



Terry Taylor

*Superintendent of Schools and Secretary-Treasurer*

March 12, 2020

## **IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING COVID-19 VIRUS AND SPRING BREAK TRAVEL**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As all of you would have heard on the news, the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, continues to surface in countries around the globe as well as here in BC. Public Health officials and the Ministry of Education are monitoring the situation regularly and updating school districts.

**On Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm, Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and Minister of Health, Adrian Dix released a statement which indicated that**

- 1) **All British Columbians are being asked to avoid any non-essential international travel.**
- 2) **If staff, students or families travel outside of Canada during spring break or until further notice, those people will be required to self-isolate for 14 days before returning to school or work.**

Although the situation may change, Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC's Chief Medical Health Officer continues to state that mass closure of schools is not being considered in BC at this point. In a March 6, 2020, Deputy Minister's Bulletin, the DM reports that: **"At present the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Provincial Health Officer do not recommend school closure strategies for the prevention of COVID-19. Any decisions related to school closures would be made by public health officials in cooperation with school districts and the Ministry of Education."** That message same was repeated again in the March 12<sup>th</sup> media interview with Dr. Henry.

Chief Medical Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister of Health, Adrian Dix are giving daily public updates at 3:30 pm and **parents are encouraged to stay informed. The risk is stated to be low still in BC and in Canada, however containing the virus by restricting international travel and ensuring that those who do choose to travel self-isolate for two weeks before returning to work or school is a measure to keep transmission rates low.**

The COVID-19 strategy schools and the public are being encouraged to use is containment. Students, staff, parents and members of the public are advised to

- Regularly wash hands; use cough control measures (cough into the elbow), regularly and safely dispose of used tissues
- Avoid physical contact with others and use strategies for physical distancing – eg avoid handshakes, hugs, and use elbow or eye contact greetings instead
- Avoid large crowds of more than 250 people, especially if risk increases with active cases in a community



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## **School District 10 COVID-19 Plans**

In SD 10, our custodians have been advised to carry on with normal disinfection and cleaning routines as well as to enhance cleaning of hard surfaces

1. Our Manager of Operations has reviewed cleaning procedures with each custodian
2. Spring break deep cleaning will continue as regularly planned each year in all classrooms and throughout school buildings
3. Additional custodial cleaning time may be considered after the spring break period when staff and students return to schools
4. Antiviral hand sanitizers in schools are being reactivated, with new hand sanitizer solution ordered; the new hand sanitizer equipment will be installed after spring break
5. Handwashing and regular flu protocols are to be followed (cough into the elbow, wash hands regularly, use social distance strategies such as not hugging and maintaining larger social distance)
6. Communication with our staff and parents will continue as new information is available – please check “[RECENT NEWS](#)” on the sd10.bc.ca website
7. Students are to be taught or reminded to follow recommended handwashing techniques. Here is one link for parents:<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

We know that news of the COVID-19 virus situation is stressful for families and for children. I trust that all of us in SD 10, staff, students and parents, along with other Canadians will do our utmost to curb the spread of this new virus and follow the Provincial Medical Health Officer’s advice.

It’s important to be informed, to be proactive, and also to stay calm.

Be well, everyone, and have a safe and happy spring break!

Kindest regards,

Terry Taylor, Superintendent of Schools