

March 27th, 2020

Dear Abbotsford School District families,

With school scheduled to re-start next week, I am providing families with more clarification about our plans for continuity of learning in the coming weeks. As you know, the provincial government announced on March 17th that all in-class instruction in BC schools would be suspended indefinitely. Since that announcement, our district staff has been busy establishing a plan to move education forward during this challenging time. While there is still much to determine, I hope that this letter provides some answers for families about the next few weeks.

Safety First

First and foremost, we want all staff, students, and families to stay healthy and safe during this critical time of the COVID-19 outbreak. Our schools will remain closed to students as staff work on a plan to deliver instruction remotely. We recognize that education is an integral part of all of our lives, but we must put the health and well-being of our families first. Provincial health officials have asked us all to stay home as much as possible, so our plan below recognizes that commitment.

Continuity of Learning Plan

We continue our work on developing a plan to support students as we make this transition to a virtual learning environment. Before we begin this process, we must give time for our staff to become comfortable with various tools that will support their work. While our learning plan continues to take shape, below are some key focus areas for our schools:

- the social and emotional well-being of students;
- support for core curriculum learning standards through meaningful interactions;
- a reasonable amount of time for each child to work on their learning every week;
- a manageable amount of technology or materials required at home; and
- enhancing access to a variety of e-resources to support instructional delivery.

Administrators, teachers and support staff will begin reaching out to families and students next week once they have had time to meet and develop their plans. To better personalize these plans, we are asking families to [complete our survey](#) for each school-aged child in their household. This survey will provide us with valuable information about your child's academic, technological, and emotional needs.

[Survey: Continuity of Learning](#)

In addition, next week parents can expect the following:

- ***A call from your child's teacher.*** Teachers will be checking in on your child's current needs. Depending on the age of your child, this might be via phone, Google Classroom or another communication tool currently used in the classroom.

- **Communication from the school.** Schools will begin communicating with families and share information related to the possibility of picking up educational or personal materials (in a way that respects physical distancing).

It is our goal that instructional support will commence in earnest during the week of April 6th. We understand that teaching and learning will look different throughout our K- 12 system. Our intent is not to replicate regular classroom instruction, but rather to provide opportunities for home learning during this very challenging time. We do not know how long the provincial government will suspend in-person instruction, but we are preparing for it to be a considerable time as the COVID-19 virus continues to spread throughout our province.

Reporting on Student Progress

The provincial government announced last week that every student will receive a final mark for this year, that graduation assessments were being postponed, and students would be able to progress to the next grade level or graduate, as usual, at the end of this school year. In Abbotsford School District, we will be working on a plan to fulfill these requirements. Things like graduation ceremonies and other important traditions are presently on hold as we wait to determine how things will unfold later this spring. We will provide further clarification to parents and students in the coming days.

Moving Forward

Undoubtedly, there will be challenges along the way as we adapt to these circumstances. However, I have every confidence in our very committed staff that we will pull together to tackle the task ahead of us. As a district, we take enormous pride in not only providing outstanding education to your children but being a community hub – a gathering place where adults and students alike come together to connect and celebrate learning. And while many of those activities will be changed or postponed, we are determined to provide your children with a robust educational experience. We recognize that this is an incredibly difficult time for many families and understand that it may be challenging for students to focus on learning. Schools will continue to provide flexible opportunities, resources, and support for our students, adapting to the individual circumstances of our families.

We continue to post new updates on our district webpage, www.abbyschools.ca, so I encourage you to visit it regularly. I will also be providing periodical system-wide email updates to our community. However, in the days ahead, you will also begin to hear from your school principal and teachers with updates that are more specific to your school community.

We are all in this together, and I am confident that we will rise above these challenges. Thank you for your understanding and your patience, and I wish you all to stay healthy.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kevin Godden
Superintendent of Schools