

# Providence Christian School

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## Update #7 on COVID 19 and its impact on school operations.

Dear parents,

We have made it past the first four days of 'a new normal'. We do not know exactly what the next week will bring, other than that *'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.'*

Psalm 97: 1&9

In the last update we tried to illustrate how important it is that we consistently [apply social distancing practices](#). On Wednesday that was underlined when the news reported that on that day alone 475 people died of COVID 19 in Italy. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if Italians had taken social distancing more seriously just two or three weeks earlier. We are at the beginning of that three-week stage now. Our intentional isolation in our homes is very important. The [chief medical officer](#) made it clear that the point of school closures is not merely that the students are not together in school but ... that they are not together. The point is that they are home where they will not be infected by anyone or infect anyone else. They should keep away from others who could pass the virus on to them. While we as teachers would love to invite some students to school for one-on-one tutoring sessions or come to your home to help for a bit, we cannot and we should not. Instead we will use the phone, Facetime, texting, Zoom, Loom, Whatsapp video, etc. to connect ... from a distance.

Wisdom, prudence and caution should convince us all to severely limit our live interactions.

A note from our partners in education, the Prairie Centre of Christian Education:

*We are hearing regularly: "these are unprecedented times." And this usually is connected to negative events such as the price of oil dropping, church services cancelled or the amount of toilet paper people have accumulated.*

*How about if we, the Christian community, match these unprecedented times with unprecedented love? Where we are the ones to offer to shop for our elderly neighbor. Where we keep our physical distance but are intentionally emotionally connected to the more vulnerable in our communities. What if at the end of the pandemic, people said: "That was really tough, but the church (that is us) was a real light in the darkness?"*

*Think of it this way:*

- *Every hand that we don't shake becomes a phone call that we place.*
- *Every embrace that we avoid becomes a verbal expression of warmth and concern.*
- *Every inch and every foot that we physically place between ourselves and another, becomes a thought as to how we might be of help to that other, should the need arise.*

In a recent sermon pastor Max Lucado shared his thoughts on the question, 'What is God telling us?' He stressed that this is a time that God is talking to the world and testing the church. He stressed that we as God's people must think more of and about God than we think about the trouble of COVID 19. "The battle is the Lord's" We must turn our attention away from the problem and toward The Provider. <https://vimeo.com/397823411?fbclid=IwAR0jXX93mXXx05AGclbiuemXH6vzbGPDa3aedKFMglQSBQwR-bDlyN1B3OQ>

## Now just a few words to understand our new normal at Providence Christian School.

**School is not cancelled. Parents are not expected to homeschool**

School is not cancelled or closed, but the building is closed to students. Schooling is ongoing but students and teachers do not share the same space. Parents are not expected to homeschool. In a homeschool environment, parents are responsible for planning, delivery and assessment of the learning content.

In our current situation, we look to parents to participate in the delivery of the program but we as teachers will continue to be responsible for the planning and assessment, and some of the delivery.

It does pose the problem for all of us how to do this exactly. We know pretty well what the students have to learn, but our vehicle of getting that to them has changed. Education in the building is mostly a synchronous process, with learning occurring simultaneously for all the students in a class. Learning at home happens in much more of an asynchronous manner<sup>1</sup> where students will learn at different times and rates but eventually come out to the same spot. We recognize this not only as a difference but also as an opportunity. Now that we are at a situation in which our students are not in a building, asynchronous learning will happen either by design or by circumstance, and that may be not be such a bad thing.

We realize that you did not sign up to be facilitators of asynchronous learning, just as the teachers did not apply to be distance learning teachers. This, however, is the situation which is assigned to us. You unexpectedly have a job to do which you did not put on your schedule and we recognize that it takes some serious adjustments. We must work together to try find the balance between too little and too much work, too little to learn and too much stress. We will not find that balance unless we communicate with each other with patience and care. Without adult cooperation the children will not advance as they should.

