



March 14, 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The Grande Prairie Public School Division Emergency Response Team provides the following information and decisions based on the March 13th press conference and March 14th conference call by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer.

While there has been an increase in cases of COVID-19, the risk of transmission in Alberta remains low. Currently, there are **no plans to close schools in the province** as a preventative measure. While this is a time of uncertainty, it is important that we ensure that our students' experience at school is as typical as possible and that we support our students and families in a way that limits their anxiety related to the situation.

Prior direction from the Chief Medical Officer remains:

- a limitation on gatherings of 250 or more people
- the recommendation to not travel outside of the country
- self-isolation for individuals returning from outside of the country
- self-isolation for individuals exposed to those that have tested positive for COVID-19
- self-isolation for individuals showing respiratory symptoms such as:
 - fever, cough and shortness of breath

New direction from the Chief Medical Officer on March 13, 2020:

There is zero tolerance for children with any respiratory symptoms attending school.

- Staff have been asked to closely monitor students.
- Schools will notify parents/guardians if a child begins to experience respiratory symptoms while at school and arrange for **immediate pick up**. These students will not be permitted on the school bus.
- Students or staff who develop respiratory symptoms should be kept home for 14 days after the start of the symptoms.
- If students or staff are tested for COVID-19, those who test negative will be advised individually about return to the school setting.
- To help prevent transmission, **the most important steps are to reinforce strict respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene practices and to have all ill students or staff sent home.**
- Individuals who are self-monitoring can attend and work in school and participate in regular activities.
- Cleaning and disinfecting practices and products will align with recommendations.
- Reassure students about their personal safety and health.

Division Decisions

- Parent Teacher Interviews are cancelled and will not be rescheduled. The Day-in-Lieu on March 27 remains a non-operational day.
- All field trips/trips outside of the building are suspended until further notice.
- Extracurricular activities are suspended until further notice. This includes practices, tryouts, games, workouts, meetings, clubs etc.
- All user group bookings in Division facilities are cancelled.
- All functions in Division facilities on evenings and weekends are prohibited.
- All presentations by non-Division staff in schools are prohibited.
- School-wide assemblies are prohibited.
- Access to the schools by parents and public will be limited.

We appreciate your cooperation and encourage families to develop a plan for their children's care, should it become necessary. We will continue to work with Alberta Health Services and communicate updated information in a timely manner.

For more information please see:

[Alberta Health Link 811](#)

[Info for Albertans](#)

[AHS COVID-19 Self-Screening Tool](#)

Sincerely Yours,

James Robinson
Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Grande Prairie Public School Division