



Evergreen School Division

Box 1200 • Gimli, Manitoba • R0C 1B0 • Ph. (204) 642-6260 • Fax (204) 642-7273 • www.esd.ca

March 18, 2020

To: Evergreen Community
From: Roza Gray, Superintendent

Re: COVID-19: PUBLIC UPDATE #5

We continue to respond to the challenges presented by the COVID 19 situation. This memo is new or updated information. Please see earlier updates for additional information.

Why are schools still open?

The provincial government has mandated that schools must remain open this week, and that classes are suspended for March 23-27 and April 3-6, 2020. Although this week was initially intended to occur as a 'business as usual' situation, this situation has been changing. Yesterday the Premier stated, "I encourage parents, as many of them have been doing, to keep their children home," based on current recommendations from public health.

Is the school taking attendance?

No, attendance this week is considered optional. Many parents/guardians have opted to keep their children at home. Other families are grateful for this week of school to arrange childcare, and for the support it offers in these uncertain times. Classes at the high schools have continued in some cases, and a transition has been made to work via Edsby.

How will I receive the home learning materials?

Schools will be contacting families regarding pick up times. In addition to these paper materials, on line suggestion are included below.

What if my child needs help with the assigned work?

Teachers will be available to respond to questions, clarify assignments or assist with comprehension as needed via email and or Edsby. Teachers may also use on line tools to connect remotely with individual students to 'check in' as appropriate. Effective Monday, March 23rd, please do not leave phone messages at the school as schools may not have personnel on site who can respond to parent phone calls.

Will students be assessed on schoolwork completed during the 9 days of suspended classes?

Teachers will indicate which, if any, of the work assigned will be marked. The material assigned is largely to provide meaningful exercises for students to rehearse skills, reinforce content and extend learning.

What if my child receives additional learning support or accommodations?

Please contact your school resource teacher to discuss what additional support might be available during the suspension of classes.



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Does my child have to complete all the learning opportunities that are provided?

There is a greater expectation of work completion at the high school level. For elementary students, it may be helpful to primarily focus on the learning opportunities that your child is most interested in. We understand that this will be easier for some families than others. Do your best. We recognize that children and families may be experiencing additional anxiety and pressure at this time and completion of all the work may not be possible.

Will this count towards report cards?

In some cases (especially at the high school level), the work may inform report card grades. Attempting as many of the learning opportunities as possible will help your child when they return to school. Work completed during the suspension of classes can and will be shared with teachers so your child can get feedback. For now, this is a short two-week period at home and because families have different needs and accessibility it will be challenge to consistently assess work and place a value on it. If the class suspension continues, we will reassess this direction.

What if my child receives additional learning support or accommodations?

Please contact your school resource teacher to discuss what additional support is available during the suspension of classes.

What if my child receives guidance or counselling support at school?

Please contact your school guidance counsellor to discuss what guidance support might be available during the suspension of classes.

Can my child borrow books from the school library?

Yes! Each school has invited students to borrow additional material from the school library.

What if I don't have internet, or my child does not have a computer?

High school students who otherwise will not have access to a computer may borrow one from the school. Teachers will make every effort to ensure that students who do not have access to internet will still be able to continue their learning with alternative means. Please contact your child's teacher by Friday March 20th, if you do not have access to the internet.

What might parents do to supplement the home-based learning?

We recognize that families and parents will be busy over the next few weeks. However, in the event that students would like some additional learning opportunities, it is recommended that parents/guardians set up a schedule for their children at home so they can spend 15-30 minutes per day on each subject area. At the high school level, depending on the subject area, more time may be required daily.

Additional Suggested Activities for K-8 Students:

- Reading, or being read to, is an excellent way for children to extend language skills, increase vocabulary acquisition, and gain background knowledge.
- Journaling is a fun way for students to share their knowledge, ideas, and opinions. Journaling can be in the form of drawings, sentences, or paragraphs.



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- Practice math facts with your students. Single-digit addition facts within 20 and single-digit multiplication facts within 100 are most helpful when students work in any area of math.
- Go on a math Scavenger Hunt. Take pictures of math you see around you. Discuss where the math may be in each picture.
- Play games. Many board games and card games have a math element. Whether you have to add points or make strategic moves, your brain grows with every game.
- Cook with your kids. Having your children help you in the kitchen not only offers the benefit of an extra pair of hands but also involves math. From measuring and sequencing to estimation and multiplication, the kitchen is a real-life school for kids of all ages.
- Get outside for some exercise. Social distancing does not mean you need to stay indoors! In addition to the physical benefits of regular exercise, research supports exercise contributes to a positive sense of well-being.
- Limit non-educational screen time. With extended time away from school, a routine is helpful to support behaviour and learning expectations.

Additional Suggested Activities for High School Students:

- Students are encouraged to continue mastering the content in their courses. Now is a great time to go back and review content that was learned over the course of the year.
- Students should take time each day to read, whether it is a previously assigned text or a text of interest.
- Students should continue working on long range assignments. While due dates will need to be adjusted, these assignments are still active. If assignments are “group projects,” we encourage students to consider on-line collaboration.

Tomorrow, the Division will send a list of high quality on-line learning resources that may be of interest to you and your child. Please follow our Twitter account (@evergreen_sd) for links to these resources and Divisional updates.

Will we still get Spring Break off?

Yes. Staff will only be available between March 23 - 27 and April 6 - 9, 2020. There is no expectation for students to do any schoolwork between March 30 and April 3, 2020. This is certainly a year in which everyone will benefit from a well-deserved week of rest.