

Sept. 25, 2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: Students, Parents/Legal Guardians, and Staff

It is hard to believe that our students and staff have been back in classes for nearly a month. Although these are certainly unusual times, our students are learning and growing in faith and knowledge through their academic, social, and extracurricular activities. Students, families, and staff are adapting well to our new way of operating and continue to follow the [multiple health measures](#) that our Division has put in place to help keep everyone safe. Thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Our division has experienced four positive cases of COVID-19, at two different schools, since the start of the school year. Two of these cases occurred in one school within a two-week period, which is considered an outbreak status according to the definition set by Alberta Health Services (AHS): “A COVID-19 outbreak within a school setting is defined as ‘two or more confirmed cases (staff and/or students) within a 14-day period (one incubation period) OR two or more confirmed cases (staff/child) who are epidemiologically linked.’” In all situations, our staff worked closely with AHS, and the established protocols set by both the government and our Division have been successful.

We are proud of our students and staff for self-screening, staying home when sick or symptomatic, getting COVID-19 testing, and informing us with results before AHS contacts us. We thank our families and staff for such vigilance and look forward to supporting one another when cases arise. May we always treat one another with respect, care, and compassion when these inevitable incidents occur. As always, I encourage you to download and review our updated [Parent Guidebook for School Re-Entry: 2020-2021](#), as well as to visit the [School Re-Entry section of our website](#) regularly for the most up-to-date information.

Our new **GSACRD Online Learning Pathway K-9** is going well, and online classes for the approximately 500 students enrolled are well underway. Today (**Fri., Sept. 25**) is the deadline for parents/legal guardians to [contact our online school principal](#) if they are interested in having their child(ren) join French Immersion classes online. As I mentioned last week, we have expanded online core programming for our French Immersion students (grades 4-5, 6, 7-8, and 9) to include Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Health. This programming begins on **Mon., Sept. 28**.

On Sept. 30, I encourage everyone to wear orange in support of [Orange Shirt Day](#). Every year on this day, our Division and our schools learn about, and promote, awareness of the history of Canada’s residential school system and its legacy of harm. On this day, as [every day](#), we declare that Every Child Matters. This truth aligns with the Catholic teaching that every human life is lovingly created in the image of God, with a goodness and inherent dignity that must be respected and protected. The Canadian Catholic Bishops urge all Catholic Canadians to continue to walk with our Indigenous brothers and sisters on a path toward [truth and reconciliation](#).

We continue to closely follow the direction of AHS, the province’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, and all levels of government on preparedness planning and will update our *School Re-Entry Plan* as required. We will make every effort to keep you informed through these weekly notices, [our website](#) and official social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)), the *Parent Guidebook*, and other communication channels. If you have specific questions, please [contact your child\(ren\)’s school](#) directly, as your child’s principal can best address your concerns as they apply to your child(ren)’s school.

We encourage you to follow all public health guidelines to help keep you, your loved ones, and your community safe and healthy. Credible information about COVID-19 is available from these reliable sources:

- [Health Canada](https://canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-COVID-19.html): canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-COVID-19.html
- [Alberta Government](https://alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx): alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx
- [Alberta Health Services](https://albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx): albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](https://who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019): who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

If you, your child(ren), or someone else you know needs support during these challenging times, please reach out for help. A list of valuable resources is provided on the last page of our *Parent Guidebook*, as well as on our website. Let us take time to help those near us who need encouragement and support. By doing so, we are Christ to those around us.

As always, thank you for your ongoing partnership and support as we journey through these challenging times. May we all find “steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 1:3). Blessings!

Sincerely,

Dr. Clint Moroziuk
Superintendent of Schools