

March 17, 2020

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ON SCHOOLS – MARCH 17, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you, again, for your ongoing support as we continue to work through the consistently evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The implications continue to unfold in our district with today's press briefing by Premier Horgan, Education Minister Fleming and Finance Minister James.

Today at noon, the provincial government announced that all in-class instruction in BC schools will be suspended indefinitely. Very few details were provided. The government did indicate that they will be working with school districts to plan for the maintenance of some level of educational service, a promise that every student will receive a final mark for this year, some graduation assessments were being postponed and students would be able to progress to the next grade level, or graduate, as usual at the end of this school year. I expect a more formal announcement from the provincial government to come out either later today or tomorrow. I recognize that this announcement creates a tremendous number of questions. What does this suspension of in-class instruction mean for our students, our school and district staff, families, and our community as a whole? It is obvious that one question leads to another.

We have already been working behind the scenes to anticipate a number of possible scenarios. As we now liaise with government over the implications of their announcement on school districts, we will have a better idea of what this means for Saanich Schools families over the next few days and weeks. We are fortunate to have strong connections with other BC school districts, as well as with the Ministry of Education – sharing ideas, information and resources to make this transition to a temporary 'new normal' as smooth as possible. Undoubtedly, there will be bumps along the way. However, as a collective district we have the skills, fortitude and professionalism to tackle the task ahead of us.

I want to reassure you that we have been, and are continuing to work as diligently as possible to best support our students, staff and families during this changing scenario. United and collaboratively we will find our pathway forward. My commitment to you is to share information in a timely fashion as well as to post it on our district website.

This is, indeed, an unprecedented time. We are living in a world when today doesn't look like yesterday – where one day does not lead into the same pattern the next day. Having said that, we are also living in a community that is taking extraordinary measures to keep us informed and safe.

Thank you, again, for your understanding during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Eberwein", with a horizontal line underneath.

Dave Eberwein
Superintendent of Schools