

Dear NLPS staff:

The end of March break is fast approaching and many of you are now wondering what the coming weeks will bring. So far, you will have received letters from the Ministry of Education, respective unions and the district, outlining direction and expectations as we face this global pandemic together. We are in unprecedented times and while the future is uncertain, my primary consideration is for your well-being and the well-being of our students, families and the Nanaimo Ladysmith Public School community.

The Minister of Education has placed four expectations on school districts:

- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
- Provide the services needed to support children of essential service workers. (Further information can be found on the district's COVID-19 [webpage](#))
- Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
- Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

Once March Break has ended, we will be proceeding slowly. The first week back will be a week of planning. Beginning Monday, March 30, please stay out of the schools until invited to return. The only exceptions are for staff who have already developed a safe and coordinated plan with their supervisor. This means that our buildings will be closed to students, the public and the majority of staff. Authorized personnel who will be in district buildings must adhere to the Provincial Health Officer's recommendation on physical distancing at all times.

Facilities staff have been busy disinfecting surfaces in our buildings. Therefore, it is important that employees should not enter a building at any time, including after hours, unless with expressed permission from their supervisor. Cleaning will need to occur each time someone visits a site.

Staying at home may also mean self-isolation for some staff due to illness, travel outside of the country or other related reasons. For those employees who are ill or need to self-isolate, please speak to your supervisor for more information on leave eligibility.

The Ministry of Education's in-class instruction suspension now leaves us with the important and challenging task of providing educational opportunities via distributed learning to the, approximately, 15,000 students in the district.

At the beginning of next week, principals and supervisors will be reconnecting with their staff, planning and building their capacity to provide opportunities for learning or daily work. We will also take the time to assess how we can work together remotely. As you can imagine, this has been a sizeable undertaking, but one that our IT department has been busy addressing.

Teachers, while creating your plans I encourage you to be courageous, innovative and inclusive. For our support workers, think creatively on how you can best support learners and the needs in your school. Please share your ideas with your school leaders.

Again, your health and the well-being remains our top priority. Please contact your supervisor and notify your union before Monday, March 30, 2020 if any of the following applies:

- Your current status should you be uncertain about attending work, including if you need to be off work (whether on site or at home) for health or isolation reasons;
- Any recent travel that will require you to be in self-isolation; or
- Any other concerns or questions you may have regarding your employment situation.

I would like to thank the many staff that have been busy cleaning our work sites or carrying out other work in the district, as well as the many who have been busy preparing for the return of school instruction. Your commitment is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

You may have other questions. Please refer to the [FAQ](#) document released by the Ministry of Education on Wednesday.

Enjoy the last few days of spring break. I look forward to working with you as we navigate these next weeks in professional, innovative and caring ways. Please take care of yourselves, each other and your loved ones.

On behalf of the Board of Education and senior leadership team, thank you, merci and hay ch q'a!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Saywell", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Scott Saywell  
Superintendent/CEO