



Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education

1251 – 1st Avenue SW, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8B4

Phone 403.527.2292 | www.mhcbe.ab.ca | Fax 403.529.0917

March 14, 2020

Dear MHCBE Families:

Alberta School Board Representatives and Senior Administration teams met in a teleconference town hall today with Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Deena Hinshaw, for a COVID-19 update. As of 12:10 today (3/14/2020), the following direction has been given by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH):

1. Staff and students exhibiting any respiratory symptoms such as: fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, headaches, muscle aches, and including symptoms that may seem like a mild cold must remain home. **This is to be considered a zero-tolerance direction.** Staff or students attending school with any symptoms will be sent home immediately. Teachers are to closely monitor their classrooms. Students are not to be sent home on the school bus if they are exhibiting any respiratory symptoms – they must be picked up by a parent or guardian. In addition to proper hand-washing practices and cough etiquette, this practice is determined by the CMOH to be the most effective for slowing the spread of COVID-19.
2. **Staff and or students returning from any country outside Canada must self-quarantine for 14 days even if symptoms are not present.** Please note that the CMOH directed Albertans not to travel outside of Canada as of March 12, 2020.
3. The direction from the CMOH is that if parents/guardians of a child have travelled outside of Canada (without their child) and have no symptoms, their child may attend school. If parents/guardians develop symptoms, the child must stay home for the 14 day self-isolation.
4. At this time the CMOH does not intend to close schools in Alberta; however, the situation is very fluid and circumstances may evolve. We will continue to keep you up to date with the latest information we receive. Please continue to visit our website and social media pages for the latest information. <https://www.mhcbe.ab.ca/our-district/news/post/covid-19> this web page will be updated as significant changes occur 24 hours a day, seven days per week.
5. **Please note that regardless of the size of schools, we will not be holding any assemblies, sporting events or extracurricular school activities.**
6. To help prevent transmission, the most important steps are to reinforce strict respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene practices.

During times such as this it is normal to feel overwhelmed. As a society we are constantly faced with information overload from our government, the news, and social media. Maintaining good mental health is extremely crucial in times like this. Please take time for yourself and your family. As a faith

family it is important that we keep each other in our prayers as well as our brothers and sisters around the world.

If you are in need of support, you are welcome to call the 24-hour Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642. Helpful advice on handling stressful situations and ways to talk to kids is also available at alberta.ca/COVID19.

Thank you all for your patience and understanding during this difficult and rapidly changing situation. Student and staff safety is our number one priority and we will continue to work together to find answers and solutions to the arising questions you may have.

God Bless!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dwayne Zarichny". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Dwayne Zarichny
Superintendent of Schools
Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education