

QMS Newsletter



Volume 4, Issue 7
Week of April 6, 2020

Queensborough Middle School

Important Dates

March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spring Break ends• Classroom instruction suspended
Week of March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Base teachers and school staff reach out to students and their families
Week of April 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Base teachers continue to reach out to students/families weekly• Remote learning platform available for students to join• Online digital consent provided by parents
April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional Development Day in Lieu
April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good Friday School closed
April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easter Monday School closed• Happy Vaisakhi!
Week of April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning begins
Week of April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning continues
April 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earth Day• Administrative Assistants' Day
Week of April 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote learning continues
April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Day of Mourning

Principal's Message:

Welcome to the first of our weekly QMS newsletters!

During this unprecedented time of COVID-19, information is coming at us fast and furious (and changing day to day)! My goal in sending these newsletters home each week is to provide you with the information you need as we embark on our remote learning journey together. If you have questions after you read through the newsletter, please send them to me and I will do my best to find the answers. I can be reached by email (Inasato@sd40.bc.ca) and at (604) 517-6042. Please reach out if there is a need!

This is what you can expect this week:

- Home Base and other school staff reaching out to connect with families and students (this may show as a blocked number if staff are using their personal phones)
- Information on the remote learning platform your child (ren) will be using (Google Classroom or Microsoft Teams)
- A request to provide parental consent for use of digital technology (sent to all families on Friday, April 3). **Please complete this online consent as soon as possible so that your child can engage in digital communication and learning.** Reach out to your child's teacher or myself if you have any questions or concerns.
- Information re: the process for students to pick up **essential** items left at school
- More information for those families who identified needs on the district survey (childcare, food security, loan of chromebooks).

Until next week ... take care, stay safe, and **please** reach out as needed,

Lisa Nasato

Teachers have been working hard to connect with each family and outline for you some of the ways that learning will progress with your students. If contact has not happened, can you please first check your junk email folders and your phone messages for communication from your child's teacher. If there are no messages, let us know and we will help to facilitate a connection with the teacher.



Helpful Tips and Resources:

G Suite (Google) a password resets:

If students have forgotten their G Suite (Google) password, please contact our Teacher Librarian, Lisa Seddon, at lseddon@sd40.bc.ca.

Students can also go to <https://sites.google.com/sd40.bc.ca/qms-library/home> and find a form to request a password change.



Temporary Loan of Chromebooks:

Please see the following link to an online application form to request the temporary loan of a SD40 issued Chromebook—for the singular use of supporting our students' learning while in-class instruction has been suspended due to the COVID-19 outbreak:

<https://newwestschools.ca/sd40-chromebook-application/>

Once applications have been processed and approved, you will be contacted with information regarding next steps.



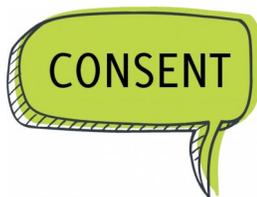
Online Consent Form:

In preparation for remote learning, the district has reviewed parental consent for the use of digital technology which was collected at the beginning of the school year. Given that we will be expanding the repertoire of electronic communications during this unique educational period, we are asking parents to reconfirm their consent or provide consent if it was previously declined.

All parents and guardians were sent an email from SchoolCashOnline on Friday, April 3 with instructions on how to provide consent online. It is very important that these consents be provided as soon as possible so that students can engage in digital communication/remote learning.

Questions or concerns can be directed to your child's teacher or to the principal, Lisa Nasato. If you did not receive an email from SchoolCashOnline, please let the office know by email:

queensborough@sd40.bc.ca



Student Access to Schools for Essential items:

Students who need to pick up **essential** items (medication, glasses, etc.) from the school can contact Mr. Jaggernathsingh by email to arrange a time to come to the school.

rjaggernathsingh@sd40.bc.ca

Students and parent/guardians who have been outside of the country within the past 14 days or anyone who is showing signs of illness may not enter the building. Thank you for your cooperation and help in keeping QMS safe for staff, students and their families.



