



Lindsay Liske
Chairperson

Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

April 27, 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians:

As you may know, yesterday, Minister Stephen Lecce announced that schools would remain closed until the end of May to prevent the spread of COVID-19. **This means that teacher-led distance learning, which began on Monday, April 6, will continue until at least Friday, May 29, 2020.** This letter is intended to provide you with additional information related to a variety of matters, including those connected to the Ministry's Learn At Home initiative.

- **Teacher-Led Learning** – During the entire school closure period, classroom teachers will continue to provide instruction, and students should continue to log in regularly to their virtual classroom environments, such as Google Classroom, Brightspace, SeeSaw, and Class Dojo, to complete the work assigned to them. Other employees of the board, including, but not limited to, school administrators, itinerant teachers, early childhood educators (ECEs), educational assistants (EAs), and school and family counselors are also providing support to students and families during this time.

Should your home environment not be equipped to access the Internet, you will continue to receive paper packages of instructional materials via Canada Post approximately once every two weeks. As outlined by the Minister in his March 31 letter to parents, students should be engaged in their studies as follows:

- Kindergarten to Grade 6 – Five hours a week
 - Grades 7 – 8 – Ten hours a week
 - Grades 9 – 12 – Three hours a week per course (i.e., twelve hours a week for a full course load)
- **Assessment and Evaluation** – Throughout the school closure period, teachers will continue to assess students' work through a combination of observations, conversations, and products. Teachers will also provide feedback on that work. In keeping with the ministry's directives, marks will not be assigned to student work at the elementary level; marks will be provided at the secondary level. We recognize that keeping students motivated during the school closure period may prove challenging. We urge you to support your children as best as you can in putting forth their best efforts in their studies. Material learned now will be important to students' success when they return to school, whether this occurs this year or the next.
- **Input on our Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)** – As you may know, our board's MYSP expires in 2020. We are in the process of obtaining input from as many stakeholders as we can. With this in mind, we invite you and/or your students to provide your feedback via the following online surveys **until Friday, May 8, 2020**:
 - Online survey for parents – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MYSP-Parent>
 - Online survey for students in Grades 4 – 12 – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MYSP-Student>
 - Online survey related to our board's branding - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HSCDSB-Branding>

In addition, our board will host a live virtual session via Google Hangouts on **Tuesday, May 5 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.** If you are interested in providing your input in this live session, please email Karen Biocchi at directors_office@hscdsb.on.ca.

Catholic Education Cent

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- **Technological Devices** – The Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board, in collaboration with our transportation consortia, has to date delivered approximately 1200 Chromebooks to the doorsteps of those families who indicated a need. We will continue to make such deliveries to ensure learning from home can occur for all students. If your family is in need of a Chromebook, please contact your school principal as soon as possible. Once again, we appreciate your cooperation in getting technology into your students' hands and ensuring the safety of these devices throughout the extended school closure period.
- **Resources and Technological Support** – Our board continues to provide instructional resources and technical assistance related to Google Classroom, the LMS, and any devices the board has loaned to your family. This technical assistance is available during regular work hours. To access instructional materials, please visit www.hscdsb.on.ca and select the PARENT tab in the navigation menu. Alternatively, you may contact your student's classroom teacher with any queries you might have related to student instruction.
- **Graduation Ceremonies and Celebrations** – Given the uncertainty surrounding the province's plans to reopen, the amount of preparatory work required for graduation ceremonies and celebrations to occur successfully, and the need to provide sufficient notice to the business owners whose venues are used for such events, the board continues to explore how and when graduation ceremonies and celebrations for Kindergarten, Grade 8, and Grade 12 students will occur. As additional information becomes available, we will share it with you.
- **Summer School** – Our board is also in the process of determining what courses / programming will be offered in summer school, and how that programming might be provided (i.e., in person or virtual). When more information becomes available, we will communicate it to you.
- **Catholic Education Week (CEW)** – Catholic Education Week begins on Sunday, May 3 and concludes on Friday, May 8, 2020. One important event occurring that week is the province-wide Catholic Education Week Mass celebrated by His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins on **Wednesday, May 6, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** at <https://www.stmichaelscathedral.com/live>. If your schedule permits you to, we encourage you to take part in this celebration with your student.

In closing, we thank you once again for your ongoing patience, cooperation, and understanding during this unprecedented time. We know that many families are facing situations and pressures that they have never before encountered, and we want to support you as best as we can. We urge you to continue to make your local school aware of any additional supports you might require in order to ensure your student can successfully learn at home. In closing, please continue to do all you can to keep yourselves and your families safe.

God bless,

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