

Our Lady of Mercy School
7481 10th Ave.
Burnaby, B.C.
V3N 2S1

March 26, 2020

Dear Parents,

Next to the health and safety of our staff and students, the continuation of student learning is our top priority as we return from March Break. I wanted to provide an update of our current progress on supporting student learning while in-class instruction is suspended.

Our vision statement states the following:

“Our Lady of Mercy School will continue to be at the forefront of Communicating Student Learning in the 21st century. As a community, we strive for an effective communication system that is both progressive and personalized facilitated through a collaborative student learning process.”

As staff, we see the coming challenge as an opportunity to further develop and strengthen our ability to remain at the forefront of learning.

We are fortunate to have such dedicated and talented staff to be doing this work along with the Ministry of Education and the CISVA. While things are changing rapidly, here is what we can share right now:

- **Continuity of Learning** – Your teachers are proactively developing a learning plan. It is not possible to replicate a traditional school day online, but that does not mean that meaningful learning must stop. It is possible to identify key curricular concepts and best practices for online/e-learning. We can ensure online learning platforms and resources are in place, and establish new ways for teacher-directed instruction and assessment. We recognize that families have many questions about how learning will continue and we expect to bring clarity around this issue over the next two weeks.

In creating our plan, we are exploring a range of ways to provide e-learning to our students and ensure the successful completion of the school year for all students. As stated in the March 20th letter to parents, OLM is an excellent position because our students are accustomed to receiving assignments on-line and our teachers are proficient with the use of technology. We already have many programs in place.

- **Staying Connected** - With the end of the March Break, staff will be back at school, (although they have already been working hard because of their passion and love for your children). Next week our focus is reconnecting as a staff and in grade level teams in order to plan for immediate on-line implementation (e-learning). By the end of the week classroom teachers will be reaching out to their students and parents with details about next steps.
- **Access to Schools and Playgrounds** - Access to all school buildings is completely restricted at this time. This includes our school yard and playground equipment.
- **Mental Health and Well-being** - This is a stressful time for families and many parents are balancing work with taking care of children. The province has launched a new non-medical information line for BC: 1-888-COVID19. Phone lines are open 7 days a week from 7:30 AM to 8PM, and information is available in more than 110 languages. B.C.'s COVID-19 website has many resources available at www.gov.bc.ca/covid19
- **Final Thoughts** - We understand that parents and students are very concerned about this interruption to student learning. We also understand the importance of teachers, administrators and all education staff to provide the learning opportunities and programs our students need. We ask for your patience as we collaborate to finalize this learning plan. We are committed to working through all aspects of this situation as quickly and effectively as possible.

"Let us seek solutions together, boldly undertake processes of change and look to the future with hope. All together, we can form young people, and build a better future."

Pope Francis