

Response Planning Team Update

The Education Response Planning Team (Ministry, LEADS, SASBO, SSBA, STF) met again today as we continue to support the education system in our response to COVID-19.

Our thanks for your ongoing and coordinated efforts to address the urgent and emergent needs of students, staff and school communities as we prepare to close schools. Thank you for your leadership and support in doing all of this while also holding conference calls, continuing planning, and bringing forth key questions, feedback and issues to the Response Planning Team (RPT).

One of the questions we have been getting is around communications protocols, which is something we discussed today. A coordinated provincial response is critical. Going forward the RPT, responses, direction, sector updates and key messages will be sent from the Education Response Planning Team to Board Chairs and Directors. Divisions are expected to share this information with their staff shortly after receiving it. Following this, the organizations involved will share the same messages with their members. It is very important, as the situation evolves rapidly we are sharing the same messages and not get ahead of ourselves and the direction of the Chief Medical Health Officer. As such here are key updates and messages from our meeting today:

- The Premier and Minister have indicated that students will progress, and that those students who are eligible to graduate will do so.
- The parameters and a framework for education delivery and grading is yet to be established but work is underway.
- We expect that teachers will have opportunities to continue learning activities after March 27. You don't need to rush and finalize grades. There will still be opportunities for students to progress on the mark they have at this time. We are not closing off the school year at this time.
- In the upcoming week, as recommended by the Chief Medical Health Officer, it is most important for staff to pause, be able to enact social distancing and focus on the care and well-being of themselves and their families. Further direction will be coming from school divisions in term of plans for next steps in the context of the COVID-19 response.
- The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation does have sanctions in place. If those sanction conditions change, the STF will notify school division administrations. If you have questions about alignment with local school division continuity plans, please contact the STF.
- During the week of March 20 to March 27 inclusive, school divisions will continue to carry out their continuity plans being mindful of the health directives in place, which includes processing payroll, infrastructure care, etc. Some school staff may be asked to carry out these duties, and those decisions are being made and communicated at the local school division level.
- While the suspension of classes has been deemed to be indefinite, it is not known what timeframe will be involved as this will depend on decisions made by Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Health Officer.
- Thank you for your continued efforts to work together, share information and ensure the education system is providing a coordinated response.

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