***Durham District School Board***

***The following message is being sent to Elementary and Secondary Principals and Vice Principals, Managers, Education Officers, and Superintendents***

Please find below FAQs regarding school closures in response to COVID-19. The FAQs will be posted to our board website, excluding the “Impact on Staff” component, and updated regularly as new information becomes available. We will make sure to provide the most up-to-date information to you as further decisions are made. Thank you for your patience as we work through this evolving situation.

**Impact on Students**
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**Will the OSSLT scheduled for March 31 be cancelled?**
Given the school closures, the OSSLT will not take place as previously scheduled on March 31, 2020. Information will be provided if it is rescheduled.  Students who require the test to graduate will be supported.

**Will students be provided with online learning opportunities during the closure?**
The DDSB has learning resources for all grades which can be accessed at the following link:
<https://www.ddsb.ca/en/programs-and-learning/optional-continuous-student-learning-at-home.aspx>

**Will students be at risk of not graduating?**
We do not anticipate that the province’s decision will have any impact on secondary school graduation.

**Will this impact mid-term marks?**
Students will not be penalized for missed work or assessments.

**My current mark is low and I was looking to improve it before the mid-term marks are in. Will this closure impact my marks?**
We will be reviewing this issue to mitigate, where possible, any negative impact to students.

**Will this impact college and university applications?**
At this stage, we have not heard the plan from colleges and universities. We encourage families to check with the colleges or universities to which the application(s) was submitted.

**Will co-op placements continue during this time?**
All co-op placements are not occurring during this time.

**Should students in dual credit programs attend their college/university classes?**
We are currently awaiting further information from our partners in colleges and universities. We will provide you with more details as it becomes available.

**Will the school year be extended into the summer months?**
We have not received this direction from the Ministry of Education. The decision to extend the school year would be made by the Ministry.

**Impact on Staff**

**Will school staff be expected to be at work?**
Most school-based staff will not be expected to be at work between March 14, 2020 and April 5, 2020.  Staff who are deemed to act in essential service capacity will be assigned as necessary by their supervisor.  All other staff, including those located at the Education Centre will be directed accordingly by their supervisor.

Following the completion of the March Break on Sunday, March 22, it is expected that all staff remain accessible and do not travel. Thus, it should be assumed that one would normally be available if the two-week shutdown period were not in place. Travelling, and specifically international travel, increases the risk of contracting COVID-19. Travel during or extending holidays during the shutdown period would contradict the intent of this closure to interrupt the pandemic.

**Will staff be paid during this time?**
All permanent staff and those in long-term assignments will continue to be paid their regular pay.

**Will the closure period be different for modified calendar schools?**
No. The closure runs from March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020.

**​​Will the Education Centre be open to the public during this time?**
The Education Centre will be closed to the public for the duration

**Will staff be permitted to work virtually?**
Staff who are able, will be permitted to work from home.  All staff who would otherwise be at their regular worksite are required to be available and check communication channels on a regular basis.

**Programs and Child Care Centres**

**Will child care centres continue to operate?**
All Child Care Centres will be closed for the period of March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020.  This also includes EarlyON programs and Youth Hubs.

**​Will Adult and Continuing Education classes and programs continue?**
These programs will be cancelled during the closure from March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020.

**Will March Break programs in schools continue?**
Given that DDSB Schools are closed for the period of March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020, any programs scheduled to run over the March Break will be cancelled.

**​Other Impacts**

**Will permits be cancelled?**
All Community Use of Schools permits will be cancelled between March 14, 2020 to April 5, 2020.

**What will happen to out of province trips?**
All board sanctioned trips scheduled to depart up until May 15, 2020 will be cancelled and no additional new trips will be booked until further notice.

**​Can the schools reopen prior to April 5, 2020?**
The Ministerial order is that all schools remain closed from March 14th until April 5th.

Jim Markovski
Superintendent of Education
Dunbarton HS and Pine Ridge SS Family of Schools / Early Years / Poverty Strategy / Foundation
Durham District School Board