



May 1, 2020

Dear parents/guardians,

As we put the month of April behind us, I wanted to once again connect and update you on the district's efforts to provide supports for students and families.

While we continue to wish for the day that we can safely resume normal in-class instruction, students and teachers are settling into a bit of a routine around remote learning. Thank you for your patience and the additional homeschool supports that you are providing your children. As a parent, you are our most important educational partner and your engagement with your child's learning is even more important through this time.

Our primary focus continues to be on the social and emotional wellbeing of students and families. If you or your child are finding any aspect of remote learning difficult or too taxing considering all that is going on, please have an open, honest conversation with your child's teacher(s). They will be willing to work with you to find the right balance of learning support for your family circumstance. Alternatively, if your family had opted out of learning opportunities and would now like to receive some, please speak with your child's teacher or contact your school principal.

The district continues to provide weekly food packages for students who need this support and we understand that this need may be increasing within our community. Please know that you can reach out to your child's principal if your family is in need and we will discreetly ensure that you begin receiving packages. We are currently delivering food to over 200 families and are very happy to share that our local Thrifty Foods, Save-On Foods and Quality Foods have partnered with the district to help us expand what we are able to provide in these packages.

We also understand that the pandemic and the requirements of social and physical distancing can be affecting our emotional and mental wellbeing. Counselling supports continue to be available through our schools and we are also now providing online counselling for elementary students or parental support for elementary students who are experiencing anxiety about COVID-19. To book an appointment, call or email the counsellor assigned to your child's school, during normal school hours:

- Pinecrest, Georgia Park and Quadra – Tim Hicken (250) 286.4400 ext. 2281
- Ripple Rock, Cedar, Penfield and Sandowne – Melissa Litke (250) 286.4400 ext. 2262
- EDM, Ecole Willow Point, Ocean Grove and Sayward – Wendy Chase wendy.chase@sd72.bc.ca
- Cortes – Tracy Kennedy (250) 286.4400 ext. 2253

While we haven't received any indication of when in-class instruction might be able to resume in BC schools, given recent statements from Premier John Horgan, Education Minister Rob Fleming and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, we are starting to consider how school might look in the fall. Currently, there are a lot of variables and unknowns. As we receive further direction and information from provincial health and the Ministry it will help us to anticipate what schools and classrooms may look like when in-class lessons resume.

Take care and stay safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Morrow", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Jeremy Morrow
Superintendent of Schools