



# COVID-19 Update for Families

April 14, 2021

On Monday, April 12, 2021, the people of the Province of Ontario were informed that the Ministry of Education had made the decision that all school districts will pivot to remote, online learning beginning April 19, 2021. The announcement did not provide a scheduled return to in-person learning date.

While we wish that we were together in person, the health and safety of our staff, students, and families need to be our focus right now as the province continues to struggle with an increase of COVID-19 cases. Our dedicated staff are committed to providing virtual learning opportunities for all students, until which time when we can all be together again.

During the remote learning period, staff will do their very best, within the health and safety parameters set out by the province and our local health units, to provide additional accommodations to those Special Education Students who may require a significantly high level of complex support to engage in remote learning.

Although many families are well-versed in the process of pivoting from in-person to remote learning, we are providing a reminder and some additional details to assist everyone during transition. As well, we are including important information for students already enrolled in our Virtual School (already registered, full-time, online learners only).

## Virtual Students

### Elementary Virtual Students

For elementary students already registered in our BHNCDSB Virtual School (and for those who were scheduled to begin on Monday, April 19, 2021), your learning begins Monday, April 19, 2021 as scheduled.

### Secondary Virtual Students

For secondary students already registered in our BHNCDSB Virtual School (and for those who were scheduled to begin Quad 4), your learning begins Tuesday, April 20, 2021 as Monday is a previously scheduled Professional Development Day.

## In-Person Students - Synchronous and Asynchronous Teaching and Learning

### Elementary Students

For our elementary students who, until the announcement, attended in-person learning, the following schedule applies: Transition/Device Distribution and Ready to Learn Day - April 19, 2021; Asynchronous learning and 'check-ins' by educators with families/students - April 20, 2021; Synchronous learning begins - April 21, 2021.

## Secondary Students

For our secondary students who, until the announcement, attended in-person learning, the following schedule applies: Transition/Device Distribution/Quadrimester Reporting Day - April 19, 2021; Asynchronous learning for Quad 4 (Week A) and 'check-ins' by educators with families/students - April 20, 2021; Synchronous learning begins - April 21, 2021.

## Technology

Students requiring a borrowed device for online learning are asked to complete the [Device Request Form](#). As devices are limited, requests are for those without other available technology at home. For those students/parents who cannot access the Device Request Form link above, or who do not have any internet service, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at [helpdesk@bhncdsb.ca](mailto:helpdesk@bhncdsb.ca) or 226-401-1224 for assistance. For families without internet service, please contact your classroom teacher, beginning the week of April 19, 2021, to discuss print resource options.

## Special Education and Student Support Services

### SEA Equipment for Students in Special Education

It is hoped that students took their SEA equipment home with them before the break. For those who did not, parents/caregivers can contact their school principal to arrange for a safe pick-up. Administrators will share safety protocols with the families that will be picking up. Board-issued equipment provided through this protocol is expected to be returned to the Board upon the completion of the closure period in good repair.

### Requesting Additional Remote Learning Accommodations for Students with Complex Special Education Needs

There are many possible additional accommodations considered for students with complex needs during a remote learning period. Parents/caregivers can initiate a request for additional accommodation by contacting the school principal. Where the school team is unable to accommodate a student in the remote learning environment, in-person learning can be considered.

Staff will be contacting parent/caregivers of all students (including those students in Secondary PAL and Community Living classes) that were previously approved for an in-person learning accommodation in January 2021. Parent/caregivers will need to confirm there is a continued need for this type of temporary accommodation.

## Student Wellbeing

The BHNCDSB continues to support our students through this unprecedented time in their learning journey. The following is a reminder of some of the supports that are in place:

- Our Student Support Services and Special Education staff will continue to implement the remote strategies and processes that have been developed to support students with special education needs and to support students with well-being concerns.
- Through their school principal, students continue to have remote access to Child and Youth Workers and Social Work services.
- On every student's BrightSpace page, there is information posted about several mental health resources that are available to them.
- Resources to support student and family wellbeing and mental health can also be found on our website at <http://www.bhncdsb.ca/page/mental-health-and-well-being>.

## Child Care

All full-time childcare programs are open and running as usual. Families, who use these services, are asked to adhere to the strict health and safety guidelines and ensure that they complete the [COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening](#) before they access the site.

We encourage all families to follow the guidance of our health experts. Together, we can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep each other safe and healthy. We look forward to the announcement of the return to in-person learning.

Your child care provider will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have with your child care.

Please stay well and God bless.

Rick Petrella, Chair of the Board

Mike McDonald, Director of Education