



Bluewater District School Board

Alana Murray, *Director of Education*

351 1st Avenue North - PO Box 190
Chesley ON N0G 1L0
Telephone: (519) 363-2014
Fax: (519) 370-2909
www.bwdsb.on.ca

March 31, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you may have heard reported in the media, Minister of Education Stephen Lecce has announced that the current shutdown of all publicly funded schools in Ontario will extend until at least May 4, 2020. This means that all Bluewater District School Board schools will remain closed for this period or until determined otherwise by the provincial government.

In today's announcement and media release by the Ministry of Education, [Ontario Extends School and Child Care Closures to Fight Spread of COVID-19](#), some new expectations have emerged in Phase 2 of the Learn at Home program, including the number of hours required each week by grade level, the distribution of technology, and final report cards. I know that these new directives will create many questions as our staff and families juggle their many responsibilities during the current COVID-19 situation.

As we await further details from the Ministry of Education, I want to provide assurance that we fully understand the challenges faced by many of our local families as we work through the numerous complex details of supporting the continuity of student learning at home. We are firmly committed to rolling out a learning plan that is **extremely flexible**, considerate of the needs of parents/guardians/staff, accessible, balanced, and varied in serving the diverse needs of all students in our rural communities. Our plan will also try to minimize additional stress for families by incorporating ways to distribute technology and learning materials to those who have limited access to those supports currently.

Within the next few days, we will be working with our principals and teachers to provide support and guidance in helping them to reconnect with their students through the communication tools that we have available to us. We will also be reaching out to parents/guardians to determine student needs and any limitations they may face at home regarding access to technology. This will be followed by details on the roll-out of our plan for continuous learning next week.

As this is an unprecedented situation for our board and families, we anticipate that there will be some growing pains as we get up and running. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work through the many logistics and details.

It is important to remember that, above all else, our top priority at this time is to stay safely at home and practice the recommendations of our public health officials to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Please continue to monitor our COVID-19 web page at http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/Parents/COVID-19_Updates, and Bluewater District School Board Facebook and Twitter accounts, for our latest postings and letters, Grey Bruce Public Health updates, and resources.

Sincerely,

Alana Murray
Director of Education