



Our Agency Connection— A Grove Perspective November 2020

Grove School 240 Simcoe St. S Oshawa— Phone: 905 725 7042 Fax: 905 723 4194

Principal: Patrick Belmonte **Vice Principal:** Joanne Docherty **Administrative Assistant:** Heather Mayell

Dear Partners,

The COVID-19 situation has evolved in Durham however, I am happy to share that to date no positive cases have been reported in any of our Grove classes. Understandably, there is a sense of unease across our school community but, with the help of our staff and support workers our students continue to respond to the situation in a positive manner. I would like to thank you for what you have done and continue to do to support your frontline workers to cope with the situation. Our collective commitment and discipline, at this time makes all the difference for our students.

In person or virtual –that is the question:

One thing for sure, is what teaching and learning looks like going into this Christmas holiday season. One thing we do not know is how teaching and learning will look like coming back from holidays. No announcement has been made at this time regarding extending the holiday or learning from home however, I believe we need to be prepared for all possibilities. Not being prepared will undoubtedly raise the levels of anxiety and stress in all our lives. To avoid this, I have asked Grove staff to reflect on the following 3 questions in the next couple of weeks.

- What would change with my teaching responsibilities if we were asked to teach virtually in January?
- Are my students equipped at home with the tools to keep them engaged in meaningful learning?
- What supports do I need from administration or others to prepare to be teaching virtually ?

In the early part of December we will be working with staff and support staff to ensure we are all prepared to teach virtually in the new year should there be an unexpected announcement from the Minister of Education.

Bus Cancellations

I wanted to take this opportunity to expand or clarify the information that came out this week with respect to bus cancellations. Firstly, should the buses be cancelled for any reason this school year, all Grove elementary and secondary teachers are required to report to their classrooms. However, there is some flexibility for our secondary teachers who have all students on their roster taking a bus or agency transport.

Should the DDSB cancel buses for the day, a Grove secondary teacher will only be given the option of working at home if the following conditions are met:

1. All the students on the teacher's class roster take a bus and or agency transport to school each day
2. All families/guardians who have a child/ren taking a bus or agency transport to school indicate that, should buses be cancelled during this school year, their child/ren will be kept at home/residence

If these conditions are met, then the teacher may continue their teaching duties from their home and access their students virtually.

This week we will be working on identifying the teachers that may qualify for this option. Administration will follow up with families/guardians to explore condition number 2. Once this information is collected it will be shared with Inclusive Student Services at the board to ensure that should a bus cancellation occur at some point this school year, we respond appropriately.

Pathway Planning

I wanted to make you aware of the DDSB 2020-2021 ***Pathways to Student Success*** document. This resource provides our teachers, students, and parents/guardians with information on a range of opportunities for individualized pathways to enhance student success in secondary school.

Pathways to Student Success is broken into 4 main sections:

Focus Programs;

Regional Accelerated Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Programs;

Specialist High Skills Major Programs;

Alternative/Referral Programs and School College Work Initiative;

Students who wish to access one of these programs at a school other than their home high school may do so in grades 10, 11, or 12. **All students attend their home high schools in grade nine.**

I have attached a PDF copy of the document to this email however, it is also available on the DDSB website at <http://www.ddsb.ca/en/programs-and-learning/secondary-school-programs.aspx>

Have a wonderful day!!

Patrick