



April 3, 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: Parents, Students, Staff

I am continually amazed at how – as partners in these unprecedented times – our staff, trustees, students, parents, and volunteers have come together, united as a faith and learning community. The safety and wellbeing of all remains our primary focus and top priority, while ensuring the continuity of student learning.

In this new learning environment, our community has consistently demonstrated how it adapts to change and can excel, even in the most challenging situations. We have gathered in prayer to humbly acknowledge that we, on our own, need someone beyond ourselves – we need God, who, as our Heavenly Father, is always right here with us.

I am most in awe of the positive stories that are emerging from students, parents, and staff – stories of who we are as a Catholic community. We will share these stories weekly on our website (gsacrd.ab.ca) and through our social media platforms, starting today, with [this community prayer video](#). I encourage you to share your own stories of faith and learning with us by email (communications@gsacrd.ab.ca) or on social media, using the hashtags #ABLearnAtHome, #GSACRDProud, and #gsacrdgrace.

Earlier this week, we had to face the reality that we must temporarily reduce staffing because of the provincial government's need to fund emergent health services and supplies as a result the COVID-19 pandemic. While we are not alone in having to make difficult choices, we recognize the stresses this may cause some of our staff and their families.

We value all of our teaching and support staff; all are integral to our work and the continued success of our students. To address the shortfall in funding from the province, we are working with school and division administrators to identify staff who will carry forward online learning as we live through COVID-19. However, it is important to understand that this is not forever. We will communicate directly with our staff over the coming weeks, working with them to access supports as needed. As well, your board of trustees will be vigilant in ensuring our resourcing needs are sufficient to meet the needs of our students.

Just as we continue to follow and implement the recommendations of the Chief Medical Officer and all levels of government, we encourage you to do the same. You can find the relevant health and safety information and important updates as follows:

- Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- Alberta Government: <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>
- Alberta Health Services: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
- City of St. Albert: <https://stalbert.ca/city/eps/preparedness/resources/>
- World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Thank you for your continued support in these challenging times. I look forward to sharing stories of togetherness, faith, and community resilience as we continue our journey of faith and learning.

Sincerely,

David Keohane
Superintendent of Schools

