

Friday, April 3rd, 2020

Dear Students and Parents,

I wanted to reach out to you all and provide some updates around what has been going on this week, and what the next few weeks will bring. We all know from personal experience the challenges that we are all facing, and the uncertainty that comes with constant changes as the story of our new reality continues to unfold. I sincerely hope that over the next while we as a School will be able to bring some sense of normalcy back into everyone's lives. For me personally, just being able to connect again on a regular basis with my Seycove colleagues, and other members of our community, has helped me see a path forward. It will get easier.

There is a lot to share, and a great deal of information here, so in the interest of clarity I have organized information into sections. I hope it is helpful, and that it will answer many of your concerns. I know that there will be many more questions and we are continuing to work on setting up resources for you to access through our website.

In closing, I just want to again acknowledge that this is a lot to take in and to process. Our number one priority is the health and safety of our greater school community. We need to take care of and support one another as we prepare to accept this, our new normal, together.

Please take care of yourselves and your families.

Sincerely,

Rob McLeod, Principal

Jagruti Desai, Vice Principal

Communications:

Whereas we are breaking new ground in so many ways, the basic structure of our school remains in place. Parents are encouraged to reach out with any questions you may have, and keep the school/home partnership a vibrant one. If you have questions/concerns, please reach out as follows:

- about a specific course, contact the teacher
- about broader questions surrounding "Learning at home", contact the grade administrator
Grades 9,10,11 Ms. Desai (Vice Principal) ... Grades 8, 12 Mr McLeod (Principal)
- about Course programming, counselling concerns, contact the Grade counsellor
Ms. Arnold Grades 9, 11 & grade 12 A-L ... Ms. Willems Grades 8, 10 Grad 12 M-Z

There have been many meetings this past week. We have experienced our first 2 "virtual" staff meetings, where the entire school staff collaborated online at the same time using the platform "Microsoft Teams." It is certainly a new experience for us all. It was our first opportunity to connect beyond email and have a collective conversation, and while not perfect, started the process of establishing how our new reality will work and feel. It is working.

By now, you should have heard from each of your child's teachers with a preliminary email of welcome, and some projections of how each class is looking at moving forward.

Continuity of Learning ... Learning at Home

Staff have been focussing hard on next steps - in their teams, grade groups, departments – as well as individually. While there is obviously a huge focus on the “What” and “How” there is also a significant focus on establishing routines and schedules. Eventually, our new normal will emerge, and we will have redefined what a school day and week will look like. Once again, our collective goal is to provide a degree of educational continuity for students and families, while working within this new and challenging landscape.

As mentioned above, students will have now heard from their teachers with some preliminary information about how they hope to organize their classes for the delivery of learning opportunities. I will thank everyone in advance for your continued patience, as there is such a wide range of needs across the school – on many levels – and the supports may take a while to put in place. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to email teachers directly. Please know that every class presents its own unique challenges in adapting to an on-line delivery system. Some areas will be up-and-running relatively quickly, while others may take a bit more time. Teachers will continue to reach out to parents and students as their plans finalize.

NVSD Portal Support:

The district is developing a public webpage (within the NVSD public website) to share an overview of our district plan for Educational Continuity with parents and the community. We anticipate it will be complete by end of day Friday, and you will receive a communication from the District Executive as to how to access it.

Student Email and MS Teams instructions:

- Parents will be contacted by their child's teachers via the emails we have in our student information system (MyEd). Teachers will be including some general information on how they will provide continuation of learning and opportunities for students to connect. Many teachers will be implementing online platforms such as **Microsoft (MS) Teams, OneNote or MyBluePrint** to continue the work your children have been doing all year long. Some teachers have already created classes in MS Teams and may have already received an email through their NVSD Outlook email. Parents or students may begin to receive class “Join Codes” to classes in the following week. Please ask your child to check both their personal emails and their NVSD 44 email on a regular basis. The PDF document, **“Quick Guide for Students for Microsoft Teams”** is **attached to this email** for reference.

- **“MS Teams”** is a new platform for most teachers and students. We have created a basic quick guide for students to access MS Teams and then join classes. The PDF document, **“Quick Guide for Students for Microsoft Teams”** is **attached to this email**, and is also available on the school website under the **“Students”** pulldown menu. Additionally, many teachers may include this guide in their emails to families. Students can access MS Teams from any laptop or device. While different browsers will work,

the preferred browser is "Chrome". Students will need to download the *MS Teams App* for use on a smart device, tablet or phone. They can access Office365 and MS Teams from the portal; their login credentials are the same as the ones they use for logging on to computers in the school.

- Although some teachers may have been communicating with students via their personal emails, moving forward, we are encouraging all students to access their NVSD44 **Outlook** email. This will be the method that students can access class meetings through *MS Teams*. Teachers may start to send messages to students through this email.

- Students can access all NVSD online platforms by using the same login they use at school. They simply sign in by using their unique computer ID, a six-digit code ending in s (e.g. 122546s) which they normally use to sign in at Seycove. If support is needed with the login, ask your child to email our teacher librarian Mr. Hughes ... bhughes@sd44.ca.

Please see the "**Guide for students to access NVSD email**" (also attached to this email) which can also be accessed on our Seycove school website under "**Students**" pulldown menu.

Accessing the school for Personal belongings:

Students will have access to the school on **THURSDAY, April 9th** so they can access their lockers, pick up musical instruments, and pick up any books etc. required for their work at home.

As you can appreciate, organizing access for all students to their lockers while still meeting the requirements for Physical Distancing, and ensuring for the safety of all staff and students, will be challenging. We will communicate specifics next week as to how this will work, but for now, as a general guide, here are the parameters we will be putting into place so you can know what to expect.

- Students will be organized into "blocks" of 50 students, in Alphabetical order based on last name.
- The day will be scheduled into 30-minute time slots. Each block of students will be assigned a time slot where they will be admitted, and will be signed-in to the school. This will happen one at a time, following all social distancing protocols.
- No Parents/siblings will be allowed to accompany the students
- Coming to the school **IS NOT** mandatory. If you have no need to come, then stay home.
- This is not a time to socialize with your peers, students will be asked to leave the premises immediately without gathering.
- There will be no opportunity to meet with your teacher, there will be no staff in the building
- Students who are currently in isolation because of symptoms, exposure, or travel, are not permitted to attend, and alternate arrangements will need to be made for pickup.

A more detailed guide, with a list of student groups, will be provided next week.

Physical distancing reminders (we are frequently seeing groups of students on school property)

Families are reminded that there are very strict guidelines which have been set out by the BC Centre for Disease Control which we are all directed to follow. These are not suggestions, they are law. The

Government of BC has declared a state of emergency. If there are any questions, please visit the following websites and review them with your family.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0020-000568>

http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/common-questions?utm_campaign=20200313_GCPE_AM_COVID_1_ADW_BCGOV_EN_BC_TEXT

We have noticed students frequently congregating on school property, and elsewhere in the community. Please remind your children that these guidelines are to be taken seriously, and that carelessness impacts us all.