So, after this week of transition we think that next week we can settle into an organized, efficient and friendly on-line ways to do things. The staff has been amazingly productive and creative this week. We had daily collaborative sessions in which we shared our skills with technologies and our experiences with teaching strategies. It was our aim to find a way of communication with parents that is centred around one or two single sources and a way of enabling students to learn new things without being limited by the isolation of social distancing.

Here is what we think it will look like. As of Monday, we will use mostly electronic means of communication with the Intermediate and High School students and weekly care packages for the Primary grades.

The packages of work for the K-3 students will be delivered to your home every Monday morning by your regular bus driver. Between 9:00 and 10:30 he will stop by to make the delivery. If there is anything to return, he will take that back to school then. We will try to limit the need for return material as much as possible. In addition the K-3 teachers will make generous use of the [SeeSaw](https://web.seesaw.me) application <https://web.seesaw.me> that they and many of the parents are already used to.

The central point of communication for the grade 4 – 12 students, teachers, and parents will be [Google Classroom](https://classroom.google.com). <https://classroom.google.com> All of the student's assignments will be posted there. The posted work, resources, videos, Docs, submitted assignments, comments, marking, etc. will all happen within the 'Classrooms' which the teachers have set up. It will keep a clear record of assignments posted, handed in, and marked. Classroom will automatically send out email notifications to students and some summary emails to parents. There is no need to immediately respond to the emails. A trip to the Classroom will show all of that material in one place.

For further explanations regarding the use of Classroom see Mrs. Reitsema's tutorials videos listed at the end of this document.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.elearners.com/education-resources/degrees-and-programs/synchronous-vs-asynchronous-classes/>

To summarize our current situation:

- We have completed our week of transition. Staff has been at school every day to collaborate and work on plans to continue to offer a quality educational program. We have developed a delivery model that we will use mostly electronic means of communication with the Intermediate and High School students and weekly care packages for the Primary grades.
- Our bus drivers will do their route on Monday morning and deliver the packages to the homes between 9:00 and 10:30
- Many of the school laptops and chrome books have already been put out to parents on loan. If you still need one, please contact Miss Feyter.
- Virtual learning and electronic submission of work does require a unique set of rules of behaviour (etiquette). Everything the students submits must mention their name, class, grade, submission title, and date. This is true for emails as well. Please, mention name, class, grade, title, and date in the subject line
- Grade 4 -12 assignments will be posted on Classroom a day at a time to allow the students wise use of time and opportunity to contact the teacher for help with each lesson. Due dates will usually be toward the end of the week, leaving room for asynchronous completion by students and sufficient time for marking by the teacher.
- Provincial assessments, such as provincial achievement tests, have been cancelled by the minister of Education. Diploma exams essential for post-secondary acceptance are still scheduled to continue. It is not clear at this time how the ministry will deal with assessments and grading of all other learning at the end of the year. We do have the time to learn more about that later. We encourage students to continue with their best effort on their work, regardless of how what assessment arrangements will be made at the end.
- The Elementary report cards have been prepared as planned. They will be distributed Monday morning. Please note that the teachers entered the marks and comments before the day that the decision of school building closures was made. Some of the comments referring to expectations for the third term will now be redundant or out of place.
- The Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences are still scheduled for Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, but they will not be on-site conversations. Instead teachers will arranged telephone calls or video calls.
- Schools are establishing protocols for persons entering their building. These protocols are typically posted on a sheet at the entry to the building and include a sign indicating there would be a request for visitors to answer some basic questions when they entered the main office suite.
  - Have you travelled out of country in the past 14 days?
  - Have you experienced any of the symptoms of the COVID-19 virus.in the past 14 days?
  - Please provide a telephone number in the event you need to be contacted in the future.

