



April 9, 2020

Dear Families, Students, Staff and Community:

As we head into the long weekend, I want to take this opportunity to reach out to you to share updates and thank you again for your ongoing support. As a school district, we have had to quickly reshape what we do in our schools, in our community, and in the workplace. As we continue to navigate these unprecedented times together, we know you have also been managing substantial changes with how you live and work. While we are, each one of us, doing the very best that we can, it is comforting to know that the Burnaby community remains unwavering in its support of one another.

Continuing Learning

In addition to the conversations already had with teachers, you will be receiving a letter from your Principal next week outlining more specifics about continued learning.

While nothing can replace a teacher in a classroom or a principal in a school, the connections with our 2600 students over the past week have been heartwarming and informative. School staff parading in their own cars past students waving and cheering from inside their homes or on their lawns, to emails, letters and videos projects that touch the heart, the importance of connection during this time of physical distancing couldn't be more apparent. Teachers, students and families have been finding new ways to build community and support each other in the midst of COVID-19.

More than 28,000 users have already explored our Continuing Learning Website, which was launched last week. While certainly not intended to take the place of instruction, this site, along with the many resources listed on it, has provided students with opportunities for continued learning as teachers have focused on connecting with students, collaborating with colleagues, thinking creatively about teaching and learning, as well as planning for their classes moving forward.

Supporting Children of Essential Service Workers

While the suspension of in-class instruction has certainly put a strain on all families, many essential service workers— who are desperately needed at work on the frontlines— require support taking care of their children. To that end, the Burnaby School District is working with our local childcare providers to do just that. Together with our partners, we are providing education support and childcare services at our school sites for the children of those essential service workers in our community who need it. It is important that those who are providing critical healthcare support in our community have appropriate care for their children during the school days so they can focus on their much needed work.

Supporting Our Community

In addition to the global uncertainty, we recognize that families may face additional pressures and challenges during these difficult times. From worries about the economy, to food insecurity, to no longer having access to community resources and services that were once relied upon, please know that we are working with our community partners and agencies to assist in any way we can. We know some of our families have children with complex needs. These considerations, and more, have been top of mind for us. We are reaching out to determine how we can best support you and your child.

We are also working with our partners who have made so many of our efforts possible, including generous donations of time and food. We have been able to support many families whose children rely on our school meal program