COVID-19 Info Centre:

For resources, tools and updates to help your family and children through this challenging time, visit:

<https://newwestschools.ca/covid-19-info-centre/>

This site is updated regularly so be sure to check back often.



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Helpful Tips and Links:

Teacher Communication:



Parents, if you are getting calls from a number you don't recognize, it might be your child's teacher! Teachers working from home are reaching out to families and may be using home/internet based numbers. Consider picking up those calls or checking voice mail to help make sure you can connect! Likewise, check your junk folder for emails from your teachers!

It is extremely important that we have your current contact information. If your telephone number or email address has changed, please let the school office know by phone (604 517-6040) or email (queensborough@sd40.bc.ca). Thank you!

QMS' Learning Support Team:

If your child needs additional support, please feel free to contact our Learning Support Team:

Counsellor -
 Shirle Schweers
sschweers@sd40.bc.ca

English Language Learners -
 Kathleen Weinkam
kweinkam@sd40.bc.ca

Learning Assistance -
 Linda Mannix
lmannix@sd40.bc.ca



Colleen Carrington
ccarrington@sd40.bc.ca

Indigenous Support Worker-
 Sherry Bellerose
sbellerose@sd40.bc.ca

Suggestions from Ms. Schweers:

Included in this newsletter is the letter from Ms. Schweers sent home by email last week to all of our families. This week, Ms. Schweer's has provided some ideas for parents while in "self-isolation".

For other resources, visit the district website or reach out to Ms. Schweers by email or phone.

Together We Can Stay Healthy

5 Tips to Prevent Respiratory Illness

- Wash your hands
Wash often, preferably with soap & water
- Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth
- Cover your sneeze/cough
- Stay home if you're sick
- Avoid contact with sick people





QMS Staff Contact Information:

Division	Grade	Name	Email	
1	8	Athanasia Ventouras	aventouras@sd40.bc.ca	
2	8	Randy Jaggernathsingh Mario Avila	rjaggernathsingh@sd40.bc.ca mavila@sd40.bc.ca	
3	7/8	Samantha Dowdell	sdowdell@sd40.bc.ca	
4	7	Marc Rouleau	mrouleau@sd40.bc.ca	
5	7	Riel Villeneuve	rvilleneuve@sd40.bc.ca	
6	7	Apinder Sekhon	asekhon@sd40.bc.ca	
7	6	Astrid Hin Wong	ahinwong@sd40.bc.ca	
8	6	Gurmeet Grewall	gurmngrewall@sd40.bc.ca	
9	6	Sian Smith	sismith@sd40.bc.ca	
10	5	Kim Johal Mario Avila	kjohal@sd40.bc.ca mavila@sd40.bc.ca	
11	5	Heather Scharf	hscharf@sd40.bc.ca	
12	5	Alayne Madlambayan	almadlambayan@sd40.bc.ca	
13	5	Peter Ha	pha@sd40.bc.ca	
Music/Band		Anne Marie Milner Grace Weick	amilner@sd40.bc.ca gweick@sd40.bc.ca	
Physical Health		Sukh Rai Mackenzie Stevens	srail@sd40.bc.ca mastevens@sd40.bc.ca	
Library		Lisa Seddon	lseddon@sd40.bc.ca	
ELL		Kathleen Weinkam	kweinkam@sd40.bc.ca	
Counselling		Shirle Schweers	sschweers@sd40.bc.ca	(604) 549-6655
CCYW		Shahan Gill	shgill@sd40.bc.ca	
SWIS		Alin Arakelian	arakelian@mosaicbc.org	(604) 773 2328
Resource		Colleen Carrington Linda Mannix	ccarrington@sd40.bc.ca lmannix@sd40.bc.ca	
Indigenous Support		Sherry Bellerose	sbellerose@sd40.bc.ca	
Office		Judy Nornberg Trish Symons	queensborough@sd40.bc.ca	(604) 517-6040
Admin		Randy Jaggernathsingh (VP) Lisa Nasato (Principal)	rjaggernathsingh@sd40.bc.ca lnasato@sd40.bc.ca	(604) 517-6048 (604) 517-6042



A Letter from QMS' Counsellor:

Parents and Students,

I miss seeing you every day at school. Change is hard and this new routine puts extra stress on all of us! I want to support you during this time of transition and these new ways of connecting and supporting. Below you will find information related to counseling support for our parents and/or their children. Although it may be a while before we see each other in person, there is technology in place to support students, answer questions and converse by phone or on-line. I look forward to continuing to support students and their families through whatever options works best. Below you will find my contact info.

