



**FOR STUDENTS AND
FAMILIES**

**FOR
COMMUNITY**

**ROOTED IN
FAITH**

**ABOUT THE
DIVISION**

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News Announcements

COVID-19 update

For the most up-to-date provincial information, visit www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus

REMINDER: Playgrounds closed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19

COVID-19 can linger on surfaces like steel and plastic for days. All playgrounds are closed until further notice.

[May 7 update from the provincial Education Response Planning Team \(pdf\)](#)

Update May 7, 2:17 pm

Dear parents and caregivers;

I hope you are doing well—as well as can be expected in the circumstances. The past two months have presented so many challenges, and we have seen innumerable ways that people in our communities have adapted to support one another. Every day, I'm reminded of the good in the world—and in our communities—as it's displayed by so many good people in so many ways.

On May 7, 2020, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that in-person classes will not resume this school year. Like you, I have very mixed emotions about this announcement. Our teachers and staff miss being physically present for your children to help guide their growth and development. At the same time, the health and safety of your children and our staff are most important, and we will continue to follow the direction of the province's Chief Medical Health Officer to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Supplemental learning opportunities will continue through June. We encourage families to continue participating in learning to the extent you are able. You are most welcome to join in the learning opportunities if you haven't done so yet. Learning is flexible, and teachers and staff are available to support you and your children.

We understand that you have many practical questions about completing this year (gathering personal belongings, returning school books or material, etc.) and what the start of school in the fall will look like. At this time, we don't have all of those answers. Staff are continuing their plans to complete this school year and will begin planning for next school year. The status of classes in the fall will be largely determined by the province's Chief Medical Health Officer and how we, as a province, progress through the phases of the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan.

In the meantime, we still have several weeks of this school year remaining, and we will continue to teach and connect with your children in a variety of ways. Please do what you can to keep your children learning in whatever ways are practical for your family.

Additional details will come from your school, so please keep your eyes open for information. As always, if you have questions, please direct them to your child's teacher or principal.

St. Paul, patron of our school division, pray for us.

Greg Chatlain, Director of Education

Update May 5 to Gr. 12 students and families

Graduation ceremonies are an incredibly important event and experience for students. It provides an opportunity to publicly recognize the completion of 13 years of learning in school from kindergarten to Grade 12—a witness to their God-given gifts growing over time. Graduation is a time for students in Gr. 12 to celebrate with friends and fellow students. It is an event shared with all who have helped our students get to this momentous moment—family, friends, teammates, coaches, mentors, teachers, support staff and others who make up your community.

Following the indefinite suspension of in-school classes in March, all of us were praying that graduation ceremonies would be possible in a face-to-face setting. Respecting the direction of the Provincial Government and Health Authority, all in-person graduation ceremonies and banquets for the 2020 classes of GSCS will not be able to take place. All Grade 12 retreats will need to be cancelled. We recognize this is very challenging news for all graduates and their families, but it is to protect the health and well-being of our community. Your safety and the safety of staff members is paramount.

Our school and division staff are committed to providing an opportunity to celebrate graduating students and provide you with recognition you deserve. This virtual ceremony will honour each graduate for their accomplishments, identify students attaining honour roll, and announce scholarship and award winners. Soon there will also be an opportunity for students to select the valedictorian and salutatorian for the ceremony. Students will receive their graduation certificates, caps and honour cords (if applicable), at a later date. Graduation fees will be adjusted accordingly to reflect the revised costs. Please stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support during these challenging times. We share your disappointment in this reality. All of us wish that we could gather in person to mark this occasion together. Please know that we will do everything possible to create an event worthy of celebrating and honouring graduates for their hard work and achievement.

[March 27 update from the education sector Response Planning Team \(pdf\)](#)

Update March 27, 1:55 pm

I hope you are all doing well and adjusting to our new reality of staying at home, physical distancing and ever changing national and



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

No tissue? Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water or use a hand sanitizer.

Stay home if you are sick.

I hope you are all doing well and adjusting to our new reality of staying at home, physical distancing and ever-changing national and provincial responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As our one-week pause on education in Saskatchewan comes to an end, I want to let you know what has happened this past week and what you can expect for next week.

The education sector's Response Planning Team (RPT) has been busy building a provincial framework to help school divisions implement Supplemental Learning Plans. Our division's own staff have also been busy making sure the behind-the-scenes infrastructure is able to deliver learning, and they have been developing plans to ensure teachers are equipped to deliver that learning in their own unique classroom setting.

