



## Small Schools Make a Difference

2020/03/03

Dear Students and Families of Superior-Greenstone District School Board,

We have been missing our regular routines and seeing everyone in school. We hope that the many videos, Facebook posts, phone calls and messages on Edsby that our staff have been sending have been helping you to know that we are thinking about you and missing you at school.

“School” is going to look quite different on Monday, but we want to reassure you. We are here to help you in whatever way works best for you. We have paid close attention to what families have told us will work and have merged this with what research tells us is best for learning during a crisis. Everyone in our board has been planning for next week as we ensure that students are continuing to learn, where possible and through various means.

There are a couple of things that you should know as we get started. We are confident that all students have continued to learn while they have been out of school. This is because we know that learning happens in many ways. So, while we say that we are “returning to learning”, we know that the many experiences that students have had while at home with their families are invaluable.

We also know that it is important to resume learning from where students left off before the March Break. This is important for specific knowledge and skill building, but also to find some routines, consistency and ways to stimulate our brains. While we cannot replicate the amount of learning that happens daily in the classroom given our current circumstances, we know that it is important to return to some formalized learning.

You have told us that there is no “one-size-fits-all” model that will work for all for families. Everyone has different realities that they are experiencing. Some families do not have access to WIFI, many families have members who are working on the front lines, for example, in hospitals or grocery stores, or are running small businesses or working from home. We want you to know that we recognize this and are grateful to you. Please remember that health and safety come first, and that no student will be disadvantaged if they cannot participate due to the virus and our current circumstances.

The Ministry of Education has provided us with the minimum hours of time that students will spend on work assigned by teachers, as outlined below.

K-Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 hours of work per student per week</li> <li>• Focus: Literacy and Math</li> </ul>
Grades 4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 hours of work per student per week</li> <li>• Focus: Literacy and Math + Science and Social Studies</li> </ul>
Grades 7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 hours of work per student per week</li> <li>• Focus: Core math, Literacy, Science and Social Studies</li> </ul>

Grades 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 hours of work per course per week for semester classes; 1.5 hours of work per course per week for non-semester classes.</li> <li>• Focus: Achieving credits/completion/graduation</li> </ul>
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\*Important subjects such as Native Language, French, Art, Music, etc. will be naturally embedded into the core areas identified above.

We are endeavoring to provide our students with distance learning that is:

- a) A continuation of what was happening in their classrooms before March Break.
- b) Is a combination of time spent on-line with teachers (or maybe on the telephone) with tasks to complete.
- c) Experiential in nature, such as virtual tours, that will keep our students thinking.
- d) Including time with the teacher/ECE/EA to get feedback and guidance on their work.
- e) Supported by other staff in the system so that important subjects such as Native Language, French and the Arts are still included.
- f) Carefully scheduled so that elementary teachers will connect with students in the morning and secondary teachers will meet with students in the afternoon. Your child's teacher will be communicating this to you.
- g) Inclusive for families with no WIFI. The school principal will be in touch with you to discuss.

We know that learning happens through play, experience and inquiry, and while this may be limited right now, we believe that students will continue to learn through the ongoing support of their SGDSB educators and their family, and through virtual experiences and experiences that may happen in at home and in nature. To return to this learning, instructions for learning will be communicated through the Edsby site. Please reach out to your child's principal if you need support accessing Edsby.

No student will lose their year due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Students have worked hard all of this year, and the previous years of their educational journey. For our students in Grade 12, additional focus and support will be provided to you as you prepare for graduation.

While learning at SGDSB will be provided to every child and family, through tasks, assignments, and experiences, we recognize that these are very challenging times. Some families may require additional materials to support their child(ren). We encourage you to continue to use the Learn at Home (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/learn-at-home>) resources as well as the supplementary resources located on our SGDSB website ([www.sgdsb.on.ca](http://www.sgdsb.on.ca)).

Our entire staff is committed to this work. We all have a role to play as we get through this time together. It may take us a bit to work out the bumps in this transition and we encourage you to engage in ongoing communicate with your child's teacher(s) and principal.

Thank you to everyone for continuing to exercise physical distancing, no matter how hard it is. Please stay home. The more we do, the faster we will be back together. Be safe and enjoy the new routine that next week will bring. Please be well and we look forward to returning to learning with you.

Yours in education,



Nicole Morden Cormier  
Director of Education