



Hastings and Prince Edward
District School Board

Possibilities
TODAY & TOMORROW

Lucille Kyle, Chair of the Board
Sean Monteith, Director of Education

March 11, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Families and Staff:

Subject: Cancellation of International School Trips Outside Canada

Like many of you, staff and Board administration have been watching the evolving events around the world as they pertain to *COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)*, and the responding actions being taken by countries, governments and even school boards. The Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is no exception. Due to the increasing concern about the spread of COVID-19, the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is cancelling all international school trips effective immediately; the sole reason for this action at this time is safety of our students, staff and traveling chaperones.

This cancellation comes amid travel advisories for much of Europe and Asia to try to contain any further spread of the virus, and follows extensive conversations with local health authorities, the provincial and government representatives through the Ministry of Education, and school boards across Ontario.

I recognize that this will be very disappointing to our students, staff and your families; however, we are not prepared to risk illness for unnecessary travel, and equally unprepared to compromise safety in any way.

Our schools are working with the respective travel companies to investigate options for accessing refunds. Please contact your child's school if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sean Monteith
Director of Education
Hastings and Prince Edward District School



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Lucille Kyle, Chair of the Board
Sean Monteith, Director of Education

March 9, 2020

To HPEDSB Families, Guardians and All Staff:

The health and safety of all students and employees is our top priority. We are working collaboratively with both the regional public health authority and our co-terminus school boards to remain proactive in our response and sensitivity to the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) situation and your possible concerns.

At this time, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) continues to advise that the risk to the public remains low. Also, HPEPH advises that, as of now, there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in our region.

At this time, the following actions are being taken at HPEDSB schools and administrative buildings to help prevent the spread of infection:

- increased environmental cleaning (using a low-level disinfectant), with particular attention to high-touch surfaces such as desks, door knobs, light switches, phones;
- additional education to school populations regarding infection control strategies, such as importance of hand hygiene and proper respiratory etiquette; and
- providing alcohol-based hand sanitizer for front entrances and non-alcohol-based hand sanitizer for classrooms (with supervised access).

Public health also recommends the following infection control strategies for everyone:

- wash your hands frequently using soap and water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- cough and sneeze into the bend of your arm, not into your hand;
- if you use a tissue, throw it away immediately and wash your hands;
- avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes with your hands;
- get plenty of rest, eat healthy and stay physically active to keep your immune system strong;
- stay home when you are sick and avoid contact with other people until you are better;
- if you suspect you are sick, avoid visiting people in long-term care, or individuals with health concerns; and
- if you are seeking medical care and are experiencing respiratory symptoms, always put on a mask when you arrive to help protect others.

We are committed to providing you with updates as we receive new information. The most current information about COVID-19 is on our website at www.HPEschools.ca, including links to local, provincial and national public health agencies.

Additional resources are available at the HPEPH website, <https://hpepublichealth.ca/>. You can also call the Infectious and Communicable Diseases Program intake line at 613-966-5500 x349, talk to your doctor or call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000.

Thank you for your support as we work to minimize the risk and spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Sean Monteith
Director of Education