



Battle River School Division

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April 17, 2020

To: Parents / Guardians of BRSD students
Re: COVID-19 and our schools – what a month it has been!

Hello everyone.

It's now been a full month since we learned that classes were being cancelled in schools across Alberta, and more than two weeks since we got the news that funding was also being reduced for the remainder of this school year.

It seems like the time has gone very quickly – but also like this month has been about a hundred days long!

Nothing seems 'normal' about this new reality yet, but we hope families and staff are starting to feel at least a small sense of school routine beginning to emerge.

We are working hard to ensure that all students are getting the support they need, whether it be from Teachers or Educational Assistants or Family School Liaison Workers or in the form of other specialized services. If you feel like your child is not currently getting the right balance of services – whether you feel more teacher time is needed; there is too much school work for your child to complete; or you feel your child would benefit from some one-on-one conversation with a supportive listener - please be in touch with your school.

We're also developing a system to distribute Nutrition Grant dollars into our communities, so that families who have relied on breakfast or lunch programs in schools can continue to have access to provisions.

In addition to the news about layoff of bus drivers that I shared with you last week, BRSD has now, regretfully, issued layoff notices to most of BRSD's Learning Commons Facilitators and about two dozen Education Assistants at schools across our division. We have not made these decisions lightly and have tried to retain as many support staff as we possibly can. We want to stress that these notices are temporary and we very much look forward to the day we can have members of our BRSD team together again.

Once again, I'd like to express my thanks to everyone who has taken a moment to share their gratitude for the efforts of teachers and school support staff, or provide feedback on ways in which we can do even better at supporting students and families in the weeks ahead.

Take good care everyone. We will talk again soon.

Rita Marler, Superintendent of Schools

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