

April 6, 2020

## Development of Learning Packages

This information is being provided to teachers and principals as a follow up to the Learning Continuity Plan: *COVID-19 Guidelines for Teachers* that was distributed on March 31, 2020.

We know that you continue to collect information about students who have access to technology and those who do not. We know that some students have limited or no access to technology and that it will be our collective responsibility to ensure equity of access to learning for all public school students. We are also aware that situations in homes vary in terms of providing support and that this can be a stressful time.

While our physical buildings are closed, learning will continue but it will not look like it did before March Break, and we should not seek to replicate the school day. Our plans will continue to evolve based on information from public health and feedback from parents/families, students and educators. It is certainly not business as usual as we charter unknown territories in education and in society together. We thank you for your collaborative professionalism and for how you are stepping up to support students and each other.

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### Overview by Grade Level

#### Primary to Grade 9

▶ **What is being planned?**

A Nova Scotia At-Home Student Learning starter package is being developed for teachers and for your students through a collaboration of all Regional Centres for Education and the CSAP. This is a resource that can be used with all of your students but will be critical for students who may have no or limited access to technology.

▶ **Why we are doing this?**

This will enhance accessibility and equity of learning opportunities for all students as we know that some students do not have access to technology to support their learning at home.

▶ **What will the P-9 look like and when will it be ready?**

This will be printed on newsprint and it will be distributed to homes across the province beginning on April 8. SaltWire Network (Chronicle Herald) will be distributing this through the flyers. We anticipate that the Nova Scotia At-Home Student Learning Packages in a

newspaper format for P-9 will be distributed every two weeks. A PDF version of the paper will be shared with teachers prior to the distribution of the flyers so that teachers can prepare in collaboration with their colleagues for follow up with students. Follow up can take multiple forms as determined by school staff. This plan will be revisited on a regular basis to determine the effectiveness by grade level and to consider feedback from students, families, and teachers.

▶ **What will teachers do with the grade level learning provided in the newspaper?**

These packages are primarily designed to address student equity of learning and provide a learning option for students without access to technology. Teachers may decide to supplement or modify the learning packages for their students based on their professional judgement.

▶ **How can I help to keep my students engaged?**

During this time, teachers and other staff will endeavour to keep all students engaged in their learning. Many colleagues can assist in this work. Where feasible, input should be considered from areas like Physical Education, Music, Technology Education, Visual Arts, Healthy Active Living, Family Studies, Core French, Learning Support Teachers, EAL/FAL teachers and others to assist in cross curricular learning experiences and for students who require additional support. These teachers can play a critical role towards enhancing the well-being of our students. These subject areas and learning opportunities are great sources of meaning and connection for students, sometimes particular subjects are the reason that students come to school. As schools are closed as a measure to further secure physical distancing, our young people need to find new ways to stay socially connected and attached to those subject areas that quite often they find the most meaning and engaging. Engagement in these subject areas can keep people connected. All colleagues should collaborate and support each other in cross curricular learning as noted in the Learning Continuity Plan: *COVID-19 Guidelines for Teachers*.

▶ **What about students who have an Individual Program Plan or additional needs?**

Some students and parents may find learning options in various sections of the newspaper. Teachers who may be looking for specific ideas to support students with additional needs can refer to the E-Learning site, including information on the Student Services page. The site has accessible, culturally, and linguistically responsive resources/tools/strategies to accommodate students with diverse needs in an online environment. You can access this through the curriculum website using your GNSPES/SEPNE account. We encourage you to connect and collaborate with members of your Teaching Support Team, as you previously would have, for assistance in determining what resources/tools/strategies might be most appropriate for supporting students and how to meaningfully integrate these tools in your teaching and learning.

- ▶ **How will teachers address learning with students who have access to high tech options?**  
Teachers will use approved technology as appropriate to the grade level, well-being and learning needs of the students to assess how students are engaging with the materials, determine additional supports and interact with students about their learning.
- ▶ **How will teachers address learning with students who do not have access to technology?**  
As teachers collect information about technology available to students in their homes to support learning, they will determine the best ways to communicate with their students. Teachers may collaborate with other staff such SchoolsPlus, and Regional Coordinators for African Canadian and Mi'kmaq Education Services, on how to support student well-being and learning, connect regularly with students and families and provide support for those who they cannot connect with through e-learning options.
- ▶ **How will students who do not have access to technology return work to their teachers?**  
Parents with access to a cell phone can take pictures of the student's work and email it to the teacher. Teachers can call students with no other means of electronic communication. Each school in collaboration with supports such as SchoolsPlus should determine how best to communicate with families with whom they are having challenges in reaching. Principals and teachers will consider the roll that other support staff can play in connecting with students.
- ▶ **How will teachers assess students?**  
Teachers will provide feedback to support ongoing student learning and to inform any culminating comments that can be made on the June report cards as feasible. EECD will collaborate to develop support, examples and directions to support teachers with assessment and reporting. This will be referenced on the e-learning site.
- ▶ **What if my students need some additional support?**  
Teachers will work with the Principal to determine how student learning can best be supported. This may be in collaboration with the Learning Support Teachers and other school and regional staff. This is a collective endeavour and all teachers should work together to share in planning, communications, and supports.
- ▶ **What if my students do not receive the weekly flyers?**  
Please let families know, as you communicate with them, that they can begin opting in now by calling 1-800-565-3339 or going to the website: <http://saltwire.com/nshomelearning> or through email: [ns-education@saltwire.com](mailto:ns-education@saltwire.com). For families with internet or cell phone access the Nova Scotia At-Home Student Learning Package will also be posted on the parent/family site noted above or you can email them a copy.

