



Good afternoon Pinetree Community,

We would like to thank everyone in our school community – parents, guardians, students and staff for their patience as we work towards our new way of life. We would also like to acknowledge all the parents in our community who are either front line health care workers or first responders; we are grateful for your selfless service. If you haven't already completed the survey sent out to parents earlier this week by Mr. Martin, please click the link: [Continuity of Learning Survey](#).

Connecting with students has always been central to the work of teachers. Now more than ever, it is through these ongoing points of connection that teachers will extend their support and care. Communication is the starting place in our new reality and, as always, it will remain a focus moving forward. Providing learners with a sense of connection, normalcy and routine can help create predictability and stability during this time of uncertainty.

Please note that we are working in congruence with the Ministry of Education's Guiding Principles:

1. Ensure a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
2. Provide the services needed to support children of our essential workers.
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

For the last two days, we have had a small group of administrators, clerical staff and caretakers in the building helping with the transition to our new reality. We miss having the students in our building and look forward to a time in the future when physical distancing and isolation are not necessary. All our staff have been working hard to learn, plan, prepare and support very differently. Please know that we are in regular communication with District Leadership who are in regular contact with the Ministries of Health and Education. As indicated in the documents from the Ministry of Education and reinforced by the School District, the health and safety of all our students, their families, and employees is the number one priority. We recognize that some students may need to access Pinetree to pick up essential items. More information will be sent out to families and students later this week about the process to gain access to their belongings next week.

The next step, by the end of this week, is for teachers to reach out to parents by email. This will be followed up by teachers reaching out to all their students by the end of the week using email (district student email). Most families should expect a number of different connection emails from staff. As most high school students typically see three to four teachers each day, you will likely receive three to four emails.

Starting sometime early next week, teachers will be reaching out to students about assignments for their individual classes. **There will be expectations for students to complete schoolwork.** We want to remind everyone though that there will be very different expectations about the volume of work that will be assigned. Students can expect three hours of work per course per week going forward next week. Families also need to understand that instruction may look different for various subject areas. We are looking to ensure that we do not overwhelm families by overloading students with learning from home, we provide support and accommodations for our vulnerable learners, and we acknowledge that access to technology is not the same for everyone.

In the days and weeks ahead, to manage this new reality of teaching and supporting students remotely, teachers will use their professional judgment to determine their learning priorities and approaches. At all levels, considerations need to be made for accessibility for learners and manageability for families. In planning for a range of ages and abilities, the Ministry suggests the following:

Grade 9: In the intermediate and early secondary years, engagement may include learners in a wide array of learning activities, with a focus on inquiry, project-based or problem-based learning.

Grades 10 -12: For learners in the graduation years, teacher-led/moderated activities and individual or group projects will enable learners to achieve and demonstrate competencies required for course completion and expected of graduates in the BC education system.

The aim moving forward is not to replicate in-person classroom experiences. Rather, it is to tap into potentially new ways of engaging students in their learning, providing instruction that is connected to what is most essential, and assessing students using practices that support and empower students in their learning. Given the current context, it is imperative that the asks of students are reasoned, measured and achievable.

Parents, family members, caregivers and guardians play a central role in supporting learning. Our intention is not to overwhelm or task families with a series of “must do’s.” Nor are we asking parents to take on the primary responsibility of teaching curriculum. Teachers will be providing learning materials to support ongoing learning on a continuous basis. Parents will not be expected to purchase any additional resources for learning.

When developing a remote learning environment, teachers will consider what works best given their context and their students. Regardless of the decisions made, most important during this time, when in-person social engagement is not possible, is that we are all mindful of the social-emotional health and wellness of our students, families and ourselves. More than ever, we must reach out, build relationships, connect and engage with our community, be responsive to individual needs, and create a safe and nurturing learning community for our students and families. We will continue to communicate with you via our School App, the School Website and e-mail.

As the coming weeks will not be like any typical school days ever experienced before – emotions may be strong and overwhelming. As such, it is important to attend to the social and emotional needs that arise. By exploring and expressing emotions, building relationships, and supporting each other – students and adults alike – we will make a difference and get through this together. Healthy wishes to you and your loved ones. Please stay safe.

The Pinetree Administration Team



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