

March 17, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Yesterday, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that all Prekindergarten to Grade 12 classes will be suspended indefinitely, effective Friday, March 20. The school closures will reduce further spread of the COVID-19 illness.

A Response Planning Team, including members from Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA), Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), League of Educational Administrators, Director and Superintendents (LEADS), Ministry of Education, Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO), and First Nation University, is working on providing answers to key questions. Many of the questions revolve around assessment, credits, distance education, graduation, supplementary curriculum, and support services. When Divisions receive the answers to these questions, information will be shared with you as well as staff.

Parents play a significant role in helping children feel safe during time of rapid change and uncertainty. It is important to focus on what can be done to support social and emotional wellness. Here are some suggestions for parents to support children:

- Take care of yourself – continue to engage in healthy, positive activities that you enjoy. Healthy adults create healthy children.
- Model calm and be reassuring to your children – Let your children talk about their feelings, fears, and questions. Responding calmly will positively influence your child's emotional responses.
- Maintain normal routines to the extent possible – Maintaining routines provides a sense of comfort and reassurance. Seek out and maintain fun activities as a family. A few examples include crafting, baking, board games, reading, movie nights and enjoying outdoor activities together.
- Monitor and limit media/social media exposure – Excessive exposure is linked to an increase in anxiety and worry. Limit your own exposure to reliable sources.
- Share factual and age-appropriate information with your children – Consider both the age and individual characteristics of your child when determining how much to share. Emphasize actions that you can do to limit risk, such as following recommended hygiene practices.

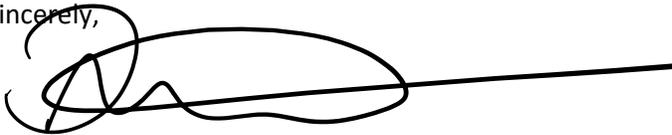
Many resources exist to support you and your child. Below are some websites you may find helpful:

- Tips for managing anxiety about COVID-19:
 - [Canadian Mental Health Association](https://cmha.bc.ca/news/managing-anxiety-covid-19/): <https://cmha.bc.ca/news/managing-anxiety-covid-19/>
 - [Anxiety Canada](https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/what-to-do-if-you-are-anxious-or-worried-about-coronavirus-covid-19/): <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/what-to-do-if-you-are-anxious-or-worried-about-coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Talking to your children about COVID-19:
 - [Center for Disease Control](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>
 - [Kids Health](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html): <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

We know you have questions. Please allow our teachers and administrators time to work through the details of this closure. Pertinent information will be shared with you as planning is completed.

This has been a tumultuous time for families, for our school, and for our community. Thank you for your understanding while we work through this unprecedented situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Quintin Robertson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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