I will be available by phone from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. each weekday (I work part-time). You or your child can reach me at 604-549-6655. If I do not answer that means I am talking to someone and you will go straight to voicemail. If you want a call back, you can leave a message with your name and phone number, the name of your son/daughter and what time I can call you back. I will call back that day. Do check the School District website for ongoing updates. Below are some helpful tips and links for you and your family.

Mental Health Resources:

During this time of global health concerns, our mental health is paramount and regular self-care is important!

Here are a few tips for all age groups:

- Monitor your screen-time and limit your Covid-19 news intake
- Stick to a schedule (write out a plan for the day, go to bed and wake up at regular times).
- If you can, get out for walks or bike rides in nature as much as possible (keeping a 2-metre distance from non-family members at all times).
- Although we can't connect face-to-face with our friends and extended family, reach beyond your immediate friend group and check-in with old friends and acquaintances by phone or on-line.
- Visit the [Calm Blog](https://blog.calm.com) (found at blog.calm.com) or download the [Mindshift app](#) (found on the AnxietyBC site).

COVID-19 Specific Mental Health Resource:

This is a great article on managing anxiety around Covid-19 in teen-friendly language from [Anxiety Canada](#) (found at anxietycanada.com). If you are looking for helpful ways to talk about the COVID-19 situation with your family, we recommend this blog from [Keltly Mental Health](#) (found at keltlymentalhealth.ca/blog).

Resources to Support Healthy Coping and Wellness:

If you are looking for more ideas to support yourself and/or a friend. Here are two helpful websites: Each one has a variety of ways to support anxiety, depression, healthy coping & provides information about healthy relationships and supporting others.

- [Youthspace.ca](https://youthspace.ca) (found at youthspace.ca)
- [Kids Helpline](https://kids.helpline.ca) (found at [kidshelpline.ca](https://kids.helpline.ca))

Currently, I am waiting for direction from the School District about a platform to connect with you via internet on programs using a video chat program. For now, you can connect via email at sschweers@sd40.bc.ca or using the phone number posted above.

Why do parents or students connect with the counselor?

- You want to check-in and let me know how you're doing
- You want to chat about school concerns/worries
- You are feeling anxious or depressed and looking for support or information about community supports

Looking forward to connecting with students and their families,
Ms. Schweers
QMS Counsellor

Ideas for Parenting while in “Self-Isolation”:

Ideas for Parenting while in “Self-Isolation”

Develop a self-care toolkit. This can look different for everyone. A lot of successful self-care strategies involve a sensory component (seven senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing, smell, vestibular (movement) and proprioceptive (comforting pressure)). An idea for each: a soft blanket or stuffed animal, a mug of hot chocolate, photos of vacations, comforting music, lavender or eucalyptus oil, a small swing or rocking chair, a weighted blanket. A journal, an inspirational book, or a mandala coloring book is wonderful, bubbles to blow or blowing watercolor on paper through a straw are visually appealing as well as work on controlled breath. Mint gum, Listerine strips, ginger ale, frozen Starburst, ice packs, and cold are also good for anxiety regulation. For children, it is great to help them create a self-regulation comfort box (often a shoe-box or bin they can decorate) that they can use on the ready for first-aid when overwhelmed.

Spend extra time playing with children. Children will rarely communicate how they are feeling, but will often make a bid for attention and communication through play. Don't be surprised to see therapeutic themes of illness, doctor visits, and isolation play through. Understand that play is cathartic and helpful for children—it is how they process their world and problem solve, and there's a lot they are seeing and experiencing in the now.

