

March 18, 2020

Attention GSSD Staff:

Directives in times of crisis are rooted in our value statements. *Belonging, Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Nurturing and Perseverance* remain central to our core. We are committed to providing safe work environments for our students, staff, parents/guardians and members of our wider learning community who visit or utilize our facilities. The GSSD has declared a crisis as outlined in AP 191: Education Continuity Plan. We recognize the importance of implementing prevention and mitigation efforts and when necessary we must act upon well established procedures when disruptive events threaten safety of persons, property or learning.

As we have shared, Saskatchewan school closures are in place indefinitely. We are unsure as to the length of time schools will be closed. As we receive further direction from the Government of Saskatchewan, we will be certain to relay information to GSSD families and staff.

I want to bring you up to date on what we know at this point. I will provide you with additional details as they are confirmed.

To start with, I need everyone to understand that **anyone who is currently on contract in all employee groups will continue to be paid.**

**Starting Friday, March 20, 2020**, Divisions have been directed to pause educational operations for a one-week period. This will allow the Response Planning Team and individual school divisions to put in longer term plans to support students, staff and families to ensure that no student's education is negatively impacted by the closing of schools. To achieve this, Divisions are directing all school staff, with the exception of essential positions, to **stay home until end of the day Friday, March 27, 2020.**

- This includes teachers, support and professional staff.
- At this time, the following positions are determined essential for the operation of GSSD in this crisis:
  - Director of Education
  - Facilities Coordinator
  - Caretaker Coordinator
  - Network Coordinator
  - Caretakers & Building Operators (**March 19**: directive was given to these employees that they would return to work as an essential service on March 24)
  - Facility Technicians
- It is important to ensure that staff understand that this time served at home will be paid in full and there will be no loss of benefits.
- Layoff notices will not occur.

During our mobilization meeting for the GSSD Education Continuity Plan, the Crisis Management Team drafted the following information. **Note:** due to the fluidity of the situation details may change as

information unfolds and further direction is provided by the Provincial Response Planning Team (members of SSBA, STF, LEADS, Ministry, SASBO).

## **PROGRAMS AND LEARNING**

### **Upcoming Due Dates**

- Please adhere to your previously determined Report Card distribution date (or sooner) when possible. We would ask that all report cards are distributed no later than April 3, the last day of the Term 2 report card window. Original copies may be mailed to families or PDF copies sent electronically. There are plans to send a third report card to parents at a later date, indicating the student's placement for the fall. Prekindergarten Portfolios and Kindergarten Reportfolios can be kept at school and distributed to students when they return. More information regarding this will come in the weeks to follow.

**March 19 Update:** High schools that have a different reporting period would follow the dates as outlined on the calendar. Report cards will not be placed in the cum folders at this time. Future reporting requirements will be determined at a later date.

- Teachers are asked to schedule an opportunity to connect with each family via telephone or Zoom in place of a face-to-face Student-Led Conference. Every effort should be made to complete Student Led Conferences by April 7, 2020. High School Administrators will work with their staff to determine how this can be implemented in a reasonable manner at the local level.

**March 19 Update:** all schools are to follow the SLC windows as indicated on the calendar. If you relayed information regarding student achievement in academics and behavior prior to them leaving your school this week, that would be considered conferencing.

- A reminder to Administrative Assistants that the Kindergarten registration deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>. Please ensure all Kindergarten registrations you have on hand are entered into Maplewood by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Please let your community know where they can find the PreK-Grade 12 Registration form on the GSSD website and that it is a fillable form. Completed registration forms can be emailed to [info@gssd.ca](mailto:info@gssd.ca).
  - Registrations are being directed to the info account to allow for consistent messaging to the public. Registration forms will be forwarded to the schools in a timely manner.
- [Prekindergarten Applications](#) are due April 30<sup>th</sup>. Completed applications can be emailed to [info@gssd.ca](mailto:info@gssd.ca). This is also a fillable form.
- A recommended online resource webpage to support families is in development and will be posted to the GSSD website as well as pushed out to school sites as soon as possible. If you have good quality links to add to this page, please email them to [Michelle Morley](#) or [Charlotte Raine](#).
- **March 19 Update:** GSSD has started collecting supplemental resources that can be accessed by families and staff on the GSSD website: [GSSD Online Learning Resources](#). Additional direction will be provided after March 27, 2020.

