



March 19, 2020

Aanii Community Members and WBE Staff,

RE: Closure of WBE Education Buildings: Mar. 23-Apr. 6, 2020

As you are aware, the Wikwemikong Board of Education has closed its doors for face-to-face learning for students due to the Coronavirus. In addition to this, the following will apply:

Community Use of Schools:

- All Community Use of Schools for gym rentals for the period of March 17-April 5 will be canceled. This will include the Youth Center and Before-and-After School programming.

School Events:

- All specialized program that include out-of-community visitors such as Strings Across the Sky and other programming are postponed or cancelled.

Field Trips:

- All field trips, including international trips, for the closure period are cancelled or postponed. All international and out-of-town trips will be cancelled until April 30, 2020.

EQAO Assessments:

- All EQAO Assessments are cancelled.

WBE Board Meetings:

- The upcoming WBE Board Meeting is cancelled.

Hub Center:

- All programming for the early years at the Hub Center is cancelled.

Staff Travel:

- All work-related travel is cancelled. If you have travel planned during this closure, please cancel them.

Student Placements:

- Student placements for Co-op are postponed. More details to come.
- Teacher-Candidate Placements are cancelled until further notice.
- ECE Candidate Placements are cancelled until further notice.

School Programming:

- Adult and Alternative Education is cancelled.

Indian Day-School Inquiries:

- The WBE will not be processing requests during the school closure.

Furthermore, the WBE has had numerous questions from Wiikwemkoong community members and Education Staff. We hope by answering the following questions we can provide clarification for the following:

STUDENT IMPACTS:

Will the schools still proceed with EQAO assessments?

No. The Minister of Education has provided direction to cancel all Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments for the 2019-20 school year.

Will high school students expecting to graduate for the 2019-2020 school year be required to complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)?

No. The Education Minister has directed that the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) be waived as a graduation requirement, as set out in Section 6 of Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2016, for students who are otherwise able to graduate in the 2019-20 school year. These changes provide the conditions to enable students to fulfill graduation requirements in our current context.

What about Student Nutrition?

Primary caregivers can pick food vouchers at Andy's for \$25.00/child starting March 25, 2020.

My child does not have access to a laptop or tablet. Will the WBE support my child with a device?

Yes. Please contact Josie jtober@wbe-education.ca

IMPACT ON INSTRUCTION, ASSESSMENT AND GRADUATION:

Will students be provided with learning opportunities during the closure of the Junior School, Pontiac School and Wiikwemkoong High School?

Yes. Information will be sent to the community about this. Principals and teachers will reach out to parents about how this programming will be rolled out for students.

Will students be at risk of not graduating?

No. The teachers from the Wiikwemkoong High School will provide learning for students. Keep up with your assignments.

Will this impact mid-term reports?

Yes. The principal will provide an update for this.

Will this impact college and university applications?

No. Please apply to the Wiikwemkoong Post-Secondary Student Support Services online. Applications for funding for 2020/2021 school year are due on June 1, 2020.

Will the school year be extended into the summer months?

No. Our teachers are planning to provide parents with student learning opportunities. Parents will support their child to complete assignments.

STAFF IMPACTS:

Do I need to physically be present for the 2 Day Planning Session on March 23-24?

No. Arrange with your principal/supervisor to meet virtually. Use Microsoft Teams to have a meeting online.

I have young children to care for at home and do not have childcare to attend the Planning Session on March 23-24. Will this be a problem?

No. Reach out to your principal/supervisor to discuss.

I am not feeling well. What do I do now?

Please self-isolate and take care of yourself. Do not attend the 2-day planning session in person. Stay home. Arrange with your principal/supervisor to meet virtually.

I just came back from a family trip over March Break. What do I do?

If you are sick or have traveled regionally or outside of the country during the March Break, please do not come to the school.

You are required to self-isolate. Please reach out to your principal/supervisor remotely.

Can my supervisor/principal send me home if they see that I have cold-flu like symptoms?

