



March 12, 2020

To Parents and Guardians:

**Memo: Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve, we want to assure our students, staff and families that we are continuing to monitor the developments and follow the advice and direction of Alberta Health Services. It is our main priority to provide healthy, safe, caring and welcoming environments for students and staff in all of our communities.

At this point, Grasslands has taken a number of steps as precaution and prevention.

- Custodial staff have increased cleaning and disinfecting procedures in all our facilities with disinfectants that are approved for school environments but aid in preventing the spread of bacteria, virus and fungi. Enhanced cleaning will be completed twice daily and continues to be a top priority.
- Custodial staff will be receiving additional inservicing this week on procedures and practices that will continue to ensure enhanced cleaning practices.
- Bus drivers will also receive inservicing on procedures and practices for proper cleaning.
- Increased communication and signage such as posters regarding proper hygiene practices will be provided to all of our facilities.
- School staff will continue to support our students with education on good hygiene.
- On March 9th, the Board of Trustees passed two motions canceling international school trips, one to Japan and another student trip to Europe.

As Alberta Health Services provides updated communications to school divisions around the province, these communications will continue to be shared with our staff and parents. At this time, parents and staff have received two memos from AHS dated February 6th and March 3rd. The Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services also have dedicated web pages to provide information about COVID-19 which can be accessed in the links below.

[Government of Alberta - COVID-19](#)

[Alberta Health Services - COVID-19](#)

**Information For Students**

Alberta public health officials are recommending the following actions as a precaution:

- If a student or member of the family has traveled outside of Canada, it is recommended that they self-isolate until two weeks have passed since that visit. This is recommended even if they are feeling well.

- Parents should call Health Link 811 for additional precautions and follow-up testing if their children have travelled to anywhere outside of Canada and experienced any of the following:
  - contact with someone who was suspected or confirmed to have the Coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - were in a health-care facility
  - have symptoms, such as cough or fever

If a student does not meet the exposure criteria above, they do not need to stay away from school and they will likely not be tested for COVID-19 as they do not meet the testing criteria. For health-related questions or concerns, please call Health Link at 811.

Self-isolation is a precautionary measure and does not mean that the individual is infected with COVID-19. In the event that testing determines an individual is a presumptive or confirmed case, public health officials will immediately connect with any close contacts believed to be at risk.

In schools where some students have been identified as close contacts, Alberta Health has not recommended other students be kept home. Health officials will already be ensuring that all appropriate precautions are being taken.

### **Preventing the Spread**

Influenza and other common viruses remain the most likely cause of a respiratory infection. To protect yourself and others:

- use good hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing
- cover coughs and sneezes
- avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill
- if you have symptoms, stay home and call [Health Link 811](#) for instructions
- [How to Prevent the Spread](#)

Thank you for your cooperation as we work through this situation together. The health and safety of our students and staff is always a top priority. We will continue to diligently monitor the situation and will quickly respond as directed by the Medical Officer of Health.

Sincerely,

*Scott Brandt*

Scott Brandt

Superintendent

Grasslands Public Schools

(This letter can be viewed online on the Grasslands website.)