



DIAMOND SCHOOL

COVID-19 Update

March 27, 2020

Dear parents and students of Diamond School,

As you will have heard, in-class instruction for all schools in BC has been suspended by the Ministry of Education under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer. As the pandemic situation progresses, we are preparing, along with the other schools in BC, to transition to distance and online learning.

Remote Instruction

Our teachers are currently focusing their incredible creativity and dedication to developing a remote learning program for each of our courses in an extremely short period of time. In order to ensure we continue to provide your children with the high quality of educational programming you expect from Diamond School, the first two days after spring break (Monday, March 30 and Tuesday, March 31) will be set aside as non-instructional days. This critical professional development time will allow our teachers and staff to be able to collaborate and create an online learning experience for all our students.

On Wednesday, April 1, 2020, parents can expect to receive an email with information about your student's program to come. Parents can also expect the first of the instructions for student's home learning. Due to the short timeframe for this transition, we expect our program will continue to be developed over the next weeks as we learn what is possible in the new off campus model. Our plan is to begin as simply as possible, with increasing instructional detail and content delivered over time. We are committed to continuing to deliver exceptional and engaging learning opportunities for all of our students, and your patience and understanding are greatly appreciated during this time.

Communication

We will be using the following methods of communication regarding remote instruction this year:

- 1) School-wide notices will be posted to our website (diamondschool.ca)
- 2) Parents will receive direct email communication from diamondschool@shawlink.ca
- 3) Teachers and staff will continue to use their @diamondschool.ca email addresses to communicate with parents and students
- 4) Students in upper grades will use Edmodo as their main class instruction point

Student Technology at Home

All students will need access at home to the internet and a computer device with video and sound capabilities. For students in Kindergarten to Grade 4, access to printer capabilities will also be needed. Upper grade students may require additional technologies depending on course requirements; any course-specific technology requirements will be communicated to parents as soon as possible. If any of these technology requirements pose a challenge or hardship for you, please contact us at diamondschool@shawlink.ca and we will work with you to ensure that all students have access to the technology they need.



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Co-Curricular Programs

Delivery of co-curricular programs will be postponed at this time. While we believe these programs are an important part of students' education and personal development, we want to ensure our focus is foremost on developing and delivering our main educational program. Refunds will be issued at the end of the term for any missed sessions during the COVID-19 school closure.

Access to School Buildings

The health and safety of each member of our school community is our top priority. We are taking every precaution and following all recommendations of the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) and the Provincial Health Officer, including increased and COVID-19 specific cleaning and adherence to all social distancing recommendations.

Our dedicated front-line office staff will be on-site for limited hours during the COVID-19 school closure to complete essential school operational tasks. As a result, we ask that you help support our school staff by communicating via email or phone at this time. Should it be necessary for you to attend the school in person, please contact the school in advance to make arrangements for safe access to our school buildings.

Message from Head of School

As an educator, I can't help but feel that this is an interesting and invigorating challenge. We are being invited to discover how learning can be achieved in a much different setting than a single *bricks and mortar* location. It will cause all of us to grow. It is a time for deliberate experimentation and exploration. No doubt, many of us will not view education the same as we did before this challenge.

A favorite principal of mine would often say after laying out a challenge before us, "Try to have fun with it!" Likewise, I encourage everyone to seek out the possibilities that this opportunity affords us.

Meanwhile I encourage everyone to stay safe, stay healthy, stay educated and stay home!

Best Regards,

Michael Ferguson,
Chairperson, Diamond Schools Society

Kelly Card,
Head of School, Diamond School