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June 18, 2020

Dear Chinook families,

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, we welcomed all of our teachers and support staff back to schools to start transitioning their work environments and to begin discussions and planning for the fall reopening. We have implemented heightened sanitary and hygienic protocols to accommodate people working in our buildings and to ensure that everyone will feel comfortable and safe.

Together, with your help, we have made it through the Supplemental Learning at Home. We had very high numbers of students engaged in supplemental learning in March and April, and those numbers are getting smaller now as the weather gets warmer outside.

As a school division, we have been planning for the fall. At this time, we know that we will be back to regular curricular instruction and assessment for all students, rather than optional supplemental learning. In the coming weeks, we will be working with teachers to ensure that no matter what the restrictions will be, we are able to take care of the learning needs of your children when school begins on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. I want to reassure you that there is a plan and in the fall, circumstances will determine the levels of intervention and sanitization measures that we will be required to implement.

You have been amazing partners over the past several weeks and we admire the support you have provided for your children and for Chinook staff. We are committed to use the learning we have achieved to provide even better service for your children in the fall. Our division and school teams are working together on plans to address learning gaps from the recent Supplemental Learning at Home period. There will be bumps in the road, but your children are going to be okay. We can't wait to see them when it is safe for them to return to school.

Our school division and the provincial reopening plan is based on the most recent research available. We have reviewed recommendations from the province's Chief Medical Health Officer, Health Canada, the Center for Disease Control, World Health Organization, and other national and international jurisdictions. COVID-19 and the decisions of the province and the Chief Medical Health Officer are extremely fluid. In the past 12 weeks, decisions and information have been changing rapidly. Our goal is to keep our students, staff and families safe and healthy.

Students will be returning to schools that will have a new standard of hygienic, sanitizing and preventative measures. We will continue to take direction from the province, and we have been developing a contingency plan that we may be required to put into place. Chinook schools will be

focused on a smooth and safe transition for students and staff to return to school. Learning is important, and health and safety is the most important along with a common sense approach.

Two key principles that will remain at the forefront are:

1. The health and safety of students and staff is paramount and will not be compromised; and
2. Students and staff who are sick or have symptoms will need to remain at home.

Families are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and use the [self-assessment tool](#) located on the Government of Saskatchewan's website. As the reopening of schools will be dependent on healthy communities and low infection rates, we will be asking our school office managers to record specifically why children are absent from school.

Please review [the latest release](#) from Saskatchewan Health and the Ministry of Education on the reopening of Saskatchewan schools and today's update from the Education Response Planning Team included with this letter (on page 3).

Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KM', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Kyle McIntyre  
Director of Education

## Saskatchewan Education Response Planning Team Update

- The Government of Saskatchewan announced on June 9, 2020 that Prekindergarten to Grade 12 students and school staff will be returning to schools this September 2020.
- We know that everyone in the sector values the education of every child in the province. Their safety and well-being, as well as that of our educators and school staff, is paramount as we continue to navigate the impacts on education from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Under the direction of Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Health Officer, and with the help of the Education Response Planning Team (RPT), the Ministry of Education announced on June 18, 2020 the Primary and Secondary Educational Institution Guidelines for the return to classroom learning.
- These guidelines are posted on Saskatchewan.ca and will ensure we are protecting our students, school staff and families while also providing quality education to the future leaders of Saskatchewan.
- We ask that parents and caregivers please monitor their children for any signs or symptoms of illness. COVID-19 infections in children tend to be mild and similar to other viral respiratory infections. Symptoms such as dry cough, fever and gastrointestinal concerns (e.g., nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) may be present. Skin changes and lesions are less common symptoms. If any of these symptoms are apparent, we ask that both students and school staff remain home.
- Schools will increase sanitation measures and continue to promote proper hygiene practices. This includes the availability of hand sanitizer wherever possible, establishing clear protocols for bringing supplementary school materials such as backpacks and school supplies in and out of schools, and planning for minimized contact among students as much as possible.
- As this situation evolves, the guidelines may be updated and adjusted depending on the impact of COVID-19 over the course of the summer.
- While a return to in-class learning is the goal for this upcoming fall, the RPT is continually working to ensure contingency plans are in place in the event of elevated risk of transmission, both regionally and provincially. School divisions are being encouraged to share their plans for re-opening with families and school staff to maintain constant support and communication.
- As we move through this global pandemic, our top priority continues to be the health and well-being of our children and communities. I can assure you the Ministry of Education, the Response Planning Team and the Chief Medical Health Officer are working diligently to ensure that the return to the classroom this fall will occur in a safe yet comfortable environment for both students and school staff.
- Thank you for your patience during this extraordinary time.