We advise all families and staff to follow the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) recommendations:

- Staying home from work when sick or with a temperature of 100.4°F at any time in the previous 24 hours. Staying home from work for 14 days if someone in your household has been exposed to COVID-19, or has been quarantined due to travel to an affected area or exposure to the virus. Persons who are not well, who have any symptoms of illness, should stay home and not join gatherings with other people. This even applies to periods of apparent allergic reactions that may temporarily be confused with COVID 19 like symptoms.
- Avoiding contact with people who are sick.
- Covering a cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash. If no tissue, sneezing or coughing into elbow, not hands.
- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always washing hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoiding touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Do not shake hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting work areas, frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Please do your part in preventing the spread of the virus.

- Please keep your children at home.
- Use zero tolerance practices.
- Practise good hygiene.

We are thankful for the parent support which we have experienced this week and we seek your prayers for the 'new normal' learning process that we are embarking on together. We desire that every effort and achievement will be to the glory of God and to the blessing to our students and families.

Mr. H. VanderHoek

Principal

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- Anyone who has health concerns or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should contact Health Link 811 to see if follow up testing is required.
  - Daily updates from Alberta Health:  
<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx#toc-9>
  - The Chief Medical Officer's Record of Decision, which is the official order explaining the steps that have been taken in regard to schools and ECS providers can be found here:  
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/educ-record-of-decision-cmoh.pdf>
  - For recommendations on protecting yourself and your community, visit [alberta.ca/COVID19](http://alberta.ca/COVID19).
  - Anyone who has questions about travel, self-monitoring and self-isolation, [read this](#):  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-ncov-2019-public-faq.pdf>
  - If you have doubts whether to take this health crisis seriously:  
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/03/13/opinion/coronavirus-cautionary-tale-italy-dont-do-what-we-did/>  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/corona-virus-covid-19-1.5499872>
  - Sym and Sam do not want Mr. Selles to get sick.
  - [http://www.pcsmonarch.com/editoruploads/files/The\\_principal\\_about\\_Social\\_distancing\\_v3.mov](http://www.pcsmonarch.com/editoruploads/files/The_principal_about_Social_distancing_v3.mov)
  - Social distancing works:  
[https://qz.com/1816060/a-chart-of-the-1918-spanish-flu-shows-why-social-distancing-works/?fbclid=IwAR1w1qVkrVbmEq5m6jba6V9D1LjaRR\\_98vclqaC-dSdrxe6hRW-1iN4pzEg](https://qz.com/1816060/a-chart-of-the-1918-spanish-flu-shows-why-social-distancing-works/?fbclid=IwAR1w1qVkrVbmEq5m6jba6V9D1LjaRR_98vclqaC-dSdrxe6hRW-1iN4pzEg)
  - Why do we need social distancing? :  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKJI1p73LQk&fbclid=IwAR30-HHb2loNE60B0QZcHhxtQojXdp2OXyuPAxqAEo7rWqtCtz6GZcmO8ho>
  - Also [this video](#) about handwashing  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HulpYYaQ2Dg&app=desktop>
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- How 'regular school' parents can homeschool their children:  
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/16/health/homeschooling-during-coronavirus-wellness/index.html>
  - Twelve famous museums you can visit for free, from home:  
[https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours?utm\\_source=facebook.com&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=social-share-article&utm\\_content=20200313&fbclid=IwAR1PJ46VnGrkQ2iCKwDBe3oR0xd2TL8Cvb2hTYnd75PEGhP5b00GpFIM6Dg](https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=social-share-article&utm_content=20200313&fbclid=IwAR1PJ46VnGrkQ2iCKwDBe3oR0xd2TL8Cvb2hTYnd75PEGhP5b00GpFIM6Dg)
  - Mrs. Reitsema's tutorial for parents – How to sign into Google Classroom and help your child to upload finished work.  
<https://www.loom.com/share/73d68c32de1042469c359e0983bfa572>
  - How to use your child's Google Classroom page.  
<https://www.loom.com/share/836cf88b6b4e4454981c5cac9222e03d>