

## COVID-19 UPDATE #1

March 13, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We understand there are concerns and questions surrounding the coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact on our community.

The health, safety and well-being of our students and staff is at the core of all decisions. River East Transcona School Division has been closely monitoring the situation, since it first began developing. We are working with Manitoba Education and the province's team of health professionals to advise our decision making and actions while maintaining quality educational programming.

Late this afternoon we received a directive from the Minister of Education declaring the following:

**March 16–20, 2020:** Staff and students are in schools to prepare and plan for the learning that will take place during the two weeks that students are not in school.

**March 23–27 & April 6–10, 2020:** Students do not attend school. Staff are in schools supporting the learning of students who will not be in school.

We are working in collaboration with Manitoba health officials and as per their recommendations have implemented a number of actions including **cancellation of the following events until further notice:**

- Public special events in RETSD schools or buildings
- All facility rentals by outside groups
- Parent/Teacher conferences
- Arts performances and practices
- Sporting games and practices
- All clubs
- Out-of-province educational excursions
- All interprovincial, national and international professional development
- Kinder Links programs
- Lighthouse programs

We are also implementing the additional measures recommended by Manitoba health:

- Limiting visitor access to school
- Limiting face-to-face meetings or the number of persons in attendance
- Avoiding greetings that involve touching such as handshakes
- Encouraging frequent and proper handwashing
- Encourage staff and students to cough or sneeze into their elbow or tissue
- Increasing the cleaning of surfaces and doorknobs in our schools and buses
- Postponing large assemblies of students or staff such as pep rallies

- Reminding all staff, parents, and students to **stay home if they are ill**

**Until further notice, we are limiting the length of the school day. Students may be in the building no more than 30 minutes before school starts and 30 minutes after school ends. Only credit courses outside of this schedule can continue.**

As always, if your child is feeling unwell, please keep them at home. Parents and guardians with questions and/or concerns regarding their children's attendance are asked to contact the school directly.

If any member of your family is showing symptoms, Manitoba Health is recommending that all members of the household self-quarantine. Specific health concerns should be directed to your family physician or by calling the WRHA Health Links line at 204.788.8200.

River East Transcona School division will be communicating as quickly and effectively as we can and it is important for all of us to be attentive, flexible, and to take both personal as well as collective responsibility to protect ourselves and each other. As this virus spreads, we will be guided by local, national and international health authorities, governments and agencies that are best positioned to inform our decisions and to help us navigate effective actions.

