

March 20, 2020

To families of River East Transcona School Division:

The RETSD board of trustees knows this is a challenging time and everyone is feeling the effects of the COVID-19 virus in some way. For many of us, the uncertainty and the constant news reports about the virus are very stressful. It's why your trustees want you to know they are here for you. After all, the division is a community made up of students, families and division staff and as a community – together and individually – we can help each other through this difficult time.

Please know that trustees will be continuing the important work of the board over the next weeks, focusing on the wellbeing and education of our students. Guided by social distancing, the board and senior administration will continue to work together to keep students and staff safe and healthy. The board's decisions have always been about what's best for students and staff and this pandemic just reinforces that commitment.

As students move from their classrooms to home, it makes us realize schools are just one place where education happens. Learning, adapting and thriving can happen anywhere. We all want to get students and staff back into the classroom, but in the meantime, we are here to try to help your children and family both cope with and learn from this strange new world.

There is so much being published so quickly about COVID-19 and how our country and province are responding. Your trustees and the senior administration will strive to ensure the information coming to you and our community is as factual as possible. We also are making decisions based on facts and not on impulsive reactions. We will keep you updated when there is new information to share. Visit the division website (www.retsd.mb.ca) for news.

We know this is a period of uncertainty and stress for many of us. Remember you are part of this bigger community with people ready to listen and help wherever they can.

We encourage everyone to follow some simple steps to help you and your family stay healthy:

- Practice social distancing
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if handwashing with soap is not possible
- If you feel ill, stay home
- Check the COVID-19 self screening tool at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

While we continue to live through the daily changes caused by the virus, please know the board of trustees is thinking of you and your family. Again, for updated information please go to the division's website (www.retsd.mb.ca).

Sincerely,



Colleen Carswell
Chairman, Board of Trustees