Expect behavioral issues in children, and respond gently. We are all struggling with disruption in routine, none more than children, who rely on routines constructed by others to make them feel safe and to know what comes next. Expect increased anxiety, worries and fears, nightmares, difficulty separating or sleeping, testing limits, and meltdowns. Do not introduce major behavioral plans or consequences at this time—hold stable and focus on emotional connection.

Focus on safety and attachment. We are going to be living for a bit with the unprecedented demand of meeting all work deadlines, homeschooling children, running a sterile household, and making a whole lot of entertainment in confinement. We can get wrapped up in meeting expectations in all domains, but we must remember that these are scary and unpredictable times for children. Focus on strengthening the connection through time spent following their lead, through physical touch, through play, through therapeutic books, and via verbal reassurances that you will be there for them in this time.

Limit social media and COVID conversation, especially around children. One can find tons of information on COVID-19 to consume, and it changes minute to minute. The information is often sensationalized, negatively skewed, and alarmist. Find a few trusted sources that you can check in with consistently, limit it to a few times a day, and set a time limit for yourself on how much you consume (again 30 minutes tops, 2-3 times daily). Keep news and alarming conversations out of earshot from children—they see and hear everything, and can become very frightened by what they hear.

Engage in repetitive movements and left-right movements. Research has shown that repetitive movement (knitting, coloring, painting, clay sculpting, jump roping etc) especially left-right movement (running, drumming, skating, hopping) can be effective at self-soothing and maintaining self-regulation in moments of distress.

Thank you to QMS Counsellor Shirle Schweers for these suggestions. Ms. Schweers will be a regular contributor to our weekly newsletters.



Letter from the Superintendent (April 3):



School Board Office, District No 40
811 Ontario Street
New Westminster, BC V3m 0J7

604 517 6240
info@sd40.bc.ca
newwestschools.ca

April 3, 2020

Dear parents, students and staff,

In last week's update we said we wanted to hear from you, and we did. Thank you to the nearly 4000 families who took time to help us better understand the needs you have right now. Principals have already started connecting with those Category 1 families (e.g. health care workers and emergency responders) who said they needed child care, as well as with the families who requested support around accessing food security solutions, through our lunchtime meal provider. Next we'll be addressing the needs of families in the other two categories. And our technology team is currently finalizing the process for the almost 300 families who have requested the loan of a Chromebook, to help facilitate remote learning.

By this time your kids should have heard from their classroom teachers as well ... laying the groundwork for the graduated shift into remote learning opportunities that will start to phase in next week. And our staff teams who work with vulnerable kids and families are starting to reach out to figure out what's possible to achieve in this new reality.

A lot has been accomplished in the last two and a half weeks. There is much more to do.

We know this isn't going to look like traditional learning. We will all need to be flexible, collaborative and measured. Each family will have to figure out when and how much they can take on. Teachers will be focussing on *key learning outcomes*, and providing opportunities to learn. Not every family will be able to capitalize on every opportunity. And that's okay.

Many of our district's other staff may be stepping into shifted roles through this transition ... everyone pitching in to deliver on the modified needs of this modified period of learning.

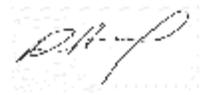
As the connections with your local schools start up again, you'll begin to hear a bit less from us and more from your principals and teachers. Know we're still working hard to keep everyone connected, to centralize efforts where it makes sense, and support each school's specific needs as well. And we'll continue to share updates and resources on our district website to help families through this situation: <https://newwestschools.ca/>

We will continue forward, together, with each of us doing the best we can each day.

Now, to shift a little ... despite the challenges, I want to add that we're seeing really beautiful moments too. We're seeing teachers creatively finding new ways to connect with students from afar, parents who – despite the pressures – are making efforts to actively engage with their kids' learning and community members reaching out to offer support.

Thank you for all you're doing to be part of delivering solutions. Thanks for being in this together.

With great appreciation,



Karim Hachlaf
Superintendent of Schools / CEO





Letter from Principal page 1 (March 31):



Queensborough Middle School
Home of the "Tsunami" – Ride the wave to success
Principal: Mrs. L. Nasato
Vice Principal: R. Jaggemathsingh

March 31, 2020

Dear QMS Families,

Welcome back from a very different Spring Break! I hope that you are well, staying safe, and taking good care of each other.

