

March 27, 2020

Dear Morrish Public School Families,

This past week has been very challenging for everyone. I greatly appreciate your patience, support and understanding as I work with staff on how we deliver and support learning at home for our students. We have made remarkable progress and by now, you all would have received communication from your child's teacher. This year's spring will be very different from what any of us had planned. We are working to find a path forward that will meet the many needs of our community.

While things are changing rapidly, here is what I can share right now:

- **School Closure Period** - Schools were originally scheduled to be closed until April 5th. Yesterday, the Premier announced that the closure would extend beyond that date. At this time, I do not have any more information about the length of the closure. I understand the Ministry will be providing more information and I will share that when it becomes available.
- **Learning Resources** - I am committed to sharing resources to help engage students, parents and families. Last week the Ministry of Education released their [Learn At Home resources](#). This week, the TDSB has posted [additional learning resources](#) on their website. I know that finding time to access these resources can be challenging for some families and other families may be looking for additional and more specific resources. These resources are not a substitute for in-class instruction, but rather a first step in promoting learning based activities, and will be updated as we move forward.
- **Continuity of Learning** - While we await further Ministry direction, I am proactively working with staff to develop a learning plan. We know that it is not possible to replicate the school day online, but it is possible to identify key curricular concepts, and establish new ways for teacher collaboration, instruction and assessment. We recognize that families have many questions about how learning will continue and we will expect to bring clarity to this over the next few weeks.
- **Staying Connected** - Watch for emails from Morrish PS and the TDSB, phone calls, and/or social media feeds (website and twitter) for more information.

- **Students with Special Education Needs** - Our staff is working on learning plans that include strategies to support students with specialized learning needs. The school cannot provide in person support during this period of social distancing. We are exploring opportunities for connection with students with special education needs.
- **Access to Schools and Playgrounds** - Access to all school buildings is completely restricted at this time. I know that our school yard is an important green space for our community, however, I ask that each of you practice social distancing in this area. Play structures have been closed and basketball nets have been removed.
- **Toronto Public Health Website for COVID-19 Updates-**
<https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/>
- **Mental Health and Well-being** – I understand that this is a stressful time for everyone. There are a variety of Mental Health and Well-Being Resources for students and families available on the TDSB website. The TDSB has compiled a [list of online resources](#) that provide information and tips to support mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, please take time to engage in physical movement with your children as it is critical to well-being, reduce screen time, and promote family communication/conversation. Board games, cooking/baking, crafts, and other "unplugged" family activities also engage children and stimulate learning. Maintaining regular sleeping, waking, meal time routines are also critical to sustaining living and working from home times for both children and adults, as everyone learns to accomplish tasks and re-organize time and space in these temporary "new normal" times.

These are unprecedented times and I assure you that we are working diligently to ensure that learning continues for our students. The obstacles set before us as a school, city, province, nation and global community has and will continue to test our character. Let us rise to the challenge with courage, compassion, generosity and humility.

Take care of yourselves and each other. Please continue to practice safe social distancing. I hope you and your family stay safe and healthy.

I remain committed to sharing information with you as soon as it becomes available.

Be well.



Arif Nathoo
Principal