



May 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

Greetings Parents & Guardians,

On Tuesday, the NWT Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) released '[Emerging Wisely](#)', which outlines how the CPHO plans to safely, gradually and wisely ease public health restrictions while continuing to respond to COVID-19.

As part of Phase 1 of the plan, the CPHO has indicated that it is safe to reopen schools, as long as schools can demonstrate they are able to follow additional rules to support required physical distancing and increased levels of daily cleaning and sanitizing.

All education bodies agree that this is encouraging news, and that the information provided by the CPHO about what factors need to be considered when conducting detailed risk assessments will be very helpful in the planning process to reopen schools safely.

Circumstances vary greatly across regions and communities in terms of capacity to reopen schools at this time. Schools are facing a number of complex operational challenges, which include the absence of many teachers, and most anticipate being unable to complete the plans needed to reopen prior to the end of the school year. As a result, education bodies have decided collectively not to reopen schools for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

With the Minister of Education Culture and Employment's support, education bodies have agreed to make use of the new recommendations of the CPHO to inform our ongoing planning for the 2020-21 school year to ensure strong health and safety practices are put in place for staff, students and their families.

While classes have been cancelled teachers and admin teams across the district have been working hard to ensure learning continues for our students. Currently the schools across the Beaufort Delta in consultation with the BDDEC central office staff are continuing to put the following supports in place for students and families:

- District Business Continuity Plan was created by BDDEC senior management team in consultation with ECE.
- Individual School Continuity of Learning Plans were developed by school leadership teams in consultation with BDDEC senior management.
- 49 modems were purchased by BDDEC to be given to families in need of Internet connections.
- All families in Inuvik are invited to access the school network for educational purposes in a new partnership with New North Networks.


- Turbo sticks are purchased and made available to Grade 12 students who need access to the Internet. Students are provided with 10 GBs of data per month with turbo sticks.
- User-friendly visual schedules provided to parents and/or caregivers with precise information regarding establishing routines at home for students with complex needs.
- Program Support Teachers (PSTs) and Support Assistants (SAs) have been following up with families to ensure routines are customized/tailored to each individual family's needs.
- Teachers have been available via email, telephone and online learning platforms to support students.
- BDDEC is currently working on a plan to increase the bandwidth capacity of school networks outside of Inuvik in the Beaufort and Delta communities.

We will now be working with ECE and our colleagues across other education bodies to develop guidance that will allow us to follow the Emerging Wisely instructions and develop comprehensive plans to ensure that schools can reopen safely for the upcoming school year.

We will continue to work closely with ECE, the NWTTA and our education partners on continued learning for all NWT students for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, and to discuss options for the coming 2020-21 school year based on the most up-to-date advice and recommendations from the CPHO.

I thank you for your hard work and understanding in supporting your children at home. We know this has been a trying time for everyone. If you have feedback or ideas on how we can support home learning, more please feel free to contact me at [frankg@bdec.nt.ca](mailto:frankg@bdec.nt.ca) or at the district office at 1-867-777-2332 ext 506. We can all get through this together with understanding and support. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

  
Frank Galway

Superintendent of Schools  
Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council