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April 1, 2021

Dear Prairie Spirit families:

As we enter the school break, I would like to provide an update to families about our current plans in Prairie Spirit schools.

You may have noticed that other school divisions in the province are moving to Level 4 (online learning) before the break and possibly after the break. At this time, our local Medical Health Officer (MHO) is not advising us to move to Level 4, so we plan to return to school in person on Monday, April 12. We use the words “at this time” as things may change and warrant a move to online learning at some point.

This advice from the MHO is based on the current COVID-19 numbers in our local context. With the current health measures in place, the MHO believes our schools can plan to continue in-person learning (Level 2) after the break. As a large high school with over 600 students, Warman High School remains at Level 3 in the provincial Safe Schools Plan, which means the school capacity is reduced with a hybrid approach to learning (at home and at school).

We are focusing on encouraging our students, staff and families to continue following the public health orders and applying layers of protection.

As we prepare for the second Easter under this pandemic, the **Saskatchewan Health Authority has shared the following messages for families:**

- Across the province, COVID-19 is spreading more quickly and more easily than before because of the COVID-19 **variants of concern** (VOC). These new strains of COVID-19 spread more easily and are causing more people under the age of 65 to become ill and even hospitalized. Please go to the following [link](#) for Ministry of Health information about variants of concern.
- Variants of concern are **highly contagious** and can result in more severe disease. They should be considered **dangerous** by every Saskatchewan person.
- The increased spread of COVID-19 and its variants could result in **more illness, more hospitalizations and ICU admissions** and consequently, **more deaths**.
- The variants are hitting those under 65 more than ever, with hospitalizations increasing for those in the age 40-59 age group. **This isn't just a concern for our older residents**. It is a concern for all of our residents.

- Variants of concern are **more transmissible**, meaning that it takes less exposure time to catch a COVID-19 variant and that a person **develops symptoms faster**. It's more important than ever before to be vigilant and get tested to help protect yourself and those around you.
- Following all Public Health measures is critical to **breaking the chain of transmission**. Please go to the following link to view a video which explains this message: [Break the Chain](#)
- **Testing** is an important way to detect the COVID-19 virus early and stop the spread. It's important that everyone be tested and tested regularly.

Public Health is urging us to use the current Public Health Orders as our minimum standard of staying safe. We must limit our contact to our immediate family or bubble. Stay safe and help break the chain of transmission!

Thank you for your continued support for your child's teachers and school staff as they continue to focus on learning, with many other pressures this year. Best wishes for a restful break!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lori Jeschke', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lori Jeschke
Director of Education

Additional Resources:

- [Testing Information | COVID-19 | Government of Saskatchewan](#)
- [Rapid Testing in Schools](#)
- [Break the Chain video](#)
- [This Easter, Stay Home, Stay Safe and Stick it to COVID \(saskhealthauthority.ca\)](#)