



GISCOME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 57 (PRINCE GEORGE)

Mailing Address: PO Box 40 Willow River, BC V0J 3C0
21840 Upper Fraser Rd., Giscome, B.C.

Phone (250) 568-2204 Fax (250) 568-2422

May 1, 2020

Dear Parents and Students,

We have just completed our fourth week of school closure due to COVID 19 and 10th week since our train derailment. It has been a journey for all of us! I wanted to thank all of you for your kindness, grace under pressure, and 'can do' attitude through all of this!

I would like to start by reminding you that the Ministry of Education has outlined four mandates for the Education sector during the pandemic. In order of priority, they are:

- Healthy and safe environment for all students, families and employees.
- Supporting front line workers
- Supporting vulnerable students and families
- Continuity of Learning

We are doing our best to strive to meet all four mandates both at the District and at the school level.

What's new?

Giscome Elementary has passed their water testing, and the building is being cleaned as we speak for re-opening. We are still awaiting the results of the air quality tests, but they should be back within the week. We are truly excited at the prospect of having our work site deemed a safe and healthy environment once again!

The school website has been improved to assist you in supporting student learning from home. There are now several learning links added to subject areas, as well as information being updated every few days. Tammy Pastor, our school secretary, has been invaluable in assisting us with this endeavor.

Our You Tube channel is new! Thanks so much to Mr. MacLise who willingly took this task on. He has helped the rest of the staff learn how to use this tool to support your child's education. I have been truly touched, impressed, and entertained by the staff's effort in this regard. I tease Mr. Schwartz that he is SD57's media darling this year, but now I see we have added some competition to the mix!

All teachers have been provided with accounts for the provincially authorized Zoom for BC Educators. **This version meets privacy requirements set out by the province of British Columbia for students.** Some options that are offered on other versions of Zoom have been turned off for security purposes, and the servers for BC Zoom are located in Canada only.

Under the direction of the Ministry of Education, each school was tasked with identifying students that would benefit from twice weekly in school support with each session being two hours in duration. This is part of the Ministry mandate for supporting vulnerable learners and families. Once Giscome is re-opened, we will undertake this work. Currently, this opportunity would only be open to 2-3 students.

The Continuity of Learning Plan:

1. Over this week you will have seen teachers firm up their Continuity of Learning Plan. The expectations remain:
 - a. Teachers communicating weekly with students (e-mail, telephone, Class Dojo, Office 365, Zoom etc.)
 - b. Teachers setting up schedules for students that include: Health and Wellness, Literacy and Numeracy goals.
 - c. Stretch activities **may** be added at the discretion of the teacher. These would be activities for students who want to do a bit more. They would primarily focus on hands on learning, STEAM learning, or project based learning.

Suggested time allotments for student learning:

Kindergarten - Grade 1	Up to an hour a day
Grades 2 - 3	Up to 90 minutes per day
Grades 4 - 7	Up to 2 hours per day

What is important for you to know:

Just as each classroom is different within the physical school setting, so too, will each teacher's classroom in the home setting. Both individually and collectively the needs of each classroom are different from one another. The teachers will be considering those needs when designing classroom schedules and materials. What one child is working on may look very different from another. There may be quite different volumes of material, and allocated time for learning, especially with the initial schedules.

Your Questions:

1. **What happens with my child who was supposed to get updated immunizations?**
We have received no information from Northern Health about this issue. While this issue has been raised at the provincial level and in the media several times, we are unable to answer this question at the current point in time.
2. **Will there be school in the fall?**
We have been given no clear directive on this matter. We have heard what you have heard – school 'will look different' for months to come and that plans are being made for what school would look like when it re-opens.
3. **What about my child who is going to high school? What is happening?**
This week each teacher met with the high school team overseeing Grade Seven transition to high school. They are planning for your child's arrival and have met with us regarding recommendations to ensure each child is well supported in this process.

In closing:

Thank you for your continued support of our school and our staff. I heard wonderful things from Marg's drop off's, Brady's visits, and Denise's walks. Jason and I continue to plot and plan behind the scenes to ensure you are supported and have what you need. I am so grateful to work with the Giscome School Community. You are truly a special group of people!

Yours truly,

Sarah J Petrisor, Principal
Jason Schwartz, Vice-Principal