is considered High Risk and recommends reduced or rescheduled strenuous outdoor activities, particularly for an at-risk population which can include children...”children and the elderly should take it easy.” That said, today we have made the school based decision for indoor recess, and will be rescheduling the Middle School Track Meet. As noted, air quality can shift rapidly and if that occurs there may be an opportunity for outdoor recess today. If this becomes an extended concern we may re-evaluate as according to the guideline children can go outside but should not engage in strenuous activities; we are very aware, as are you as parents, that extended indoor time brings its own set of challenges. We will hope that the air clears and we will not need to navigate this “grey area”.

Children who have respiratory issues should always have any required medication at school (puffer etc.), and homeroom teachers and the office should be made aware of any of these types of medical conditions. Students with specific respiratory medical conditions may warrant that child staying inside at recess.

If you have any questions or concerns in regard to the above information, please feel free to contact me. We appreciate your understanding as we navigate this unique situation.

Leslie Cooper-Shand  
Principal  
River Valley School