



March 11, 2020

Dear ALCDSB families, guardians and staff in the KFL&A area,

The health and wellbeing of all Board students, staff, volunteers and community members is a priority for the Board. We work in collaboration with all of our public health units who have asked us to share information about COVID-19.

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board will continue to post updates on our board website, www.alcdsb.on.ca, as they become available.

The following is information we received from Dr. Kieran Moore, Medical Officer of Health, KFL&A Public Health:

KFL&A Public Health is monitoring the COVID-19 situation. There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the KFL&A community; however, it is important for school communities and families to be prepared, to know how COVID-19 is spread, and how to lower your risk of contracting the virus.

[COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus.](#) Symptoms include cough, fever, and difficulty breathing. Coronaviruses are spread mainly from an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze,
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands, and
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

Being Prepared

The Public Health Agency of Canada has provided more detailed information to support [families to prepare](#).

There is no vaccine, nor antiviral available to protect against the 2019 novel coronavirus. However, there are everyday actions you can take to lower your risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 infection, which include:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are sick
- when coughing or sneezing:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs
 - immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as toys, electronic devices, and doorknobs
- stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others

March Break

If you plan to travel, during the March Break, check for Travel Health Notices on the government of Canada website <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice> to learn if you need to use special precautions or avoid non-essential travel. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is now recommending that Canadians avoid all cruise ship travel.

If you return from travel outside of Canada after the March Break, monitor yourself for symptoms (fever, cough or difficulty breathing) for 14 days after returning.

PHAC is also advising anyone who travelled and who has COVID-19 symptoms to stay home and self-isolate (which means stay in a separate room or keep a 2 metre distance), and call your health care provider, KFL&A Public Health 613-549-1232 or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving situation and you need to consider, when travelling, that current requirements by the Canadian government for returning travelers could change. You should be prepared for the potential recommendation to self-isolate and to stay home for 14 days upon returning from any travel outside Canada.

School Measures

Public health measures for schools are intended to provide a safer school environment. These can range from simple measures, like increasing distancing between desks and hygiene, to more extensive measures, like school closures.

For your information, the Public Health Agency of Canada has provided [guidance for schools and daycares](#), which includes information on the measures for schools to take to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.