



March 30, 2020

Dear parents and caregivers,

I want to begin by saying thank you for your continued support of our schools and our staff members. We know this is more than a disruption. Education starting from a young age is vital to the growth of our children. We are working to right the ship as much as we can during these turbulent times.

As you know, the Ministry of Education directed all schools to pause educational operations last week. While this was done first and foremost to protect the members of our school communities, it provided much-needed time for the ministry and numerous education partners to determine the next steps for students as we navigate these uncharted waters.

The ministry created the Response Planning Team with representatives from key education stakeholders to address the instructional needs of students for the remainder of the year, and the adaptation of school division operations. See the attached letter from the RPT for more information.

Last week, our division staff continued to work on how we can offer learning support to students and families. This isn't simple; the work of a classroom teacher can't be easily replicated through an online classroom. Student equity, access to technology, assessment of student learning, supports for individual needs, and introducing new platforms and software were just a few of the numerous questions that need addressing. We haven't answered them all yet, but we have a start.

Later today, you will receive information from your child's school regarding how learning will move forward this week. This message from the school will outline what to expect with regards to weekly learning plans, as well as individual opportunities to connect with teachers. Our goal is for teachers to support students learning at home by being accessible during the school day. We know student learning in the home requires support from parents and caregivers, which may be challenging right now. Our teachers will provide an appropriate amount of work to help prepare our students for their return to school, but not overburden your family. They will be accessible to provide regular guidance and support.

There are still many questions we are working to answer. As we endeavour to provide educational support in an entirely new way, we will encounter problems. While this class cancellation is temporary, we don't know when schools will re-open. We ask for your patience as we work through these challenges. Like many of you, much of our school staff members will be working from home while also caring for loved ones. They remain committed to their students and will do what they can to provide what your child needs.

As I noted before, our division has created an educational resource page for elementary school families that provides numerous links to academic sites appropriate for each grade level. These resources can be found at www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca/parentresources.



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Barry MacDougall, Director of Education

Safety remains our priority. As our province's response to the pandemic evolves, this may impact our work. We will continue to provide division updates on our website

www.saskatoonpublicschools.ca/covid19. This page can be accessed from all school websites.

Individuals who may have concerns about their health can call the provincial HealthLine at 811 or use the [self-assessment tool](#) to determine next steps. Information and updates regarding COVID-19 are available on www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus.

Let's continue to look out for each other and protect our community. Please stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Barry MacDougall, Director of Education

Saskatoon Public Schools