

Message to families from Chair of the Board, Rick Petrella - March 31, 2020

Today, we received further information from the Ministry of Education pertaining to the education of our students and what that will look like after the announcement from the Minister that schools will remain closed until May 4, 2020.

As a parent, I know our children's education is paramount in everything we do, and I understand that education in these challenging times will look very different than it has in the past. I also understand and appreciate that all of you have many questions. I want you to know that our Board is working diligently with the government, staff and with our unions partners to ensure that our students receive the best possible education under the current circumstances.

First and foremost, I can share that the Board and the government are committed to ensuring the successful completion of the current school year. Our Elementary students and secondary students currently enrolled in credits, will work to complete them and our graduates can expect to continue their journey to their post-secondary destinations.

We are pleased to hear that the Ministry has launched additional support for teachers for the new online learning platform, Brightspace. We already have many staff using the tool and they have already started reaching out to many of you with login in credentials and information.

I wanted to express my thanks to our families and students who have already logged into their online classrooms, and if anyone is struggling to do this, or requires additional learning services, our staff are here, ready, and committed to help.

Depending on a student's grade, they can expect different workloads using this virtual learning platform:

- Kindergarten to Grade 3: 5 hours of work per student per week. Focus: Literacy and math
- Grades 4 to 6: 5 hours of work per student per week. Focus: Literacy and math + science and social studies
- Grades 7 and 8: 10 hours of work per student per week. Focus: Core math, literacy, science and social studies
- Grades 9 to 12: three hours per course per week for semestered students and 1.5 hours per course per week for non-semestered students. Focus: Achieving credits/completion/graduation

Hours refer to the approximate amount of time students would spend on the work assigned by teachers.

Not only do we commit to the ongoing education of our students, we commit to providing as many supports as possible. We have a dedicated team of non-teaching staff including social workers, mental health workers, child and youth workers and other support staff who will remain active and ready to support students.

At this time, we are still waiting to see how student assessment will look. What we do know is that their will be some form of student learning assessment and that our graduating students will have some form of mid-term marks provided to their post-secondary destinations. Please know that that the Ministry of

Education is working with colleges and universities to establish how admission timelines and final marks will work.

Staff are taking the rest of this school week to complete their online learning environments, address the technology needs of staff and students, and continue to work together to ensure that every student can and will participate in learning in order to complete the 2019-20 school year.

As we continue this journey, as a Catholic learning community, together we will continue to find strength in each other and in our faith.

Please expect more information from the Board, your school principals and teachers. We are all working together to help each other by supporting the needs of all. We will rise to the challenge presented and use our resiliency and community to finish stronger.

For the latest up to date information, I encourage you to visit our website at <http://www.bhncdsb.ca/news/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-update>

Thank you for your patience and understanding
God Bless

Rick Petrella, Chair of the Board