



March 13, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We know that there is growing concern within our school communities around COVID-19. The district is taking precautions to keep students and staff safe. Calgary Catholic is working directly with Alberta Health Services (AHS), Alberta Education and the Calgary Emergency Management Agency and responding in accordance with their recommendations. We have mobilized our pandemic response committee who will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation around COVID-19 and communicate any changes or cancellations if necessary. We are also implementing the current precautions:

Travel

- Following AHS' direction to not travel outside of Canada and self-isolate
- Recommending families visit the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta websites for current recommendations
- Cancelling all travel and not planning any additional trips until further notice.

Schools

- Increasing cleaning of high-touch points in our schools and workplaces; Calgary Catholic is working to ensure we have necessary soap, sanitizer and cleaning and disinfecting supplies
- Using emergency plans to mitigate and prevent the spread of illness, for interruptions to regular instruction and for potential school closures at the direction of AHS
- Creating protocols to regularly review good hygiene habits with staff and students
- Increasing vigilance with staff and students who may present symptoms
- Using communication plans to provide updates to parents.

Prevention

- Asking staff and students to stay home if they are sick. If you have symptoms such as fever, cough and difficulty breathing and have travelled outside Canada or have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, stay home and call Health Link at 811. If you are not seriously ill, do not go to a physicians' office, a healthcare facility or a lab without consulting Health Link first
- Asking parents to report any symptoms of COVID-19 to schools
- Tracking the reasons for student and staff absences to determine if they are related to COVID-19
- Monitoring children who develop symptoms of illness at school in the nurses' room and asking parents or emergency contacts to pick them up; children will not be permitted to take the bus home.

Social distancing

- Any large gatherings of more than 250 people such as sporting events and school events will be reduced to smaller gatherings at the schools. (liturgies, assemblies, etc)

We recommend you get current information from reliable sources such [AHS](#) and take the preventative steps below to reduce your infection and help protect our community. To help you with this, we've provided more information from AHS.

Spread

COVID-19 is believed to spread mainly through coughing, sneezing or direct contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19 or with surfaces they have recently touched. AHS defines a **close contact** as a person who:

- Provided care for the individual including healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers
- Had other, similar and close physical contact with the person without consistent and appropriate use of personal protective equipment
- Lived with or had close, prolonged contact (within 2 metres) with the person while they were infectious
- Had direct contact with the person's infectious bodily fluids (e.g. was coughed or sneezed on) while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment.

Risk

People who develop a fever and/or cough or shortness of breath AND meet any of the criteria below are currently at a higher risk. In the 14 days before illness onset, they:

Travelled to anywhere outside of Canada **OR** Had close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 **OR** Had close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has travelled anywhere outside of Canada within 14 days prior to illness onset **OR** Had laboratory exposure to biological material (e.g. primary clinical specimens, virus culture isolates) known to contain COVID-19 virus.

Prevention

As a Catholic community, we can all help to protect one another by following the steps below:

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly and frequently
- Avoid touching your face, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, throw it away into a garbage that is lined with a plastic bag and wash your hands immediately afterwards. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve and wash your hands immediately
- Clean and disinfect surfaces at home, work and school that are used often
- Stay home if you are sick and call Health Link at 811 if you have questions or concerns about your health; follow the advice given by Health Link
- Report your child's absence to school as soon as you can.

As a Catholic school community, our thoughts and prayers are with those affected by COVID-19 worldwide.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Szumlas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Bryan Szumlas
Chief Superintendent
Calgary Catholic School District