



March 3, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the current status of international student trips, particularly those that involve travel to Italy, which is one of the countries currently being most severely affected by the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). This health-related issue is raising travel concerns for many school districts. We rely on the latest information from Global Affairs Canada, the World Health Organization, the B.C. Ministries of Health and Education, and Vancouver Coastal Health to help inform our decisions.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I am writing to advise that, as a precautionary measure, the North Vancouver School District has decided to cancel all travel to Italy at this time. **This means the Handsworth school excursion planned for Italy between March 12-20, 2020, has been cancelled.** We share the disappointment of students, staff and families, but our top priority must be the safety of students and staff.

We are currently working with the travel provider to review the insurance policy. The school trip sponsor will communicate directly with affected students and families about next steps related to refunds.

We continue to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and may extend cancellations and trip suspensions to include other countries. If that happens, we will communicate directly with those who are affected. Student and staff safety will be the paramount criteria in any decision the school district makes with respect to school excursions, whether that includes the approval of alternate itineraries or the cancellation of a trip.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Handsworth principal Rupi Samra-Gynane at rsamra@sd44.ca.

Sincerely,

Mark Pearmain
Superintendent
North Vancouver School District