September 18, 2020

Dear Prairie Spirit families:

Here we are, at the end of the second week of school and isn’t it great to be back? Thank you for working with us to keep our schools and communities safe.

I’m sure you’ve heard that there have been positive cases of COVID-19 in Saskatoon schools this past week. As a Division, we are reviewing our response plan in the event that a case is discovered in a Prairie Spirit school.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have provided the following flowchart to describe the process that will be used if there is a positive case in a school. If this happens, we will be following this process and working closely with the Saskatchewan Health Authority.
If a student comes to school with symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, the student will be sent home. We know this is an inconvenience for parents, but it is a requirement from the Saskatchewan Health Authority. These requirements are designed to keep our schools open. Thank you to all of you, our families, for doing what you can to be part of the solution to keep schools open for students.

I recently heard someone compare what we are doing to protect ourselves from the spread of COVID-19 to trying to avoid a sunburn. To avoid a sunburn, you might put on sunscreen, wear a hat, wear a long-sleeved shirt, sit in the shade or avoid being outside during the hottest time of the day. All of these layers of protection won’t prevent the sun from shining, but they will reduce the chance of you getting a sunburn.

Our strategies to avoid the spread of COVID-19 also involve a few different layers of protection:

- In Prairie Spirit schools and offices, we are limiting outside visitors and guests.
- We have a screening test for all staff and any guests at Prairie Spirit facilities to help people determine if they are well enough to enter and to also assist with contact tracing, if necessary.
- Our students and staff are practicing excellent hygiene and sanitization practices before entering the school and throughout the day.
- Our caretaking staff are ensuring extra cleaning in the classroom and throughout the school.
- Our students are reducing their contacts throughout the school day by staying in their classroom cohort or scheduling blocks of time for classes in high school (in some schools).
- Teachers and students are spending as much time as they can outside while the weather permits.
- Our schools are keeping records of all seating arrangements both in the school and on the bus.
- Both staff and students are staying home when they have symptoms or feel unwell.

Thank you again for your support, patience and collaboration.

Sincerely,

Lori Jeschke
Director of Education