

WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

TO: Trustees
Student Trustees

FROM: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Michèle Giroux, Executive Officer, Corporate Services

DATE: 8 April 2020

RE: **Weekly Memorandum to Trustees #1 (April 6-9)**

In an effort to keep trustees apprised of matters during the closure period, a weekly memorandum will be prepared and distributed to trustees following the Director's Executive Council meetings. Staff anticipates that the memorandum will help address queries and ensure an understanding of the issues.

Update on Emergency Operations

- **Launch of OCDSB Learn At Home** - This began on Monday, April 6, and is going well. There are several operational and technical issues that staff continue to manage as we work through the implementation. Using the online discussion tool, Thoughtexchange, we will be looking for feedback from parents, students and community members (including advisory committees) about their challenges, successes, questions and/or suggestions regarding learning at home. This will help to inform our work going forward. The Thoughtexchange will be released on 9 April 2020.
- **Assessment and Evaluation** - The Ministry released new details about assessment and evaluation. The District will use these in its instructions to teachers. For elementary students, teachers will use formative assessment approaches to gather evidence of how students are progressing in their learning. It is expected that teachers will provide feedback to their students on their progress. Secondary students will be assigned learning tasks, projects and culminating activities that will be marked by their teachers for purposes of formative and summative evaluation. Communications to both students and parents providing further details with regards to assessment, evaluation and reporting are being sent on April 8 (Grade 12), and K-grade 11 on April 9.
- **Access to Buildings** - Plans are underway to allow for limited access to buildings to retrieve essential items only. The size and diverse needs of the system, combined with ensuring the health and safety of staff, are creating some limitations on capacity. Staff continues to work through these.

- **Distribution of Technology** - Based on assessments and discussions with families, it is estimated that 4700 mobile devices are required for students to access online learning. We are working with two different providers, Rogers and Bell, to provide students with the best Wi-Fi coverage available. The 700 Rogers hotspots should be distributed to families within the next ten days. The Bell hotspots will not arrive until the end of April and will be delivered to students as soon as they are received and configured. These resources are in high demand, and inventory is limited. Other options are also being assessed.
- **Supports for Families whose language is other than English** - Program and Learning is working on the creation of a set of central lessons that could be made available in paper copy to those in need.
- **Special Education Supports** - Teachers may be able to support some students with special needs; however, others will require more individualized strategies. Unfortunately, physical distancing recommendations in place means we cannot provide in-person support, which is vital for some students. Central Learning Support Consultants are communicating with teachers to determine how we can best help them to deliver the educational program during this challenging time. We are also in the process of reviewing who has home access to assistive technology (e.g., tablets or Chromebooks) and who may need equipment provided to access their education program. This planning will need to take into account recommendations of health authorities and safety considerations for families in considering how we can equip students with these resources.
- **Support for Families in Need** - Information about community-based support has been shared, including those from the City, ONFE, Education Foundation, and others. We are currently working on a consolidation of information to put all of this information into one area.
- **Staffing** - Casual employees were notified that they would not be paid after April 6 and advised to seek eligibility for the federal relief program. Casual employees in the following groups: occasional teachers (OTs), educational assistants (EAs), custodians, administrative and support, early childhood educators (ECEs), early learning assistants (ELAs), and lunchtime monitors (LTMs) are impacted. This decision was based on direction from the Ministry regarding the payment of casual workers.

Upcoming Board Decisions

- **Stittsville Boundary Review** - An amendment to the consultation plan will be required to allow for the completion of the boundary-setting process. Staff is confident with alternative ways to conduct the consultation that will allow for broad community input and participation.



- **Purchase of Additional Portables** - Additional portables will be required for the 2020-2021 school year in order to provide the District with sufficient flexibility to accommodate student needs throughout the system.

cc Senior Staff
 Manager, Board Services
 Corporate Records