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## NEWS RELEASE

### Winnipeg School Division implements work-from-home strategy in response to COVID-19

**March 19, 2020 (Winnipeg, MB)** – Winnipeg School Division (WSD) has taken steps necessary to ensure the majority of its 6,000 employees have the option to work-from-home during the suspension of classes starting March 23, 2020.

“While classes are suspended, teaching and non-teaching staff will continue regular duties and professional responsibilities regardless of work location, where those duties are critical to maintain key services of the division,” says Chris Broughton, Chair, WSD Board of Trustees. “That being said, meaningful work may not be available to all non-teaching staff during the two-week suspension of classes, in which case their supervisors will advise them to stay home with pay.”

Broughton says the efforts of all WSD staff over the past week since the decision to suspend classes is exceptional, and he extends thanks on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

“There have been many questions about how we can meet the educational needs of our students while also observing social distancing and limiting opportunities for transmission of COVID-19. We recognize that it is all of our responsibility to delay and minimize the peak in COVID-19 cases to help manage the impact on the health care system and our community.”

Broughton says that the work-from-home strategy gives teaching and non-teaching staff the option of working from home or continuing to go to work in their school or building. Each staff person is to identify with their Principal or Supervisor their individual work-from-home strategy and be available online or by phone during normal working hours.

For teachers, this means they are at the other end of the phone or computer assisting students who are continuing to learn at home. Education Assistants will consult with Principals and Teachers to identify work they can take home that will help support the ongoing learning of students as well. All non-teaching staff may be completing online professional development training or outstanding work projects, for example.

Custodial, Building and Trades staff are considered critical in the maintenance of WSD Buildings, and a schedule to ensure on-site presence is maintained has been developed for these positions. In addition, schools and offices will be rigorously cleaned and sanitized in anticipation of the return of all staff and students.

WSD was established in 1871 and is celebrating 150 years of quality education in 2021. It currently has 79 schools, 33,000 students and 6,000 employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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