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To: Horizon Families
From: Kevin C. Garinger, Director of Education
Date: March 18, 2020
Re: UPDATE: Information Related to School Closure - COVID-19

Good afternoon, Horizon families.

As we know, school closures will be in effect beginning Friday, March 20. In order to plan for the educational needs of students during this time away from school, and how to manage moving forward for our families and staff, the Ministry of Education has announced a one-week pause period for educational operations in Saskatchewan. From Friday, March 20, to Friday, March 27 (inclusive), all school divisions in Saskatchewan will pause school programming and educational operations for a one-week period. As such, all school staff have been directed to stay home beginning Friday, March 20 until the end of the day on Friday, March 27. They will not be required to perform duties related to their work during this time and buildings will not be accessible to the public.

This pause period allows for the provincial education sector's [Response Planning Team](#) and divisions across the province including Horizon School Division to develop long-term plans for supporting our children, families, and staff throughout this unprecedented situation. We know that there is concern in these uncertain times for the educational wellbeing of our students, your children. To ensure that no student's education is negatively impacted by indefinite school closures, a pause period during the first week of school closures will give the education sector time to develop unified plans and supports. I would ask you to please ensure your child takes home their personal belongings and any learning resources deemed necessary by their teacher(s). Again, this also will allow us to do a deep clean of the learning spaces while schools are indefinitely closed. Schools are open until the end of the school day on Thursday, March 19.

In order to ensure staff can manage their own plans for leaving the school beginning Friday, March 20, regular buses will pick up your bus child(ren) at school at 2:00 PM on Thursday, March 19, and town students will also be dismissed at that time. We have researched the number of students riding on our buses and attending at our schools. You have done a tremendous job of getting your children home during this week, so we have very few students left in our buildings. This was of course the intent of the Chief Medical Officer for Saskatchewan when he provided a four-day window for families to manage this. It is therefore our expectation that this will not impact your family situation.

In the days ahead, I will be in contact with families and staff to discuss our next steps. As we receive direction and updates, these will be shared with you. When this one-week pause is lifted, it is our hope that Horizon will be able to provide clear direction and access to a supplemental learning plan to support students and families. Horizon's Central Office will remain accessible during this pause. As such, parents can continue to use our Communications Centre Hotline for any questions or concerns.

We can be reached at **1-306-682-2558**. Please ask for the Communications Centre.

Please visit www.horizonsd.ca for updates. My previous communications on this issue are archived there, as well as links to other resources and supports. Once again, I will remind you of the resources available at www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus, and the provincial HealthLine that can be reached by dialing **811**.

On behalf of the Horizon School Division No. 205 Board of Education, I want to thank each of you for your understanding, patience, and support. Remember that we are closing schools and sending your children home for social distancing purposes. We are grateful for your diligence related to all activities you consider for your child(ren). I know we will get through this unprecedented time by continuing to communicate and work together...your children and ours deserve that from us. Please look after yourselves, your children, and each other.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin C. Garinger', is positioned above the typed name.

Kevin C. Garinger, B. Ed, M.A. Ed
Director of Education/CEO
Horizon School Division No. 205