Yes. Your wages will be paid to you for 2 weeks if your supervisor/principal sends you home. The WBE will require 'Return to Work' documentation and screening of the COVID-19.

Who do I contact if I need to be screened or think I need the Covid-19 test?

Please call the Public Health – Sudbury District at: (705) 370-9200

Due to where I live, I am not able to get internet. What can I do to access my emails and stay up-to-date with communications from the WBE?

Access to internet will be available around the school buildings. If you need the WIFI password, please ask Josie for this. Feel free to park in the parking lot to answer some emails, if you like. Telephone communication is still an acceptable means to communicate with your supervisor.

Will teaching and non-teaching staff be expected to be at work during this closure?

Staff members will be requested to work remotely from home between March 23-April 3, 2020. Be sure to pick up laptops to bring home, if you do not have one. Working from home includes modified working hours.

Teachers will provide learning for students that may be paper-based or through virtual learning. A 2-day planning session will take place on March 23-24. Please work with your principals during this meeting. You are more than welcome to attend this session virtually.

What do Education Assistants do?

Apply online to Fleming College for the Education Assistant Program.

- If you are WUT Member, apply for funding at the Wiikwemkoong Post-Secondary Student Support Services.
- If you are non-status, please send an email to the Education Director to request a letter of support for funding. You will need this to send to Fleming College.
- Check with your principals and SERTS for direction.

Should I bring my laptop home from work?

Yes. All staff should bring the laptops home to utilize during the school/hub center closure.

Will WBE staff be paid during this time?

Yes. Staff will be paid as per usual WBE process during the school closure.

I am a staff member. Do you I need to be accessible to the principal/supervisor during the school closure?

Yes. 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. A travelling 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.

OTHER IMPACTS:

Will students be allowed back into the building at this time?

No.

Can education staff work at school/Hub Center buildings?

No. All educators, administration, support staff will not be permitted to enter the buildings as of March 25, 2020.

All educators, early child care educators, education assistants, principals and admin staff are requested to work remotely from home following the 2-day planning session.

The schools will be cleaned and disinfected on March 25-27, 2020. The WBE will be hiring additional supports to help our custodian team to clean up our schools & Hub Center. Deep cleaning of the building will include sanitizing of equipment, fixtures, common areas, desks, tables, switches, flooring, etc.

After March 27, 2020, the only people permitted to enter the buildings are:

- Senior Admin Team Members
- Maintenance Manager

I am feeling overwhelmed and depressed of all this news about COVID-19. What should I do?

The WBE cares about your mental health. Please reach out to Wiikwemkoong Health Center if you are struggling.

Wiikwemkoong Post-Secondary Student Support Services:

Post-Secondary students are asked to keep up-to-date with the information they are provided from their education institute. Most universities and colleges have announced that they have closed their doors for face-to-face learning and will be proceeding with online learning. As such, students are expected to adhere to the expectations of their learning institutes.

All students, including returning students, will need to apply for the new school year. The due dates for student applications for the school year 2020-2021 is June 1st and already has the application online for you to access.

The staff of Post-Secondary Student Support Services are preparing to work from home as of March 25, 2020. Work hours will be modified. The best way to reach them is through email:

- Administrative Assistant: sjackson@wbe-education.ca
- Education Navigator: jmcComb@wbe-education.ca
- Lead Education Navigator: rgeorge@wbe-education.ca

What's happening at the WBE Admin Office?

Our staff at the administration office are preparing to work from home. All work hours will be modified. The WBE will provide essential services while looking out for the health of our staff.

The best way to reach any members of the Senior Admin Team is through cell or email:

- System Principal: Mick Staruck Cell: (705) 210-0146
Email: mstaruck@wbe-education.ca
- Senior Business Official: Maureen Aiabens Cell: (705) 208-0915
Email: maiabens@wbe-education.ca
- Education Director: Fay Zoccole Cell: (705) 207-1346
Email: fzoccole@wbe-education.ca

In closing, we hope to have provided answers to any concerns. If you have further questions, please advise.

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Fay Zoccole
Education Director