Next week, we will start to ease into our new reality of learning from a distance. You will begin to receive communication directly from your school and teacher instead of broad, division-wide messaging from me. They will be in touch to get a better understanding of how to deliver supplemental learning to your children. They'll also start sharing a little about what tools and resources they plan on using, and asking you about your ability to access online resources.

We recognize each home is different, and we'll do our best to present a variety of learning opportunities so all students can continue learning, no matter your learning environment or access to technology. Teachers and support staff will do their best to adapt to individual student needs. I ask for your patience with us. We're learning to adjust to this new reality along with you, so we'll need to work together.

Our plan is to have the supplemental learning options implemented on or before April 6. While the RPT has indicated this supplemental learning is not mandatory, I encourage you to do what you can to help your child continue their learning at home as there remains much to learn yet this year. Remember, teachers and other support staff are here to help facilitate that learning, even if we can't physically be with students.

If you have any questions or concerns, please direct them to your school principal.

St. Paul, patron of our school division, pray for us.

Greg Chatlain, Director of Education

Update March 20, 4:50 pm

[Update to families from the provincial Education Response Planning Team \(pdf\)](#)

Update March 19, 2:45 pm

This week has been a very emotional one for us all as students say farewell to teachers and school staff with no certainty about when they will see each other again. The fact there can't be any more than a wave from a metre away makes it a little more difficult for everyone. Rest assured, they will reconnect soon, just not in person.

With the indefinite suspension of classes to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, families across the province have transitioned (or are transitioning) from schools being a place of learning to your homes being temporary classrooms. During this one-week pause that we start Friday, March 20, the province and our school division will work on plans to continue your child's learning from their home classroom.

Please keep in mind schools are closed March 20 - 29. If there is a need to contact the school, call or email the office. Messages will only be checked intermittently, and a response may be delayed.

In my last message, we provided some elementary-level resources you may choose to take advantage of next week (and into the future). I'm happy to give similar options for high school students below.

If you have missed any communications about COVID-19, they are listed below.

Please continue to pay attention to the news for new developments. As we have seen, things happen fast, which as a good thing in response to the pandemic.

As people of faith, it is important that we pay attention to our spiritual lives during these uncertain times. Both the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon and the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon have listed some resources to access Mass/Divine Liturgy on their respective websites:

<https://news.rcdos.ca/2020/03/17/public-celebration-of-mass-cancelled-in-diocese-of-saskatoon-because-of-covid-19-concerns/>
<https://www.skeparchy.org/wordpress/liturgy-live-in-our-parishes-of-the-eparchy-of-saskatoon/>

We will be in touch next week with information. Until then, God bless you and your families.

Resources for high school students: All online resources licensed by the Ministry, including ROVER and online magazines, journals and newspapers are available outside of a school network with a Blackboard login. All teachers and students in the province have access to Blackboard through a default password. The username will be firstname.lastname and the default password will be the month and day of their birthday in the form of MMDD. If users have login trouble, a helpdesk is available at networkservices@gov.sk.ca or 1-866-933-8333.

Students/parents can go to www.edonline.sk.ca and log in to Blackboard. They will then be prompted to create a more secure password. Once logged in to Blackboard, they will be able to access ROVER (including Curio and NFB Campus), online library resources, and a number of other resources under the "Teaching Tools and Supports" tab at the top right of the page.

ROVER could also be accessed directly from <https://rover.edonline.sk.ca/> and when a video is selected, a Blackboard login prompt will be displayed. The experience is a little more seamless when a user logs in to Blackboard first.

Update March 18, 2:35 pm

This has certainly been a challenging week for everyone. Thank you for your patience and support.

I remind you that classes will be suspended indefinitely starting Friday, March 20. Thursday, March 19 is the last day that schools will be open until further notice.

I also write to inform you of another decision made by the Government of Saskatchewan. The education sector Response Planning Team (a team gathered in response to the government's COVID-19 decisions), on the advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Saskatchewan, has announced that all 27 Saskatchewan school boards will pause educational operations for a one-week period starting Friday, March 20.

While this pause is meant to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will also allow the Response Planning Team and individual school divisions to put in longer-term plans to support students, staff and families moving forward. Essentially, this will provide the needed time to prepare the supplemental learning that was mentioned in my previous messages.

