



From the Desk

of Silke Yardley
Superintendent, Southeast Kootenay
School District



April 6, 2020

Dear parents, guardians, students and staff:

I have heard of wonderful supports and planning that is happening in SD 5, and I will share the good things that are happening in SD 5 in the coming weeks. I am proud to say that we are in good hands; with our trustees, our district office staff, our principals and vice principals, and all of our staff and families.

Learning will look different for our students moving forward. Teachers will slowly start to provide learning opportunities for your children as they do their planning and deciding on how to share this with parents and students. I have been in communication with all principals and vice-principals on a regular basis and you will see a variety of different learning opportunities being offered in each school and within classrooms.

The Ministry of Education has provided direction to all School Districts which we are following as we do our planning and support:

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
2. Provide services to support children of essential workers.
3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.
4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

1. Maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.

- Our schools are very clean. We are following the protocols provided by the Ministry of Education and are working very closely with our custodians and principals in order to keep everyone safe. You will see a sign on the door when you come to our facilities on whom to contact if you need to enter our buildings if you are not an SD5 employee. They will ask you a series of questions in order to ensure your entry would be safe for the employees and children that may be at school. Schools also have schedules for entry for staff in order to keep a physical distance that is recommended by the Provincial Health officer. Please check our website for the information on how we are keeping staff and families safe.
- Our pandemic plan is also on our website and if there is a situation at a school, we have a plan for what to do if needed.

2. Provide services to support children of essential workers.

- There was an online survey on our website that parents could fill out if they needed care for their children which closed on Wednesday. Requests will still be considered by contacting your school principal. Once we have finalized which parents will need support, we will work with staff and are hoping to have school support set up by the end of the week.
- The Ministry has provided us direction that going forward, child care providers and schools providing care for children are for those children whose parents are employed as front-line workers in public health and health services, social services, law enforcement, first responders and emergency response. We are looking at Tier 1 Essential Services, and will wait on Ministry direction for the other Essential Services requirements.





3. Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance.

- Our team is focusing on providing mini hampers to families in need. It is very exciting to hear about the great partnerships with families, our community partners and our school district. We have also been asking schools to identify students who may be in need of a mini hamper. Please let your school principal know if you would like more information about this initiative. Food will start coming to families at some point this week.

4. Provide continuity of educational opportunities for all students.

- We have a great framework on our website that teachers and school staff can access in order to support our students. You will notice that we are not teaching the entire curriculum, but more important concepts that are grade specific.
- Schools have contacted their parents and students last week, and some may still be contacting the home this week as well. As we move forward, teachers will be contacting home once a week through a wide variety of formats, which will be shared to parents by their teachers in the coming weeks.
- Teachers are busy planning for learning for students and they will slowly start to share the information with parents and students in the next while. Learning will look different and you will see from our framework there are recommended hours of learning for children depending on the grades. This way of learning is new for many of us, and this may take a bit of time to get up and running.

Technology update:

Our team has been working hard on keeping us up to date on the technology that we can use and supporting staff in a variety of ways on these platforms. They have also created a repository of resources for staff, students and parents that is available on our website called "remote learning".

You may have heard about Zoom as a tool that the Ministry has provided for us. I would also really recommend this tool to continue to be connected to your own families during this time where we don't have face to face connections with people. Here is the information on how to download this.:

ZOOM

Here is how to download the Free Zoom App with Basic Features

Quick Link to [Download Zoom Now](#)

How to Schedule:

1. Log in to the **Zoom** application.
2. Select **Schedule**.
3. Select the **meeting** options.

Tap Done to finish **scheduling**.

Zoom invites will come into their calendar with a link to click on.

The following FAQ from the Ministry of Education ([link here](#)) that is on our website will give much more information on questions that you may have.

Please take care of yourselves and your families.

Best regards,

Silke Yardley

Please click [here](#) for access to our website and the most current information.