### **Planning for Supplementary Curriculum**

- Divisions are still awaiting direction from the Provincial Response Planning team regarding questions related to supplemental curriculum, credit attainment, graduation eligibility, etc.
- Divisions have been tasked with meeting the spirit and intent of the Premier's notification on March 16<sup>th</sup> stating that:

*Every student will receive a final grade based on their current grade, and students will progress to their next grade level next year. Every student who is eligible to graduate from Grade 12 this year will graduate. The Ministry of Education and School Divisions will work with Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Institutions to adapt entry requirements for programs commencing in the next academic year.*

- Please ensure you have an updated means of communicating information to families (email, text, Remind, etc.). Over the next several weeks, we will be turning our attention from education continuity to working with teachers to support families with supplemental curriculum at home.
- **March 19 Update:** Teachers not comfortable using their personal phone to contact families, are encouraged to consult with their Administrator.
- Teachers who are currently using Seesaw, Google Classroom/Moodle and Zoom are encouraged to continue communicating through these platforms with their students and parents.
- Teachers who are NOT currently using Seesaw or Google Classroom are asked to create an account in one of these platforms. Zoom accounts have been created for every teacher within the school division. Teachers will receive support from the Division within the coming days.
- All high school students in grades 10-12 will have access to the current Distributed Learning courses (Science and Math) housed within Moodle for independent study.
- Students in Grades 1-12 will have access to teacher support through Zoom and Google Classroom.
- Grades 4-9 Math resources will be available within Moodle.
- Reminder that the supplemental resources are not currently ready for implementation. Staff will be guided in utilization of the materials, prior to families being notified.
- **March 19 Update:** Alternate format materials will be investigated for students who have limited or no access to wifi,

### **Student Services Supports**

#### Counselling Support

- School counsellors will be working to identify students considered to be requiring consistent check-ins.
- Students and families will be contacted directly by the counsellor on a regular basis via telephone.
- Counsellor contact information will be provided on the GSSD website for students requiring emergent or on-going support.
- **March 19 Update:** School Counsellor contact information is available on the GSSD website: [School Counsellor Information](#).
- **March 19 Update:** There are Mental Health resources available on the GSSD website to support staff and family: [Mental Health Resources](#).

#### Occupational Therapy

- The Occupational Therapist will be contacting families directly to determine equipment accessibility needs.
- Lending agreements will be completed for equipment required for continued therapeutic services.

#### Speech and Language Therapy

- Investigations will occur to determine the ability to provide online therapy services.
- SLPs will be working with Student Services Coordinators and families to determine the need.

## General Student Services

- All future meetings will be scheduled with their location changed to online platforms (CSI meetings, PLC meetings, PSP touchpoint meetings, IIP development and review meetings).
- Lending agreements will be completed for all students requiring assistive technology devices.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The Good Spirit School Division is imposing a number of policies and procedure changes:

### General Items

- Employees are asked to follow the directives of the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) located on their website.
- **March 19 Update:** Effective immediately, international travel is discouraged. Only essential travel across the Canada/US border is allowed.
- Any employees who have returned from international travel between Friday, March 13 and Thursday, March 18, 2020, are required to self-isolate for 14 days after returning to Canada. Their family members are advised to self-monitor as a pre-caution.
- Any employees who have direct contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 should self-isolate and access sick days. Their family members are also advised to self-isolate and access sick days.
- All employees who are experiencing symptoms of an acute respiratory or flu-like illness will be required to stay at home and access sick days. To access the SHA self-assessment tool, click on the following link: [Self-Assessment Tool](#).
- All employees who must stay home for the care of their children can do so provided they are able to work from home while caring for their child. If they are not able, they should contact their supervisor regarding a work-place accommodation. It is important to note that this is a significant change from current procedures and will not set precedent now or in the future.
- After March 19, 2020, there is to be no public entry to a GSSD facility.
- Entrance to any GSSD facility, by staff, must be approved by the Superintendent of Education after midnight, Thursday, March 19, 2020. Click [HERE](#) to access Superintendent information.
- Sasktel will forward all school main phone numbers to GSEC starting at 4 pm on Thursday, March 19, 2020 until staff return to the school.

### Attendance

- From March 20 to March 27, 2020 essential employees are defined as: a) those who ensure the safety of our facilities and; b) those responsible for communication infrastructure within GSSD.
- All employees, with the exception of designated essential employees, are directed to work from home until March 30, 2020. It is expected that everyone who has been assigned a school division laptop will be able to complete a modified version of their job description.
- “Quarantine” will be added as a leave option. All staff with the exception of essential positions will be entered by HR starting March 20, 2020. This will not affect job banks. It is merely a tool to record work from home days.
- All collective agreements (LINC, CUPE 4784, CUPE 5123, DPEA, OOS) will be honoured. Employees should continue with regular leave procedures and continue to access the leaves available. For example: if you need to attend a funeral while assigned at home, you are required to submit a LOA. This includes sick days. If you become ill, you are required to make your supervisor aware and your sick days will be accessed.

- To ensure we are not burdening the healthcare system, supervisors should not ask for medical documentation unless they believe it's necessary in a particular situation. If this is the case, contact Human Resources.
- Employees on leave or are scheduled to go on leave will continue with regular procedures and notice periods.
- Further correspondence regarding work-place location and job duties will occur prior to March 27, 2020.

