

Oct. 16, 2020

**Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: Students, Parents/Legal Guardians, and Staff**

With the forecast calling for scattered flurries (although it's Alberta, so that may change in the next five minutes), it is starting to look and feel like winter, which we all know is just around the corner. Let us watch out for each other as temperatures drop and as snowfall and ice result in potentially hazardous conditions.

Although the seasons may be changing once again, we can rest assured in the eternal truth that God's love for us remains steadfast: *"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, within whom there is not variation or shadow due to change"* (James 1:17).

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has confirmed one new case of COVID-19 in one of our schools, raising the total number of confirmed cases in our Division to five since the start of this school year. School and Division staff are working closely with AHS and following all [health measures](#) that we have put in place to help protect students and staff. Close contacts with the student have been notified, and the steps outlined by AHS have been strictly followed.

This positive case highlights the challenges that we all face in preventing COVID-19 from spreading further. I remind you to monitor your child(ren) for any signs or symptoms by using the [Daily Health Screening Questionnaire](#). Parents/legal guardians: please remember to complete this checklist each day, **prior** to your child(ren) attending school, and take even mild symptoms seriously, in spite of the inconvenience/frustration of your child missing school. If your child is ill or has any symptoms, keep him or her at home, call 8-1-1, and follow AHS's instructions for testing and isolating.

We thank you for having transparent, two-way, and serious conversations with your child(ren) about COVID-19 and for continually reinforcing how important it is to follow all [health and safety protocols](#). We encourage you to take advantage of AHS's recently launched [tool](#), which provides parents/legal guardians with helpful information and answers frequently asked questions. Be sure, as well, to review the updates in our [Parent Guide for School Re-entry 2020-2021](#) and the [School Re-Entry section](#) of our website.

On Oct. 13, Alberta Education [announced](#) that [diploma exams](#) for high school students will be optional for October and November 2020. Upon our Division becoming aware of this notice, I immediately sent a [letter](#), along with [Questions and Answers](#) from Alberta Education, to impacted families. In it, I provided information about this change, as well as key considerations to help students and parents/legal guardians make informed decisions that are right for them. Students are encouraged to talk to their teachers about writing diploma exams.

As you know, the situation around COVID-19 is changing rapidly. We continue to follow the direction of the province's Chief Medical Officer of Health and all levels of government on preparedness planning and will update our *School Re-Entry Plan* as required. We will keep you informed through these weekly notices, [our website](#), social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)), and other communication channels. Your child(ren)'s teacher(s) and school principal(s) can best address your concerns as they apply to [your child\(ren\)'s school](#).

We encourage you to follow all public health guidelines, including the new voluntary measures that Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health [announced](#) last week. Credible information about COVID-19 is available from [Health Canada](#), the [Government of Alberta](#), [AHS](#), and the [World Health Organization](#).

In this time of uncertainty, [praying the Rosary](#) (during this Month of the Rosary – and beyond) can help ease our anxious minds and bring peace to our troubled hearts, as we focus on the salvific mysteries of Christ in union with Mary, who was so closely associated with her Son in His redeeming activity.

I leave you with some encouraging thoughts from the Book of Deuteronomy, the words of which, although written ages ago, are as reassuring today as they were when they were first proclaimed:

*"Be strong and bold; have no fear...because it is the Lord your God who goes with you;  
He will not fail you or forsake you."* (Deuteronomy 31:6)

We can trust that God loves us, cares for us, and is a constant companion on our journeys; these are timeless truths upon which we can always depend.

Thank you for continuing to partner with us in keeping our students, their families, our staff, and our communities safe.

Blessings!

Sincerely,

Dr. Clint Moroziuk  
Superintendent of Schools