

May 8, 2020

Superintendent's Update

Dear staff, students, parents, families, and community,

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK!

I would like to offer our appreciation to all of our teachers in SD 52 for rising up and meeting the challenge of teaching and learning during COVID-19. As educators, you have risen to the task of teaching online, preparing education packages, and most importantly: *connecting with students*. I know it has not been easy, but I hope you continue to find joy in your role as you continue to shape the minds and hearts of our students. From all of us from the Senior Leadership team of SD 52, we thank you!



CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PROGRESS:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, and all employees.

Our focus continues to be on health and safety for everyone entering our school building. To date we have been following the Provincial Health Officer's guidelines for K-12 settings as our Health and Safety Protocols. Further to this, and in conjunction with our stakeholders, we are implementing an Exposure Control Plan which includes measures to minimize or eliminate the potential for transmission of communicable disease. At school sites and in combination with staff training, safety measures will be used to minimize the potential of exposure to COVID-19 as we prepare to invite our priority students to our school sites, not only to keep them safe but to continue to provide safety for all of our staff. For further details on our Exposure Control Plan please visit our website at www.rupertschools.ca.

2. Provide services to support children of essential workers.

We have opened our education care for children of essential service workers at Lax Keen school site. Christine Franes of Learning Services has taken the lead of providing leadership along with the admin team of Susan and Jean for making this happen. It is amazing what can happen in a very short period of time. We currently have 15 students attending in two classrooms. There are physical distancing plans in place as well as continuous cleaning and sanitizing.

3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.

Our Learning Services Department under the leadership of Christine Franes has taken on the responsibility for connecting with our schools to continue to provide a food program for our students who normally access the breakfast or lunch program. Grocery cards are delivered on alternate weeks to the "Bags of Groceries".

Assistance from the Port Authority includes grocery delivery and providing a cargo truck for delivery of groceries to Roosevelt school where this program is housed.

4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

PRMS invited students into the schools; first day 9 grade 7 students in the a.m. and 5 grade 8's in the afternoon with 10 grade 6's the next day.

Pacific Coast School (PCS) continues to open their doors today for their grade 12 students and both staff and students are happy to access their learning with support from their teachers and support staff.

In the weeks ahead, we will be re-introducing K-5 students into schools on a part-time basis and on alternating days. Parents will have a choice whether they send their children or not.

No date has been set yet and we will be working with the Ministry of Education and new Health and Safety protocols. Stay tuned for more information.

Key Messaging Moving Forward:

1. Safety is our top priority – Exposure Plan will be in place at all sites.
2. Planning and details are in progress. Patience and flexibility are necessary.
3. Equity will be the foundation of students return to school.
4. Students and staff have been in school already and it has been safe.
5. We are waiting for further direction from the Minister of Education.

BEAR WITNESS DAY IN HONOUR OF JORDAN RIVER ANDERSON:

I also would like to share that Sunday, May 10th is Bear Witness Day in honour of Jordan River Anderson, and raising awareness about Jordan's Principle. The First Nations Caring Society recommends bringing teddy bears to work or daycares to acknowledge Jordan's Principle. As this may be more challenging these days, many are posting photos of teddy bears on social media. For more information visit: <https://fncaringsociety.com/jordans-principle>

Stay safe and healthy. We are all in this together and we've got this!

Irene LaPierre
Superintendent of Schools
School District 52 Prince Rupert