



COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

March 20, 2020

To: All Parents/Guardians

From: Cheryl Gilmore, Superintendent

Dear Parents / Guardians

First, I want to thank you for your patience and understanding as Lethbridge School Division staff continue to work hard to prepare for the delivery of learning for students at home. This week the schools had the additional challenge of making arrangements for pick up of personal belongings in an organized and safe manner. These are very challenging times for the community and I know that it is during times of adversity that community pulls together, exhibits compassion and provides support to one another. I am proud of the progress staff are making with planning and establishing structures that will provide for the best learning opportunities possible with the changed context. It has taken some time to get a structure in place that is sustainable and considers delivery of learning over a longer period of time.

Staff are working on learning how to use the technology, securing resources, and planning lessons for the delivery of learning using an online platform. Schools will be contacting parents/ older students with details as they are finalized and ready to implement. It is recognized that not all students have access to online learning, so schools are also making plans for learning that is not online. This is a complex endeavour and we are committed to delivering a quality program that engages students in their home environment. There is no doubt that there will be some start-up challenges; we may have a few failures but will learn as we go and try to self-correct quickly. We will help students and parents navigate technology as well as resource access off-line as best we can through a variety of communication channels.

The plan moving forward is to launch our online learning opportunities with the following timelines:

1. High Schools and ICSS– Connecting with their learners for set-up and testing of platforms by Monday. Delivery anticipated to start by Tuesday, March 23. There was a recent announcement made today from Alberta Education that contains some specific details regarding high school programming, credits, assessment, and so forth. High schools will send communication to students and parents/guardians regarding government direction in these area that affect our high school students. The major highlight is: **Diploma Exams are cancelled with some exceptions being made in special circumstances. How special circumstances are defined, has yet to be clarified.**
2. Middle Schools – Connecting with learners/parents to provide information about the learning platform, access and lesson structures by Tuesday. The first learning activity is scheduled to roll out on Wednesday, March 25th. We are on track with Alberta Education’s announcement today with the delivery of content covering core. Our schools will also be expanding beyond core.
3. Elementary Schools – Connecting with their families as they continue planning with information specific to accessing learning once it is ready to go. The anticipated launch date for elementary lessons is Monday, March 30th. The focus at the elementary level will be literacy and numeracy;

this is aligned with the Alberta Education announcement today that outlines areas of focus for different grade levels.

There will be more information coming from the Division and/or schools directly regarding technology in the home. Please don't think that you need to go out and invest in a bunch of technology; we do not want families to be burdened by this. I have been told that almost any device will work (tablet, phone, iPad, computer, lap tops) As well, it is not expected that every child is able to hook up with technology, and even if they can, that they can all hook up at specific times (e.g. some elementary children might be in someone else's care during the day without access to technology; there may be a number of children in a family and one device). We are not planning delivery all day on technology and access to lessons and lesson materials will not be time bound. The exception for this may be some of the high school classes. I encourage parents and students not to feel overwhelmed... take it slow; if you feel frustrated or don't understand something, staff are here to help.



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