For you as a parent or caregiver, this will look much like a week-long school break. School will be closed. If you need to contact the school, call or email the school office. Please note, messages will only be checked intermittently, and a response may be delayed.

When this temporary pause ends, we should have a much clearer picture of how to implement supplemental learning for your children

while classes at the school are suspended. We will be in touch with details the week of March 30.

In the meantime, we have put together some short-term learning experiences for elementary students. Here are some resources that you may find useful to support your child's learning in literacy and mathematics.

[Supporting Literacy at Home](#)

[Scholastic Learn at Home](#)

[Epic](#)

[Mathletics Grade 1 – 8](#) (for password resets email customerservice@3plearning.ca)

[Building Math Success – Parent Pamphlets](#)

[Growing in Faith Growing in Christ](#) (username GIFGIC_student99; password Student99)

Don't forget to:

- Go outside for a walk
- Draw and/or make crafts
- Cook as a family
- Read books together
- Play board games together as a family
- Play outside
- Pray as a family

Thank you once again for your understanding as we work through these changes together. Please continue to pray for all students, staff and especially those people in the world who are ill with COVID-19.

Update March 17, 3 pm

We know that you have many questions after Monday's announcement from the Government of Saskatchewan that classes are indefinitely suspended starting Friday, March 20. We are working to answer those questions for items within our control and get answers for those that are out of our control.

Here's an update on some of those questions.

What does supplemental learning from home look like, and what can I do to help my children learn from home?

Aside from the safety of your children who are still attending school before Friday, this is our top priority. We are preparing for the shift from face-to-face learning to distance learning, either online or some other format for those without internet access. Please understand that this requires a fair amount of preparation and support for teachers to make this shift for almost 20,000 students.

While we are preparing, we will be sending some information for elementary students including activities that you can work on at home or suggestions for developing a routine (if possible). In fact, some elementary teachers have already been sending work home or working with students in a variety of ways. This short-term plan will be replaced with something more comprehensive in the upcoming weeks.

For high school students, we are working on supporting teachers to transition to a distance learning model to give students access to course materials. Our priority will be Grade 12 students, then work our way down through other grades. Similar to elementary, some teachers may have already started with short-term work or assignments for students that will be replaced with something more comprehensive in the upcoming weeks.

Will three-way conferences still be held over the phone?

Any three-way conferences that have not already taken place are cancelled.

Will we receive progress reports (report cards)?

Progress reports will be scanned and emailed to parents. If we do not have an email address on file, progress reports will be mailed via Canada Post. Please update the school with any changes to contact information.

How can I get my child's personal belongings?

Schools remain open March 16-19, so you can pick up any items your child has not already brought home during those days. If that doesn't work for you, contact the school to make arrangements. (Please remember to bring bags or boxes.)

I have textbooks and library books at home still. How can I return those?

Schools remain open March 16-19, so you can return any school resources during those days. If that doesn't work for you, contact the school to make arrangements.

We know you have many more questions. And if you have questions, keep asking. We're working hard to get you the answers you need. In the meantime, thank you for your cooperation, patience and prayer as we navigate through an unprecedented scenario that evolves very fast.

Update: March 16, 2020, 3 pm

Earlier today, Premier Scott Moe announced that all pre-kindergarten to Gr. 12 classes will be cancelled indefinitely starting Friday, March 20, 2020 as a step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our province ([read the government news release](#)). Classes will be in session March 16-19 to wind-down operations. Because this is indefinite, we need to prepare for the possibility that Thursday may be the last day of in-school classes this school year.

This decision includes all in-school childcare centres and pre-school programs.

We recognize this decision has significant impact for you as parents and caregivers, but health authorities believe this is a necessary precaution to keep members of our community safe.

March 16 – 19 is defined as a wind-down period. Students who can stay at home are asked to do so. Student attendance is not required, and absences will not be officially recorded. However, to help ensure safety of students, we still need to monitor absences. To assist us with this, please continue to report student absences through Thursday, March 19. Use "other" in School Messenger.

During the wind-down period schools remain open, and staff is asked to be at work (except previously approved leaves or absences). Safety and security of students remains our top concern.

During this wind-down period, parents and caregivers are encouraged to come to the school to gather your children's personal belongings. Schools will follow-up with instructions specific to your school. Please bring bags to take things home.

