

December 4, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2020, education minister Kelvin Goertzen announced that immediately following the winter break, students in Grades 7–12 will transition to a mandated two-week remote learning period starting Jan. 4, 2021 through Jan. 15, 2021.

Students in K–6 have the option to participate in January remote learning. However, regular, in-school instruction will continue for all other students in kindergarten to Grade 6 and for students in Grades 7–12 with lifelong disabilities who require in-school support. Busing will continue as per our current practice for students attending school.

If you have a child in Grades K-6, please contact your child's school directly to learn more about this January remote learning option and if it is a right fit for your family. If you select this option, your child must remain in remote learning for the entire two weeks. This two-week remote learning option is independent of the temporary remote learning option available to families while we are in orange of the provincial response system.

As our K–6 families consider January remote learning, we encourage you to consider the emotional well-being of your child as well as their academics. As parents, you know what is best for your child and we are here to support you and your choice to keep your child in school, or at home for January remote learning. If you choose to move to January remote learning, please contact your child's school by Dec. 14, 2020 so we can prepare accordingly.

For our families with students in Grades 7–12, we know this two-week period of remote learning will have various impacts depending on your unique circumstances. Our teachers and support staff will be in touch regularly throughout this time to ensure learning continues. We encourage all families to reach out to school staff at any time for support to help your child; their success and well-being are at the heart of what we do in education. We care for your children and want the best for them. These times have been difficult for most adults and we know the stress and uncertainty is also felt by our students. We believe students learn best in the classroom among their peers and supported by their teachers.

Right now, we all can use support and kindness as we close off 2020. Our school staff have been incredible and I, as the superintendent/CEO of RETSD, am asking all parents to be patient while we work through a new chapter of this pandemic in education. We are committed to providing your child with the education they deserve regardless of if they are at home or in their classroom.

As we edge closer to a winter break unlike any other, we are strongly encouraging all families to follow current Public Health guidelines in your holiday planning. It has been said many times this year, but it is true—we are all in this together, and together, we can help keep our students, staff, schools and communities safe.

Sincerely,



Kelly Barkman
Superintendent/CEO