

Smokey Drive Elementary Update Memo

How to Contact Us

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| School Website: | https://sde.hrce.ca |
| Staff directory (emails and websites): | https://sde.hrce.ca/staff-directory |
| Principal: Carolyn Thompson | cthompson@hrce.ca |
| Vice Principal: Stephanie Bellefontaine | shawkins@hrce.ca |
| Guidance Counsellor: Sue McKay | smckay@hrce.ca |
| School Phone (messages checked daily) | 902-864-6838 |
| Twitter | @SmokeyDrive |

Up-Date

Earlier this week, the province of Nova Scotia announced that schools would continue to be closed until at least May 1 and with that announcement they released a Learning Continuity Plan. Teachers have been working hard this week, collaborating with colleagues, consulting curriculum documents and planning learning activities that students can do remotely from home. These learning activities will commence next Wednesday, April 8th.

Prior to this announcement, teachers had been in contact with their students' families. We were very pleased to be able to hear how you are all doing in these difficult times and we were also finding out who has access to required technology to do on-line learning and/or to access on-line information and lessons.

The Learning Continuity Plan allows for families who have access to technology for on-line learning to receive plans and ideas from classroom teachers. For all families who do not have this access, or for whom this access is too difficult, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will be creating at-home work packages. These packages will be delivered bi-weekly to all homes who receive regular flyer delivery beginning April 8. If you do not currently receive flyers, you can contact Saltwire (<https://www.saltwire.com/nshomelearning/> or 1-800-565-3339) to get on the delivery list.

We want parents to know that student, staff and family well-being is our main priority. Learning activities will be provided—via email, google classroom or other on-line platforms—as well as the at-home learning packages. We encourage you to communicate with your child's teacher if any of these activities are too much for your family. Students will not be penalized for not completing at-home learning in this situation. Students who are participating in the learning from home provided by the teacher are not expected to also do the delivered paper packages—but if there are interesting activities you'd like to do with your children, feel free. The packages are not designed to be assessed/graded by teachers so they are not to be sent back to teachers unless the teachers ask for them.

This is a new experience for all of us. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we all try to figure it out in the best way possible. We certainly expect that there will be changes as we get started and we will do our best to keep you updated. Please reach out to us with any questions and concerns you have. We can't be at school, but we are here for you.

What Will it Look Like?

Teachers will be communicating directly with their families. Teachers will use April 6 & 7 to plan to be able to provide learning activities to students beginning April 8. From P-5 teachers will assign an average of 5 hours of work/week, focusing on math and literacy. Where possible in grades 4 & 5, science and social studies may be integrated in the lessons. Teachers will work with you on the delivery of these lessons. Phys. Ed, music and French will be looking at ways to provide optional activities for your children too.

How Do We Get In Touch?

Teachers have been asked to communicate office hours to their families during the shut down. These office hours (minimum 1 hr/day) will look different for different teachers and may change as we figure out what works best. Remember, we're learning too! Teachers will be using email to communicate with families. Some will also be using Google Classroom, Google Hangout Meet, phone calls and other platforms. We're still on Twitter, and love seeing all the pictures and stories you're sharing with us. Details will be provided to you in the forthcoming communications by teachers.

Report Cards

Elementary reports cards and IPP reports for March/April are currently underway. The DEECD is investigating feasible methods to distribute these and more information will follow when available.

Where Else Can We Find Information?

You can find information and links on the new curriculum website, <https://curriculum.novascotia.ca/>. There is a resources page at the bottom of the home page.

- for up-to-date public health information and advice, visit the public health coronavirus website, <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

- NS government collation of the MH links for children, youth and families: <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/mental-health/children-and-youth.asp>

Guidance and Other Support Notes

Ms. McKay continues to be a resource for students and parents/guardians. Please see the attached letter from her about how to contact her.

Schools Plus and the school Social Worker are also continuing to support students and families. Please reach out to Ms. Thompson if you are looking for this support.