

**BLACK GOLD SCHOOL DIVISION**

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March 12, 2020

Dear Families and Staff of Black Gold School Division:

After speaking with Alberta Health Services, I am pleased to announce that there are no probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within any of our Black Gold School Division Schools. Alberta is adopting aggressive new public health measures to limit the spread of this virus; therefore, it is important that Black Gold School Division be prepared.

Black Gold School Division is taking a proactive approach in addressing COVID-19 issues for schools. This includes the development of a written Pandemic Plan <https://www.blackgold.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/PANDEMIC-PLAN-Jan-29-2020.pdf> Black Gold is also working closely with Alberta Health Services receiving the most up-to-date information as it becomes available, and Black Gold will continue to monitor the situation enabling an efficient response to any changes.

Following are questions, answers, statements, and recommendations that are guiding Black Gold through this process:

1. What is Black Gold doing to protect staff and students against all respiratory illnesses, including flu and COVID-19?
    - Encouraging good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene practices.
    - Discouraging everyone from sharing food, utensils, and water bottles.
    - Promoting 'elbow bumps' in place of handshakes as informal greetings.
    - Notifying parents if students become ill with Influenza-like Illness at school.
    - Advising parents to keep ill children at home until they are free of symptoms and feeling well and are able to participate in normal daily activities.
    - Advising ill staff to stay home.
    - Implementing its Pre-Pandemic Phase and with guidance from Alberta Health Services, evaluating the move to its Pandemic Phase.
    - Providing students with age appropriate information.
    - Advising staff against travelling internationally.
  2. When should students and staff remain at home?
    - If a student or staff member has visited a Grand Princess Cruise, Iran, Italy, or China's Hubei province in the last 14 days, it is recommended s/he self-isolates until 2 weeks have passed since that visit – this is recommended even if one is feeling well.
    - Parents (students) and staff should call Health Link 811 for additional precautions if they have travelled to anywhere outside of Canada and experienced any of the following: contact with someone who was suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, were in a health-care facility, have symptoms such as a cough or fever.
    - If one develops Influenza-like Illness (respiratory illness, fever, cough, etc) stay home.
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- If a one does not meet the exposure criteria above, s/he does not need to stay away from school/work.
3. Is Black Gold cancelling participation in large gatherings: sports tournaments, concerts, festivals, parent/teacher interviews, etc?
- Yes, Black Gold has instructed its schools to postpone indefinitely any sports tournaments, ski nights, drama productions, family nights/dances, and school open houses they may be hosting.
  - Black Gold is instructing its schools to ensure that no more than 250 individuals are in the same room at any given time ie: school assemblies, staff P.D. sessions, field trip venues, etc.

Once again, Black Gold will continue monitoring the situation and respond appropriately to any changes.

Sincerely,



Calvin Monty  
Associate Superintendent  
Human Resources & Administration