

Response Planning Team Update – March 25, 2020

Thank you for your continued leadership as we respond to the many elements of Saskatchewan's pandemic response, including that of class suspension, and our collective goal of providing Saskatchewan students with learning opportunities.

We know that school divisions will continue their deliberations and transition planning for service delivery that is necessary during the suspension of school. Effective Monday, it is expected that there will be connections with students and the development of learning opportunities available for students and teachers will also commence.

We understand each of you may be at different levels of preparedness, so we trust you will work toward a service delivery model that meets the needs of your local community as early as is possible.

Communication with your staff, parents, and students, as well as your larger community, is of paramount importance during this time.

As we continue to prepare for work of the education sector next week, in which you will be making decisions at the local level about where staff do their work, please note the following Saskatchewan Public Health Directive, as signed by the Chief Medical Health Officer that states:

“Public gatherings of more than 25 people in one room are prohibited except where two metre distancing between people can be maintained; workplace and meeting settings where people are distributed into multiple rooms or buildings; and retail locations”.

In consultation with the Ministry of Health, this directive applies to schools, and we ask you to consider it when developing staffing plans for next week. Schools remain available for use within these guidelines.

As you are developing plans for how to offer learning opportunities, please continue to work with your existing local structures within your school division. A collaborative approach with your staff and labour groups should be employed as you work towards solutions.

As identified in the March 23, 2020 update, two subcommittees have been struck to focus on the instructional and the corporate response. Both committees are meeting daily to create solutions moving forward.

Corporate Services Team Update

The Ministry-directed school pause period runs from March 20 to 27. For the week of March 30, we expect that most school-based staff will be able to work from home, but essential functions will need to be carried out by staff in schools and/or in division offices, including regular facility inspections, maintenance or repairs as well as central business and support functions such as finance, payroll, human resources and information technology.

Decisions regarding staff assignments will be made by the Director of Education and communicated by each school division.

School divisions will continue to follow the direction and advice of the Chief Medical Officer. Our priority as a sector is to ensure the safety and well-being of students, and staff. We ask you to watch for the latest COVID-19 information that is being updated daily on Saskatchewan.ca.

Instructional Services Team Update

Principles to Guide our Work

- School divisions and First Nations* are committed to providing all students an opportunity to learn and to support well-being.
- Teachers, administrators and other school staff should remain connected to the students, families and communities they serve.
- Teachers are best positioned to offer supplementary learning opportunities to the students they are currently teaching, should their students/families choose to take advantage of them.
- As a means to engage all students, teachers should employ multiple modes of delivery as available to them and be supported in doing so.
- Supplemental learning opportunities support families and caregivers in continued learning for students. Families and caregivers are not expected to deliver Saskatchewan curriculum.

*First Nations education authorities that choose to follow the provincial guidelines.

Framework Update:

The framework is broken down between groups of grades:

- Prekindergarten
- Kindergarten to Grade 3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-9
- Grades 10-12

Each category of grades will have areas of focus and guidance including;

- Supplemental Learning Opportunities
- Grading
- Assessment
- Transitions
- Communications
- Inclusion/students with additional needs/vulnerable students

We have addressed Grades 10-12 first. Other grade groupings will follow.

Grades 10-12

- Supplemental Learning Opportunities
 - As a means to engage all students, teachers should employ multiple modes of delivery as available to them and be supported in doing so.
 - School divisions and schools will offer access to content that focuses on core subjects (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, Health Education/Physical Education,

- Arts Education/Practical and Applied Arts) to all students who wish to continue their learning in courses in which they are registered.
- Other subjects will continue to be offered where possible and practical to all students who wish to continue their learning in courses in which they are registered.
 - For students in a block or quad system, who have registered for and not started an elective course required for graduation, schools will offer the opportunity. To support the situation where a school is not able to offer the elective course, the Ministry of Education will increase the amount of special project credits for the 2019-20 school year from 3 to 5 to allow flexibility in student graduation. Please see publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/73964 for more information.
 - In instances where students are enrolled in distance learning, their classes will carry on, should the student choose to continue. If currently enrolled students choose not to continue, they will be granted a minimum final mark record of 50 per cent or greater, based on the outcomes evaluated to date in the subject area, as of March 13, 2020.
- Assessment and Evaluation
 - For students who choose to engage in supplemental learning opportunities, teachers will provide formative assessment and other feedback.
 - The processes for evaluation, in order for students to increase their marks from March 13, 2020, will continue to be determined by the teacher.
 - Provincial examinations within the K-12 system are waived for non-accredited teachers from March 13, 2020 through to the end of June 2020. All course challenge requests would occur with local teachers/schools.
 - Home-based students and adult learners access to provincial examinations will be made available through the Ministry of Education.
 - Flexible assessment and evaluation practices will be utilized.
 - Grading
 - A minimum final mark record of 50 per cent or greater is to be applied to the outcomes evaluated to date in the subject areas as of March 13, 2020. Students will be afforded the opportunity to improve the mark record through options provided within the capacity of the school division and local school if students choose.
 - Students will be invited to continue learning; however, if they and their families choose not to, they will be assigned their grade as of March 13, 2020, as per the statement above.
 - A mark of 50 per cent will not be applied where a student has not completed any outcomes or where the teacher has not evaluated any outcomes as of March 13, 2020. Students will have the opportunity to engage in supplementary learning opportunities to obtain a mark record.
 - Marks will be submitted to the Ministry of Education as per the usual process by July 2, 2020, as per the Registrar's Handbook.
 - In these exceptional times, teachers are asked to follow the direction provided by the province relating to final mark assessments, and as such are deemed to be working within the bounds of their professional and ethical standards of practice. The Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Professional Teacher Regulatory Board has provided the following supportive statement: *"Teachers who provide final assessments consistent with the direction provided by the Ministry of Education and their school division upon the closure of schools for the COVID-19 crisis will be following the directions of their employer and would be considered to be acting within the expectations of the profession"*.

- Transitions
 - The Ministry of Education will work with post-secondary institutions to ensure that these extraordinary circumstances do not prevent students from being eligible for admission to post-secondary studies for the upcoming school year.
 - School divisions will work with community partners to continue to advance existing transition processes.
- Communications
 - As a means to engage all students, teachers should employ multiple modes of communication as available to them and be supported in doing so.
 - Schools and teachers will develop communication plans for students and families to inform them about learning opportunities.
- Students with Additional Needs
 - A learning plan will be created by the teacher/student support team as required.

What does 'State of Emergency' measures mean for School Divisions?

- In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Government of Saskatchewan has implemented a number of very broad powers pursuant to The Emergency Act, including an Order which requires that all persons must comply with any direction issued by the Government of Saskatchewan, or an agent of the Government.
- Some powers may be authorized which impact school divisions include the following:
 - use of school property (which may include buildings or supplies);
 - provide for restoration of essential facilities; and,
 - entry into any school division building in the course of implementing an emergency plan.
- Government of Saskatchewan is still exploring its emergency planning at this time, and we will update school divisions as information is available.

We thank you for your continued leadership during these challenging times.

Clint Repski, CA

Assistant Deputy Minister

Ministry of Education

Bus: 306-787-6115 Cell: 306-519-9527

Email: clint.repski3@gov.sk.ca