



Dear Near North District School Board Family,

We look forward to welcoming our students back to school.

During these unprecedented times and the significant shifts away from our normal routines, many people have expressed concerns about the impact on students' academic journeys. We want to encourage parents, educators, and students in the Near North District School Board family to remember the big picture. This is a time to focus on and be grateful for our family's safety, health, and well-being and a time for us at the NNDSB to do the best we can to support your children in returning to a safe and welcoming environment. We will embark upon this journey together, keeping in mind that the landscape continues to change and no one can possibly have all the answers. We will need to discover them together. This is why we need to pull together as a family that creates a cradle of support around your children. Of utmost importance to us is the wellbeing of your children, our students. NNDSB is proud of the quality of teaching and learning that we have always provided. Please rest assured that we will make every effort to support your children's learning and maintain our sights on the learning goals that have been set for each child's pathway to success.

For families concerned that their children are missing out on academic content, remember that at a time like this, less is more. We will concentrate on the big ideas in your child's curriculum to support innovative and differentiated approaches that support the building of knowledge and understanding of key components of learning. If you'd like to support this learning, keep in mind that critical skills for students of all grade levels include reading, problem solving, and communication, as well as social-emotional skills like resilience, collaboration, flexibility, and positive coping. Use this time at home to support these skills along with prioritizing students' well-being and engagement with learning.

Each family is experiencing this time differently depending on how you have experienced learning this winter, the juggling of work commitments, and the unique needs of each child. We want you to know that educators are working tirelessly to meet the needs of all of their students to the best of their ability. For those families who have requested remote lessons and resources from the schools, try to honor as best as you can what the school is asking your child to do. If the workload feels like too much for your child and your home situation, communicate with your child's teachers. For those families who have chosen to return to school, please know that, just like everyone around the world, we are returning to work with caution and amidst the same unknown factors and are doing our very best to comply with Ministry and Health Authority guidelines.

We will continue to support you with new information as it is supplied by the various ministries and health authorities. Please also access the NNDSB website at www.nearnorthschools.ca for up to date information and comprehensive guidelines and as always, please feel free to reach out to your child's teachers and or principals and vice principals.

We will get through this together.

Craig Myles, Director of Education

Jay Aspin, Chair of the Board