

Email to all families and staff: March 12, 2020



Gray Academy
OF JEWISH EDUCATION

COVID-19 UPDATE: PROVINCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOLS

Dear Families:

I am writing to follow up on the email sent to all families earlier today.

After meeting this afternoon with **Manitoba's Deputy Minister of Education, Grant Doak**, and **Dr. Brent Roussen, Manitoba's Chief Provincial Public Health Officer**, I am sharing with you the latest strategies recommended for schools across the province, along with steps we are taking here at Gray Academy.

Provincial Recommendations:

- **Hand-washing** – increased frequency and duration
- **Disinfecting** – more frequent cleaning of shared surfaces
- **Social distancing** – limiting large gatherings and maintaining physical distance between individuals

- **Illness** - students and staff experiencing symptoms must stay away from school
- **Limit non-essential travel outside the province**

We are working together with our staff, families, the AJCC and partner organizations to take a proactive approach to all the above.

Gray Academy Actions:

- **Hand-washing** – teaching staff is continuing to remind and lead all students to wash their hands frequently throughout the school day, especially before snacks and meals and after play
- **Disinfecting** – AJCC has confirmed that all cleaning staff have been briefed fully regarding increased frequency of disinfecting surfaces throughout the building. In addition, all of our classrooms have been provided with additional disinfecting wipes, which staff will be using throughout the day.
- **Social distancing** – as of today, we are postponing large gatherings of students, as well as programs that include families and guests. This move is temporary until the Province advises that such precautions are no longer necessary. (E.g., tomorrow's Grade 4-6 Kabbalat Shabbat with families will be rescheduled; students will celebrate Kabbalat Shabbat in their individual classrooms.) We will communicate information about changes as needed. We are also reviewing co-curricular activities and field trips outside the school up until Pesach break. We will communicate directly with families of students impacted. We are mindful of the opportunity to adjust classroom configurations to ensure safer distances between students throughout the day.
- **Illness** – as a school, we have always been diligent to minimize the spread of illness by ensuring any staff or students who are ill remain at home. We rely on you as our partners to use your good judgement as parents to keep children at home when they are showing flu-like symptoms.
- **Limiting travel** – as outlined in our email this morning, we are rescheduling or cancelling school trips outside Manitoba until the end of May. To date we have had excellent cooperation with families who have been out of the province. If you have plans to travel outside of Manitoba, please continue to let us know. We will work with

each family to determine appropriate next steps based on directives from the [Provincial Government](#), the [Government of Canada](#) and local health care professionals.

Classroom discussions

The **emotional well-being of your children** is equally critical at this time. With the vast amount of information coming from a variety of sources and changing hour to hour, we are taking steps to meet with all students to ensure they feel safe and supported. This will take place tomorrow, class by class, with age appropriate discussions guided by our Principals and our Student Support Services Team.

Gray Matters e-newsletter

With the many changes to Gray Academy events and activities, **we are postponing our weekly Gray Matters e-newsletter until tomorrow**. This will give us a better opportunity to update all families on cancellations and/or postponements of events.

Ongoing communication

Tomorrow, **our first focus will be on your children**. We will continue update families as necessary. Thank you again for your patience, understanding and cooperation, as we navigate this evolving situation.

Please feel free to contact me or your principal should you have any questions.

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