On March 17, 2020, under the direction of the Provincial Health Officer, the Provincial Government directed all K-12 schools to immediately suspend in-class instruction until further notice. With Spring Break now over, many of you have questions about what comes next. While there are still many questions to be answered, I wanted to provide you with an update for the week ahead.

The suspension of in-class instruction will mean that the way in which we do our work will be different. I want to assure you that we are working hard to develop plans so that learning can continue while your children are at home. During the next week or two, our dedicated QMS teachers will be collaborating with colleagues and developing thoughtful plans for how remote learning will move forward. We thank you for your patience during this time and assure you that teachers will be reaching out to students soon.

Maintaining a focus on relationships in this time of physical distancing is paramount and I am confident we will meet this challenge together. I'd like to thank you for responding to the request to complete the district wide survey. Your responses will help us in understanding your family's needs, especially as they pertain to childcare, food security and access to technology. Over the next week, we will be reviewing this information and I will be in touch with you directly if you identified specific needs. If you did not have a chance to respond to the survey and have immediate needs, please contact me to discuss your situation.

As we move forward, communication will be key. To that end, I will share information and keep you informed through email, and you can expect a weekly update from me. In addition, please don't hesitate to contact me should you wish to connect. For this week, I'd like to share the following update:

833 Salter Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 6G8
Phone: 604-517-6040 Fax: 604-517-6041



Letter from Principal page 2 (March 31):



March 30 – April 3:

- The health and safety of our community of staff, students, and families is the top priority and we ask that you not visit the school at this time. Next week, you will receive information on how to arrange an appointment to come collect belongings that your child may need while at home;
- Your child's teacher(s) will reach out to you and your child with an initial communication this week;
- The District will continue to keep families informed of matters related to the COVID-19 response on the website at www.newwestschools.ca. In addition, you will find learning resources on the website to assist you in getting started with remote learning including how to establish a daily routine for your child.

I hope this message provides you with some clarity regarding what to expect this week. Our school community is a place of caring and belonging. Together, we will manage the uncertainty and challenges. Take care of yourself and your family, making health and wellness your number one priority at this time.

Kind regards,
Lisa Nasato
lnasato@sd40.bc.ca

833 Salter Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 6G8
Phone: 604-517-6040 Fax: 604-517-6041



Letter from the Superintendent (May Day 2020):



School Board Office, District No 40
811 Ontario Street
New Westminster, BC V3m 0J7

604 517 6240
info@sd40.bc.ca
newwestschools.ca

April 3, 2020

Dear parents, students, staff and community members,

In this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 outbreak, we, as a District, have had to make many changes to how we do business. And we have done so by taking guidance and direction from the health authorities who have the lead on this evolving situation ... looking to them for guidance on best-practice and required safety measures.

Not only has that been true at a District level, but at every level of government as well. In New Westminster, both the City and the Provincial government took steps to call states of emergency to help them enact restrictions, closures and enforce other preventative measures. That includes everything from the suspension of in-class instruction in K-12 schools to closures of playgrounds and various other shared outdoor spaces.

In every decision we make, we must keep the safety of our community as our top priority. And that means considering how requirements around limited gathering sizes, safe physical distancing and the general advice to "stay home when you can" affects all that we do.

In light of all of these factors, it is with regret that we are announcing the cancellation of this year's May Day event.

We know how deeply connected many are to the annual festivities ... and this was to be a milestone year as the 150th celebration. We acknowledge the additional disappointment this adds.

To the students, staff and neighbours who stepped forward – eager to participate and help – we send additional thanks to you for your time and commitment.

But, in order to keep our students, staff, families and our wider community safe and well, this was the only appropriate decision at this time.

We must continue to work collaboratively, in all we do, to help flatten the curve. We must all be in this together.

On behalf of the Board of Education, thank you for your understanding.

Respectfully,

Karim Hachlaf
Superintendent of Schools / CEO