



Lori Wilder, *Director of Education*

Bluewater District School Board

351 1st Avenue North - PO Box 190
Chesley ON N0G 1L0
Telephone: (519) 363-2014
Fax: (519) 370-2909
www.bwdsb.on.ca

December 22, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As recently announced by the provincial government, all publicly funded schools in Ontario will remain closed to students for a period following the holiday break as part of a province-wide shutdown to help manage the spread of COVID-19. [Click here to view the provincial media release.](#)

Our schools in Bluewater District School Board will be impacted as follows:

Elementary

All elementary students will switch to full remote learning following the holiday break beginning on **Monday, January 4, 2021**. Unless otherwise determined by the provincial government, **in-person learning will return on Monday, January 11, 2021** when elementary schools reopen to students.

Secondary

All secondary students will switch to full remote learning following the holiday break beginning on **Monday, January 4, 2021**. Unless otherwise determined by the provincial government, **in-person learning will return on Monday, January 25, 2021** when secondary schools reopen to students. Dual credit and co-op programs may continue virtually during this three-week period.

As communicated in my [December 17, 2020 letter to parents/guardians](#), elementary and secondary schools will utilize the online learning environment (Office 365 suite, Brightspace) for daily lessons. Your child(ren) will receive further instructions on getting set up, along with details for online expectations on January 4, 2021. If you do not have your child(ren)'s Active Directory login(s) and password(s), this information can be provided at that time.

Special Education

Parents/guardians of children attending a special education class placement will be contacted on January 4, 2021 to discuss access to remote learning.

Access to Internet/Technology

For those families requiring assistance with access to reliable internet and/or devices, schools will be reaching out to you individually based on their previous assessments of the needs within their school communities on January 4, 2021.

Student Transportation

No student transportation services will be provided during the week of January 4, 2021. Student transportation will resume on January 11, 2021.

Remote School

For elementary and secondary students who are already attending the Remote School, it will be business as usual when classes resume on Monday, January 4, 2021.

Child Care/Before and After School Programs

While child care centres in schools will remain open during this one-week period, they will be prohibited from serving school-aged children. Families may wish to contact their child care providers to determine their availability during the week of January 4, 2021. Further details regarding emergency child care for school-aged children will be released shortly by the Ministry of Education.

Before and after school programs will be cancelled during this one-week period.

Mental Health Resources

During this critical time, I also want you to be aware of the mental health resources that are available to support students and families, including Kids Help Phone, which offers 24/7 counselling and referral services across the province. To use this free resource, children can call 1-800-668-6868, or text CONNECT to 686868. School Mental Health Ontario also has many helpful resources for students, parents/guardians, and families on their website at www.smho-smso.ca. Please visit our board's mental health and well-being web page for additional resources at www.bwdsb.on.ca/students/mental_health.

Learning Resources

Online resources are available to support students during this time. Visit the 'resources' section on our Remote Learning web page at www.bwdsb.on.ca/families_community/remote_learning. The Ministry of Education has also launched two new portals, [TVO Learn](#) and [TFO IDÉLLO, apprendre à la maison](#), which provide supports for learning remotely through access to additional educational resources developed by Ontario certified teachers. Secondary students can continue to access TVO's [Independent Learning Centre \(ILC\) Open House](#) and [Portes ouvertes pour les cours TVO ILC](#) in French.

Thank you for your continued patience, understanding, and support as we work through this closure period. Please remember that we are here to support your child(ren)'s learning and a smooth transition to remote learning for all our families, and will get through this together as we have in the past. In the meantime, I hope you will be able to take time to enjoy the holidays, even if celebrations may look and feel a bit different this year.

Sincerely,



Lori Wilder
Director of Education