



## **CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROGRESSES WITH PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES**

April 3, 2020

KELOWNA, BC – Thanks to detailed planning over the past weeks, Central Okanagan Public Schools begins to deliver on the following four priorities set out by the Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister of Education Rob Fleming:

### **1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families, and employees.**

- The District Health and Safety Department has developed a pandemic and safety plan and has established a universal standard of strong safety protocols to protect everyone who will enter a school.
- District custodial services have been increased to ensure a higher frequency of cleaning and focus on touch points to prevent virus transmission.
- Schools will strictly follow safety protocols and maintain appropriate physical distancing to ensure everyone stays healthy and safe.

### **2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential service workers.**

- Surveys indicate significant demand for in-school learning service, with requests for this service exceeding 1,100 students.
- Starting Monday, April 6, learning service centres in elementary and middle schools will accommodate the children of Tier 1 essential service workers (e.g. health care providers, acute care workers, and emergency responders) who submitted online applications for in-class learning services. Teaching staff and support staff will provide learning and care in small groups for over 500 Kindergarten to Grade 6 children, Monday to Friday.
- Tier 2 and 3 essential service workers have been placed on a waitlist and the District will attempt to accommodate requests over the next couple weeks according to available space.

### **3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.**

- Starting the week of April 6, our district will distribute hundreds of student breakfasts and lunches to 37 schools.
- To reduce daily contact, providers will deliver a week's worth of lunches and breakfasts once per week.
- Teachers and support staff continue to reach out to families who previously made use of these programs to determine need and arrange pickup/delivery.



- In addition to teaching staff, a wide variety of district professionals are collaborating and making plans to remotely provide a high level of service to students with diverse abilities and needs.
- Our district also developed plans to support students who may require additional mental health services from outside agencies. District staff, in partnership with community agencies, will provide mental health resources for students and parents. In addition, they will offer virtual mental health educational opportunities for parents to enhance their ability to best support their children during a challenging time.

**4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.**

- Staff have been busy connecting with families to ensure that we understand each student's situation and create appropriate learning opportunities and expectations.
- All grade levels will blend synchronous learning (where teachers and students connect in real time through technology) and asynchronous learning (where students continue learning on their own time through meaningful activities and assignments).
- We will provide more details in the coming weeks as we finalize a new Framework for Continuity of Educational Opportunities.

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For comments, please contact:

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