



April 20, 2020

Dear UCDSB Families,

Last week the Premier [extended the Declaration of Emergency until May 12](#), which signals that schools will not open on May 4, 2020 as planned. We have not received any formal notice of this yet but expect to hear more from the Ministry of Education and the Premier about the school year over the next few days. You can count on us to update you immediately, once we receive any further information from the provincial government on this important topic.

Access to Technology

Families of Grade 9-12 students that indicated they needed access to a device to participate in distance learning were contacted last week to make device pick-up arrangements. For families with students in Kindergarten to Grade 8, we are still working on getting devices to you but currently, the demand for devices is higher than our current supply.

At this time, we also do not have the means to provide internet to families at home. As we have a unique and vast school district, with varying levels of connectivity options, we have not yet been able to find a reliable solution. Please know, this is also something we continue to investigate.

However, on Friday, April 17, [the Ministry of Education announced it is working with Apple and Rogers to support the provincial Learn at Home program](#). The initiative plans to get iPads with integrated wireless connections to families who need access to technology to continue distance learning. This was welcomed news, though we do not have additional details about what this means for our school district at this time. We will update our school principals, students, and families once details have become available.

For now, if connectivity or access to devices continues to be a barrier for students in your household to take part in distance learning, please contact your school principal or teacher as we are able to provide printed materials for them to use at home.

Update on Specialized Secondary School Credits:

Last week, all school principals sought to provide [an update to families about assessment, evaluation and reporting on student learning](#), given the learn-at-home strategy that is in place. Here is some further information about several of our training and career education programs being taken by many of our students.

- **Co-operative Education**

In-person community placements for co-operative education programs are suspended, however, some students may have the opportunity to connect virtually with industry partners and explore career and experiential learning opportunities. Students should work with their teachers to modify their learning plans in these cases.

John McAllister
Chair



Stephen Sliwa
Director

- **Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)**
Graduating students in a Specialist High Skills Major program unable to complete their SHSM requirements due to extenuating circumstances, including the impacts from COVID-19, will be given exemptions for incomplete certifications. If your child was on track to receive a Red Seal this year, they will still be able to receive it.
- **Dual Credit/ Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)**
Dual credit/OYAP courses are suspended, however, if a student requires a credit in this course to graduate in the 2019-2020 school year, the school board will work with them to accomplish it.

Secondary students should be already working with their teachers to gain credits or to modify these courses, however, more can be found about these program-related items [on our website](#).

K-8 Weekly Learning Menus:

Here are the weekly choice menus for literacy, math and health & physical activity that families can use to complement any activities that are coming from their classroom teachers. We are providing these resources and the ones posted on our [Learn at Home webpage](#) as a means to keep students engaged in age-appropriate learning, to whatever extent is reasonable during these unprecedented times.

- [Kindergarten Activities](#)
- [Gr. 1-3 Math Activities](#)
- [Gr. 1-3 Literacy Activities](#)
- [Gr. 4-6 Math Activities](#)
- [Gr. 4-6 Literacy Activities](#)
- [Gr. 7-8 Math Activities](#)
- [Gr. 7-8 Literacy Activities](#)
- [Health and Physical Education](#)

As always, we hope that your family is well and staying safe. Please use the resources in our [Mental Health and Wellness Library](#) or reach out to [resources available in your community](#) if you are struggling during these times.

Please continue to refer to our [COVID-19 webpage](#) or our [FAQ](#) for up-to-date information, as well as our [Learn at Home webpage](#).

We continue to wish for the best for our students and their families. We understand the necessity of everyone taking good care of their health so that they can attend to other matters, including the opportunities available through the learn-at-home strategy that we have in place. Please take care, stay safe, and stay in touch with your local school.

John McAllister
Chair

Stephen Sliwa
Director



Sincerely,

Stephen Sliwa
Director of Education
Upper Canada District School Board

John McAllister
Chair



Stephen Sliwa
Director