

Response Planning Team Update – April 28, 2020

Intended for use and distribution to school division personnel

Thank you to everyone who has continued to focus on our students, our families, and ourselves as we continue to deliver education in the best way we can during this pandemic. We have heard from many of you and have seen numerous media clips of all of the creative and heartfelt ways in which you are working in your communities. Our sector is truly well served by all of you.

Graduation Ceremonies

The question of school division graduations was raised at the most recent RPT meeting. We fully understand this is a monumental event in our communities and to our graduates. While this issue impacts many areas across the province, we feel that this is a matter best addressed by local school divisions, with provincial guidance.

In order to assist school divisions, members of the RPT have volunteered to approach both their provincial membership and Canadian colleagues to collect and share any innovative ways in which graduations have been celebrated in other communities across the country. The RPT will also be connecting with the Chief Medical Health Officer to get direction to answer questions we have received regarding potential of in-person gatherings if they meet the public health requirements that have been established. The Corporate Services Team email address will be used to gather the information and then it will be passed onto the SSBA for distribution to Boards to share with others.

Re-opening Saskatchewan Plan

Last week, Premier Scott Moe released [Re-Open Saskatchewan](#), a plan for re-opening the provincial economy. The plan serves as a roadmap for businesses and services to gradually re-open, and allow for more people to return to work.

As parts of the economy start to re-open, flattening the curve continues to be a priority.

As restrictions are gradually lifted, the Government of Saskatchewan and its Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Saqib Shahab, will carefully monitor the daily number of reported cases and other important indicators. They will also monitor to ensure that:

- transmission of the virus is controlled;
- the provincial health system has enough capacity to test, isolate and treat every case, as well as trace every contact;
- outbreak risks are minimized in special settings, such as health care facilities;
- preventive measures are established in place in workplaces, schools and other essential gathering places;
- the risks of importing the virus from outside the province can be managed; and,

- communities and businesses are educated, engaged and empowered to adjust to the new realities brought about by COVID-19.

Education is considered to be in phase five of the plan. While phases one and two are scheduled to be implemented until May 19, 2020, dates for implementation of other phases are yet to be determined. We know that there is a lot of uncertainty around the remainder of the school year. Many questions have been raised such as:

- Will students or staff be able to return before the end of the school year?
- Why doesn't the Province just announce that schools will be closed until the fall?
- Can we have a definitive date that would help us plan for the fall?

We appreciate that the uncertainty around remaining weeks of the school year is not ideal. We will continue take direction from our Chief Medical Health Officer, and as information becomes available we will get it out as soon as we possibly can.

What we can't do at this time is to guess or speculate on what may be coming. What we can say at this time is that next steps will be done in the same fashion as we have been working under, and that is to ensure consideration for the health and safety of our students, and our people, while addressing the needs of our organizations.

We thank you for your continued leadership during these challenging times.

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