



**March 18, 2020**

**Re: Education Sector Update (PSE, Public K-12, LNIB K-7 School, & Head Start)**

As the COVID-19 virus presents new challenges on a daily basis I want to be sure all external communications we receive and all actions we execute as a sector are shared as often with both LNIB members and those involved within our school community.

- We experienced a technical challenge today at LNIB School when accessing parent email addresses; however, we were able to execute a social media blitz via Facebook to provide everyone with yesterday's communication and let parents know to check both LNIB Website and LNIB Facebook on a daily basis for updates. If you hear of anyone from the school who did not receive our messages please let them know all information can be accessed via LNIB Facebook and website. I was also informed by our manager of Head Start that everyone involved with our program had been communicated with this information today as well.
- We would like to remind all Post-Secondary Education students to let us know if they are experiencing any unique challenges due to the changes being made to their studies. We have already received a few requests from students for tutors and we will continue to provide supports as needed. Please also note there will be no disruptions with living allowances and that all financial schedules will remain the same as previous months.
- While K-12 classroom instruction is suspended, it is expected that schools plan to implement a variety of measures to ensure continued learning for students. More information to support our planning processes around the continuity of learning, as well as other planning efforts, will be forthcoming by the Ministry of Education over the coming days. Once we are provided with this information we will then start communicating with our teachers and begin putting plans together as per Ministry direction.
- We receive communication material from SD58 on a regular basis throughout the year and earlier tonight I received a letter from the Superintendent that I thought I would include with this update to ensure his message is reaching everyone who may be involved with one of the local public schools.



- Access to up-to-date information is vital when serious situations are occurring around us, and as such, to ensure everyone has a direct line to my team if communication is needed here are the numbers to reach them at:

**School/Head Start**

Angie Sterling 236-575-2116

Tamika Bob 236-575-2131

Sioux Swakum 236-575-2128

**Education Department**

Sharon Parsons 236-575-2105

Gail LaRochelle 236-575-2104

Rhonda Dunn 236-575-2100

I would also like to encourage all LNIB Members who have children attending school anywhere outside the Nicola Valley to reach out to us as we are both willing and professionally equipped to assist in advocating for any K-12 situation needing support.

I can be reached directly at [Shane.Coutlee@lnib.net](mailto:Shane.Coutlee@lnib.net) and/or 236.575.2135. Please feel free to call me anytime, including evenings or weekends, as I know regular work hours does not always fit with everyone's schedule. Please note I may not always be by my phone outside regular hours; however, I will always return your call within 24 hours or soon after your message is left if it is not too late in the day to call back.

Respectfully,

Shane Coutlee  
Director of Education



**THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58 (NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN)**

**ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

Stephen McNiven, B.Ed., M.A., Superintendent of Schools  
Barbara Ross, C.P.A., C.G.A., Secretary Treasurer

P.O. Box 4100, 1550 Chapman Street, Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8, Phone: (250) 378-5161, Fax: (250) 378-6263

March 18, 2020

Good afternoon,

Today we are writing to provide you with an update on our response to the Provincial Health Officer direction to suspend in-class instruction in the B.C. school system. Here in School District No. 58, as in other districts, any decisions we make will take into consideration our top priority, which is the health and safety of our students, staff and community. With that primary priority in mind, our next steps will be:

- putting strategies in place to help support the basic needs of our vulnerable students and families as well as the social-emotional well-being of our general learning community;
- putting measures in place to provide an opportunity for the ongoing learning of all of our students; and
- providing some level of service for children of people who are performing essential services in our community.

It is important to clarify that schools are not closed, but that in-class instruction is suspended. How the priorities above will be operationalized will be determined over the next two to three weeks and will likely evolve as things continue to change.

We will work with community organizations to support the basic needs of our vulnerable students and we will be putting into place the tools needed to provide a level of online learning opportunities as we move forward. The plan for supporting the children of those performing essential services will be developed through further consultation with both the Province and other school districts as we move forward.

We understand that many questions remain and that these are difficult times; however, we want to assure you that we are working to put the necessary measures in place while prioritizing the health and safety of our students, staff and community.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen McNiven  
Superintendent of Schools