



June 7, 2021

Dear Parents / Guardians:

As you know, on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, Premier Doug Ford announced that all elementary and secondary students would continue to learn remotely for the rest of this school year. Students with complex special needs who cannot benefit from remote learning will continue to receive in-person instruction until June 29, 2021.

In light of this announcement, as well as other pertinent information, I am providing details pertaining to all schools in the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board.

Mental Health Supports

We recognize that many students and families will be disappointed and upset by the news that they will not be returning to in-person learning this year. Please know that a variety of mental health supports are available to those who require them. These include, but are not limited to:

- **School and Family Counsellors** – The services of our board’s school and family counsellors will remain available to students throughout the month of June. During July and August, one or more of these counsellors will be available to students who require virtual counselling and support. Please contact your principal, vice-principal, or counsellor for more information about this free service.
- **Kids Help Phone** – This free-of-charge provincial service remains available to anyone in need and provides 24/7 counselling and referral services. Children and youth can text CONNECT to 686868 or call 1-800-668-6868.
- **School Mental Health Ontario** – The website at www.smho-smso.ca has a number of free and important resources for students, parents, and families.

Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) Scolaire Exam

Another announcement that might come as a disappointment to students and families is the recent cancellation of the Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) Scolaire Exam. The board recognizes that, with the help of their teachers and support staff, many of our current senior secondary students have worked hard to prepare for this exam.

The Ministry of Education in France oversees the DELF worldwide and they have mandated that three out of four of the DELF components must be completed in person. Unfortunately, since students in Ontario are unable to gather in person under current legislation, we cannot offer the DELF testing. The worldwide DELF examination takes place the week Monday, June 7, and because of the continued closure of Ontario schools, **this exam was cancelled** for students across the province.

Students or families who wish to learn more about other opportunities to obtain DELF certification through the DELF Junior and Tout Public exams may find more information at the following websites:

- <https://www.alliance-francaise.ca/fr/examens/diplomes/delf-junior>
- https://www.af.ca/ottawa/tests_et_examens/delf-dalf/#/
- <https://novocentre.com/programmation/delf-dalf>

Regrettably, neither the board nor the Ministry of Education are able to cover any of the costs associated with these exams or in challenging the DELF.

Summer Learning Programs

We recognize that the past fifteen months have been like no other. The many shifts in instruction that occurred because of provincial emergency orders and local health concerns has resulted in significant gaps in some students' learning.

As a result, throughout July and August, the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board will be offering a number of summer learning programs for students in Grades 1 – 12. Although we anticipate most will be offered virtually, there may be opportunities for in-person learning as well. Please contact your principal or vice-

principal for more details if you are interested in having your child participate in one of these programs.

Graduations

As communicated in my letter dated May 27, 2021, the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board recognizes how important graduation celebrations are to students, families, employees, and communities. **Our board continues to plan meaningful, dignified, and personalized virtual graduation masses and ceremonies for all Grade 8 and Grade 12 students.**

The government's announcement on June 3 related to in-person outdoor graduations has sparked many questions and requires more clarification. Accordingly as reported in the local media late last week, **the board will continue to communicate and collaborate with the Algoma, Porcupine, and Sudbury Health Units to ensure any opportunities we can provide for students to receive their diplomas in person are safe for all and reflect the most up-to-date public health guidance.**

Vaccines for Students Aged 12 – 17

As I shared with you in my letter of Thursday, May 27, 2021, Health Canada has authorized the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for youth aged 12 and up. Ontarians aged 12 to 17 are now able to book an appointment for a free first dose of the vaccine. Families may attend clinics with their children.

Various details, including how to book and prepare for your child's vaccination appointment, may be found at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-youth>. Please speak with your health care provider or your local public health unit if you have questions about the vaccine.

Retrieving Personal Belongings

We recognize that, before students left for Spring Break in mid-April, they might not have taken all of their personal belongings with them. Our board will soon begin the

process of working with the Algoma, Porcupine, and Sudbury Health Units on protocols for students and/or parents to gain access to these personal belongings before the end of June. Once these protocols have been approved, **your child(ren)'s school will contact you** with specific dates, times, and locations. Please note that the protocols created will permit families whose students are moving out of our system to safely drop off board-owned Chromebooks and pick up personal items, including report cards, graduation diplomas, and mementoes.

Returning Chromebooks and Other Board-Owned Devices

This year, the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board deployed thousands of Chromebooks and other devices required for remote learning to families who indicated a need for them. Since we anticipate that schools will reopen to in-person learning in the fall, **we ask that all students or families who have been loaned a board-owned Chromebook return it to their schools before the end of the school year.** Those students who have a Chromebook in their possession and who have registered for an online summer learning program with our board may retain their digital devices, with their principal's permission.

Should you have any remaining questions or concerns, please contact your local school. We wish each of your children and your families a safe and successful remainder of the 2020-21 school year and urge everyone to continue praying for everyone's continued health and protection.

Nurturing hope,



Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

