



Lindsay Liske
Chairperson

Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

August 22, 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians:

The 2020-21 school year is fast approaching, and the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board is in the final stages of preparing for the return of our students to the learning environment. This letter is a reminder that, despite repeated efforts to reach you, we have not yet learned what your preferences are for your child's education for the fall. **In the absence of any confirmation, we have registered your child for remote learning for this fall.** We look forward to serving and supporting you at a distance. If you like to change this selection to in-school learning, please contact your local school by no later than the end of the day on **Wednesday, August 26** so that we can include you in that form of learning.

The following information is intended to ease your child's transition to the remote learning environment. As is outlined in the province's Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 164, located at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/164.html>:

- **Students in Kindergarten to Grade 12** will attend school 300 minutes per day, five days per week, and will be engaged in a combination of synchronous (real time) and asynchronous instruction. Kindergarten students will be scheduled for 180 minutes of synchronous learning each day. Students from Grades 1 – 12 will be scheduled for 225 minutes of synchronous learning each day. As outlined in PPM 164, the 180 or 225 minutes of synchronous instruction may be broken up into smaller components or blocks of time; it may also include full-class, small group, and/or individualized instruction. A schedule of synchronous sessions will be provided and exemptions for such sessions may be arranged. More details will follow.
- **Remote learning** requires that students have access to:
 - A reliable technological device (e.g., Chromebook, desktop computer, laptop) that allows them to type and/or navigate various programs or applications easily.
 - A camera and microphone that functions reliably; the camera and microphone may be built into the device or separate items plugged into ports (e.g., USB, analogue) located on the device.
 - A stable Internet connection that is strong enough to allow audio and video to stream smoothly throughout the day. Satellite connections are not recommended.
 - One or more Internet browsers (e.g., Chrome, Safari).
 - Their Google account, which will provide them with access to a suite of tools, including Google Meet and Classroom.
 - The learning management system (LMS), particularly if they are secondary students.
- **Transition points** have been established throughout the school year for those who choose one form of delivery for their children (e.g., remote learning) in August and then wish to move to another form of delivery (e.g., in-school learning) later on. Transitions for elementary students will occur after the Christmas holidays. Transition points for secondary students will occur at the beginning of quadesters (i.e., mid-November, early February, and mid-April).
- **Staggered entry** is currently being arranged for all students, including those attending in person. In order to ease everyone's transition back to school, please anticipate that one or more staff members will be in contact with you and/or your children during the week of September 8 to communicate the schedule of synchronous sessions, ensure basic technical requirements are in place, and trouble shoot technical issues before synchronous instruction begins. Remote learning will officially begin for all students on **Monday, September 14, 2020.**

Catholic Education Centre

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- **Chromebooks** were loaned to many families last year. If you received a Chromebook last spring and still require it for remote learning, you may continue to use it. Conversely, if you received a Chromebook and no longer require it (e.g., you have purchased your own device), please contact your local school to arrange a time for drop-off. Alternatively, if you live in Sault Ste. Marie and wish to return the Chromebook and its power cord before the school year begins, you may do so, either on Tuesday, August 25 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. OR on Thursday, August 26 from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. at one of the following sites, where a technician will be present:
 - Site A: St. Mary's College, 868 Second Line East
 - Site B: St. Basil Catholic Elementary, 250 St. George's Avenue East
 - Site C: Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary, 319 Prentice Avenue
 - Site D: Holy Cross Catholic Elementary, 16 Texas Avenue
- **SEA Equipment** – If your child with special needs has been assigned specialized equipment, such as a laptop or other device specific to him/her, please continue to use this device for remote learning.
- **Staff Assignments** – Senior administration will be working diligently throughout the next two weeks to finalize the assignments of all staff members, including classroom teachers, early childhood educators, and educational assistants. Once these assignments have been confirmed, schools will be able to communicate this information to you so that you know who will be working most closely with your child in the fall.

As always, we thank you for your ongoing cooperation, understanding, and commitment to Catholic education. We acknowledge that this continues to be a time of great anxiety for many people, including parents and students, and want to assure you that we will do our utmost to support you and your child from a distance. We encourage you to visit our website at www.hscdsb.on.ca regularly, where we will continue to post updates and other important information, such as the board's updated plan for reopening and frequently asked questions.

God bless,

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