



# School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Board of Education of School District No. 71

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Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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May 1, 2020

Dear Staff,

I hope this email finds you and your family safe and in good spirits. Since Spring break our reality has changed significantly as we deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to express my thanks for the flexibility and adaptability each one of you have shown as you continue to support our students along their educational journeys. As Dr. Bonnie Henry has stated, "The changes we are experiencing are not forever, but they are for now".

As you may have heard the province is now looking to ease the restrictions which we are currently working under. This does not mean we will return to a full-scale move back to the way things were before COVID-19. But rather a possible gradual return to school for some students in the near future.

The purpose of this letter is to update you on some of the work, which is going on behind the scenes in preparation for a gradual return to school.

SD71 staff are working with WorkSafe BC officials to ensure our work protocols meet WorkSafe standards. Our operations department is currently working to ensure our sites are retrofitted with all safety measures that are required to ensure our employees and students are working in a safe environment. Our custodial department is developing very clear protocols to ensure high contact surfaces in schools are treated and cleaned on a regular basis. Lastly, schools are developing ways and protocols for staff and students to work and learn in our buildings while following provincial health guidelines along with proper social distancing expectations.

Our hope is that we will have an opportunity for our staff to return to school prior to the arrival of any students. We understand that this in itself will present challenges for employee childcare needs. We continue to work with our community around this aspect.

As of now we do not have any official dates for these plans to take effect as there is still plenty of work to be completed; however, we felt the need to keep everyone informed as to our next steps. We encourage each of you to work through your building Principals and Vice-Principals if you have specific questions or concerns.

I would like to thank the CDTA president, Sherry Dittrick and CUPE president, Denise Bullock who continue to work hard on behalf of their members and who have been active in the planning process.

Once again words cannot express my gratitude for the flexibility, commitment and dedication each of you have shown as you continue to support each of our students on their educational journey.

Thank you!

Respectfully,

Mr. Tom Demeo

Superintendent of Schools