### **Employee Contractual Obligations**

- All contractual obligations will be honoured.
- Emergency EA support & additional hours will be cancelled effective March 20, 2020.
- Substitutes who worked prior to March 20, 2020 will be paid. All substitutes scheduled from March 20, 2020 and beyond will be cancelled by **school-based Administrators**.
- Leave forms previously approved will be processed in payroll according to regular procedures.
- New or amended contracts of employment will not be offered until regular operation of schools occur or until otherwise decided.
- Current job posting will be paused.
- Employee evaluation periods will be paused and extended when regular operation resumes.
- **March 19 Update:** GSSD will continue to adhere to collective bargaining agreements. Regular leave process needs to be adhered to as outlined in the employee's CBA.

### **Communication Plans**

- During the timeframe of March 20 to 27, 2020, employees are assigned to be working from home. This ensures that employees do not need to access medical leave.
- All employees are directed to check their GSSD email regularly. A response time within 1 hour is the expectation. If employees do not have immediate access to an email, ensure emergency contact information is communicated to your supervisor prior to the end of the day March 19, 2020.  
**March 19 Update:** The intent of the 1 hour response time is to ensure that accurate information is being shared in a timely manner not to monitor work schedules. Only emergent information will be shared.
- Schools will assign a GSSD Chromebook (N22 or newer) and power cord to Administrative Assistants prior to the end of the day March 19, 2020. Administrative Assistants will be able to access available web-based resources and emails from this device. Prior to the end of Thursday, March 19, 2020, Administrative Assistants are to contact Tech Services to verify that their account works.

### **Staff Wellness**

Below is a list of employee support numbers. We would encourage all employees to take care of their physical and mental health in these difficult times.

- CUPE 4784 and OOS – Employee Family Assistance Plan: 1-800-644-0326
- STF Members – Members Family Assistance Plan offered by ComPsych: 1-833-485-4245 or 1-800-667-7762
- Mental Health: 1-306-786-0558
- Canada Crisis Line: 1-800-668-6868
- SaskHealth Hotline: 811

## **PAYROLL**

- All communication with the Payroll Team needs to take place via email.
- March 17, 2020 is month end cut-off.
- Amended timesheets are due by March 31, 2020 (with the exception of COVID-19 diagnosis).
- Forms such as extra-curricular, noon hour supervision, etc. are to be submitted by the end of April.
- Upon request, a Record of Employment will be issued to substitutes in order for them to receive employment insurance.
- Regular payroll schedules will be followed to the end of June.
- **March 19 Update:** Regular payroll schedule refer to payroll cut-offs and pay deposit dates. All arrangements remain the same; if you are a 12 month employee or 12 month pay teacher, you will continue to be paid in the summer.
- A reconciliation of EDOs will take place in the months following.

## **ACCOUNTING**

- All communication with the Accounting Team needs to take place via email.
- Regular accounting operations will continue.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

- Staff are required to back up their laptops prior to leaving on Thursday, March 19, 2020.
- Staff requiring technical support should use Sysaid (<https://helpdesk.gssd.ca> or email [helpdesk@gssd.ca](mailto:helpdesk@gssd.ca)) in order for the Tech Department to track requests.

## **FACILITIES**

- Caretakers and the facilities team have been deemed as an essential service.
- Caretakers are to ensure that lockers are empty (if possible), disinfected and no food items are left inside.
- In consultation with Caretaker Coordinator and Senior Leadership, Caretakers may request to revert to summer hours (after April 1, 2020).
- Facilities Department will provide written notification to community groups regarding cancellation of events and user group bookings.
- Administrators are requested to arrange for the collection of keys from user groups, if possible.
- **March 19 Update:** Flag protocols will continue to apply. Flags will remain outside of GSSD buildings during school closure.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- The Yorkton and Melville Bus Garages will remain closed until March 30, 2020.
- Any questions related to transportation should be directed to Donna Kriger at 306-786-5504.
- Further information will be sent out to bus drivers regarding the drop off busses at their respective bus garages.
- Bus drivers should be checking emails and text messages regarding further updates.

## GENERAL

- All doors to GSSD facilities will be locked until further notice.
- Library books and textbooks will not be collected at this time.
- Administrators are responsible for posting closure signage (provided by Facilities Department) on their front door. The sign will indicate that school programming has been suspended and schools have been closed based on Bill 28-207 from the Chief Medical Officer and also include an emergency contact number (Administrator contact). This will allow for deliveries to be secured during the closure.
- Administrators will ensure that mail is picked up regularly, if possible.
- **March 19 Update:** Canada Post at the Ball Road location will be holding all mail for GSSD school in Yorkton. Principals or designated person will be able to pick up the mail from Ball Road in the future. There is currently no charge for this service. Rural schools will have mail held at their local post office or in the regular lockbox location.

We thank you for your continued work and support in ensuring the needs of students, staff and families are met.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Quintin Robertson  
Director of Education/CEO  
Good Spirit School Division No. 204