



CDSBEO Distance Learning Implementation

Board administrative staff have been working collaboratively to support the delivery of the Ministry's Distance Learning Plan for students. Superintendent of School Effectiveness, Brent Bovaird, provided a detailed update to Trustees on the implementation process, including the support that was provided for students and families, as well as teachers.

The process began with a survey to assess the needs of students with regard to technology for learning. Any families that did not respond to the survey were called individually by school staff members. Devices were then distributed to any families who requested one. This distribution was done in partnership with the Board ICT Department, and continues as more families connect to the internet and see the value of distance education, as well as if the family feels that they require more devices in the home to help support learning for multiple children.

"Special Education students were connected with their SEA devices," noted Superintendent Bovaird. "These devices host the apps and software specific to the learning needs of each student."

A partnership between the ICT, Curriculum, Special Education and Student Success Departments is ongoing, and ensures that students are able to attain the required devices and resources to complete schoolwork, experience success, and for graduating students, ensure a successful graduation outcome.

Being a primarily rural school board, many CDSBEO families may not have access to reliable internet.

"To support these families, we prepared and mailed out paper learning packages," explained Superintendent Bovaird. "The second round of packages will be going out in the middle of May."

Self-addressed postage paid envelopes were included for families to return student work to the school for teacher feedback and next steps by phone. For those students with access to reliable internet, classroom groups were created in the Microsoft Teams environment where teachers are able to post activities and assignments. Teachers are available for feedback, support and guidance as students interact and engage with the many activities and online resources.



Support for teachers was provided through the Board Curriculum Department. Each school was connected with a curriculum consultant to facilitate learning around the online platform. Educators received video tutorials which could be shared with students and families to support working in the Microsoft Teams environment. The Board has partnered with Microsoft to help support consultant professional development as educator needs diversify, and to support teachers in their more individualized questions which emerge through their evolving use of the distance learning platform.

"Additionally, the Curriculum Department has developed some low tech or unplugged learning activities for educators to incorporate into their lesson plans," noted Superintendent Bovaird. "These have received great feedback from educators and parents alike as they improve engagement and reduce screen time for students while remaining connected to the curriculum and pushing student learning forward."

Additional support for parents is set to be released in the coming weeks through the CDSBEO Parent Involvement Committee. The resource includes informative videos to support distance learning.

"Thank you Mr. Bovaird for providing this thorough overview of everything that has been implemented to support student learning in a new way," concluded Chair Lalonde. "We are excited to see the creative and innovative ways our students and educators have embraced distance learning."