► **What if there is more than one student at the elementary level in a household?**

The flyers will be going to all houses that receive the flyers in Nova Scotia and additional copies will be available at selected grocery stores throughout the province. If parents feel that they would like more than one copy, we suggest that families make arrangements in a COVID19- friendly way to get additional copies of the NS At Home Learning paper from a friend, neighbour or at the grocery stores that will have extra copies.

► **How can teachers provide feedback and contribute to the learning that is developed for this bi- weekly newspaper?**

Teachers can email their feedback and contributions into the appropriate grade level. We encourage all who wish to contribute to email. Your regional/CSAP staff would appreciate your ideas as they develop the content based on our curriculum.

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Feedback Email</b>
P	feedback@ccrce.ca
1	feedback@ccrce.ca
2	retroaction@csap.ca
3	cbv-feedback@gnspes.ca
4	feedback@srce.ca
5	feedback@ssrce.ca
6	feedback@tcrce.ca
7	feedback@avrce.ca
8	feedback@hrce.ca
9	feedback@hrce.ca

### **Grades 10 & 11**

Regions are in the process of determining how to extend technology to students in these grades who do not have access. A set of guidelines is being developed. All plans will be developed with respect to public health. Ensuring the safety of all is a priority. This determination will impact what can be done in the development of learning packages to support students in grades 10 and 11 to complete their modified course work.

EECD is collaborating with the NSTU, PSAANS and Regional Centres/CSAP on some possible options for students who have no access or limited access to technology.

Supports for you and your students:

- Later this month we will be extending the Homework Hub hours to provide additional support for mathematics. The Homework Hub has math texts, video and resources collated to curriculum outcomes and provides live tutoring with qualified teachers free of charge. This is accessible through GNSPES/SEPNE.
- The e-learning site has information to support many curricular areas and ideas to help you with approved resources as you begin to teach in new ways. This site can be accessed through GNSPES/SEPNE or from the curriculum website: <https://curriculum.novascotia.ca>
- There are many colleagues that you work with who can support you. There is an old saying that many hands make light work. Be sure to stay in touch with each other and collaborate as you support learning in new ways.

In the interim, please continue checking in with students and supporting them with academics and with their well-being. We know these check-ins have a positive impact. In these stressful times, it is critical that we keep our lines of communication open with students and families, so we know how they are doing and can respond appropriately. If students or families are sharing information about difficult circumstances at home SchoolsPlus and others are available to direct families to resources in the community.

## Grade 12

While technology has been made available to grade 12 students it is recognized that students may continue to have issues with connectivity. We encourage you to continue to look for the best ways to support all students and to continue to stay in touch with them about their well-being and academics.

While many of the messages in the grades 10 & 11 section are also applicable to you, there are some unique needs for grade 12 students and their families. This is not the school year envisioned by our graduating students and they likely have many questions about courses, graduation, and support for post-secondary applications. An information Q & A sheet has been developed specifically to support the needs of these students and will be distributed through each RCE/CSAP.

As plans for grades 10 & 11 unfold this will also provide opportunity to develop some innovative and creative ways to support learning packages in consistent ways across the province. Additional information will be available soon to provide high schools with some concrete options that also respect public health guidelines.

## Conclusion

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development acknowledges and thanks the collaborative professionalism of the NSTU and PSAANS whose input helped form the contents of this communication and whose ongoing collaboration continues to be valuable as we move forward. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we all work through new territories together.

To support families, a website has been developed and can be found at: <https://curriculum.novascotia.ca/>. A resource for teachers to support e-learning and how to address curriculum when you are not physically at school, can also be accessed by the same link. Since the release on Monday, March 30, both sites have seen extensive use. We will continue to grow and develop these online resources to support you and invite your feedback and suggestions. Please see the form on the e-learning site to share your ideas.

Stay safe and follow public health guidelines.