Transportation will continue as scheduled through the end of the day Thursday, March 19.

Before-and-after school programs will also continue through Thursday.

The government has announced: "Every student will receive a final grade based on their current grade, and students will progress to their next grade level next year. Every student who is eligible to graduate from Grade 12 this year will graduate."

In essence, our academic year is effectively paused. If the cancellation continues to the end of the year, then academic standing will be conferred as complete and grades assigned as they are now. Particularly in the context of high school, please watch for further communication on this.

While formal class instruction will pause, we will be providing supplemental distance learning opportunities where possible. Grade 12 students are our top priority. Again, please watch for further communication.

We will continue to provide updates as we progress through these changes together.

We thank you for your patience and understanding during these difficult times. And, as people of faith, please continue to pray for all of those affected by the virus and those who are charged with caring for the ill.

Update: March 15, 6:35 pm

The Government of Saskatchewan has announced that schools will remain open for now. [Read the government's news release](#) for more information.

Update: March 13, 2:40 pm

In the past day we have been in consultation with many of our partners with respect to COVID-19. We have discussed implementation of plans and steps to slow the spread of the virus with health officials, the Ministry of Education, our partner school divisions, and other stakeholders.

In addition to the measures announced yesterday (cancelling extracurricular activities, field trips, etc.), we are enacting the following steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our community:

- Cancel all guest speakers and external presentations at schools;
- Cancel large school gatherings such as pep rallies, school-wide liturgies and assemblies;
- Three-way conferences will take place over the phone, not in person (details will follow from your school);
- Cancel all after-hours school rentals;
- Postpone any school/program open houses or information evenings.

If your child is ill, please keep your child at home to prevent the spread of any type of illness to other children and families. If parents or caregivers are ill, please refrain from coming into the school. Alternate arrangements may need to be made for drop off and pick up.

It is important to be mindful that the potential spread of COVID-19 on the community can be a source of anxiety, even for your young children. Some common stress relievers include: controlled breathing, get your body moving, write things down or make a list, laugh, pray, practice positive self-talk, and smile.

Provincial updates and important information can be found at www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus. If you are at risk and are exhibiting symptoms, call Healthline 811 for advice and direction.

Please help protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands frequently – for at least 20 seconds;
- Do not touch surfaces and then your mouth, eyes or nose;
- Use tissues when you cough or sneeze and dispose of them immediately, use your elbow if a tissue not available;
- Practice social distancing by not shaking hands, hugging, etc.;
- Stay home if you become ill and prevent the spread of the illness.

March 12, 2020

Dear GSCS community,

With the situation around COVID-19 (coronavirus) rapidly evolving, I want to provide an update with respect to Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools' preparedness and response.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11. In the WHO Director-General's remarks, he mentioned the importance to focus on other "p" words: prevention, preparedness, public health, political leadership, and most of all, people.

Saskatchewan now has its first presumptive case of COVID-19. We will continue to take our direction from Public Health Agency of Canada and the Saskatchewan Health Authority as we consider the implications for our school division.

As a school division, we have been reviewing and revising our pandemic plan for several weeks in preparation; we have been in regular contact with various stakeholders (health officials, various city departments, airport authority, other educational institutions, etc.); and we have increased preventative measures such as enhanced cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, and encouraging thorough handwashing and sanitizing among students and staff.

We are ever mindful of how our decisions affect people. Our primary goal remains the safety and security of the students we serve and our staff, while still fulfilling our mandate to provide high-quality Catholic education. We have already taken steps such as cancelling an international exchange and student educational tours. The recent suspension of extracurricular activities puts one of our preventative measures in place. At this time, the implementation of more significant restrictions is not recommended, although this will be continuously monitored. We will communicate directly with staff, parents and caregivers as needed.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority remains the go-to source for information and updates.

Visit www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus for definitions and information on items such as self-monitoring, self-isolation, social distancing, preventative measures, etc. If you are at risk and are exhibiting symptoms, call Healthline 811 for advice and direction.

Please help protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands frequently – for at least 20 seconds;
- Do not touch surfaces and then your mouth, eyes or nose;
- Use tissues when you cough or sneeze and dispose of them immediately, use your elbow if a tissue not available;
- Practice social distancing by not shaking hands, hugging, etc.;
- Stay home if you become ill and prevent the spread of the illness.

Sincerely,
Greg Chatlain,
Director of Education

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