

Hello Bruce Middle School Families!

I hope you are all safe, secure and in a positive frame of mind. Thank you for supporting the educational tools we have provided to continue the learning from home over the last three weeks. Thank you for your words of encouragement and thank you for being strong when our young children need us the most.

First, reports cards have been mailed out (Apr 14th) and should arrive in your physical (not digital) mailboxes in the next day or so. We will still be producing report cards for the end of the year, but with so much variability and possibility between now and June, what it looks like and what it will contain is still being decided upon by the province.

This Friday (April 17th) is considered to *be an academic 'pause day' for students. Teachers will work on assessment and preparation of learning.* No new work will assigned to students on this day and teachers will not be expected to have contact with students on April 17th. Students may use this day as a catch-up day if they require more time for learning. Ideally, families can use this extra day as a chance to relax and reconnect.

This Friday is also a day where printed schoolwork may be dropped off for assessment at the school. This only applies to those families who have picked up or have been delivered a paper package. Students who have been working through Showbie, Kidblog, Microsoft Teams or other digital means have already been submitting work to their teacher electronically. The front doors will be open 12-3pm and a Rubbermaid bin with envelopes will be available for work submission. Please label the envelope with your child's name and class (6a, 6b etc).

As you are aware, Microsoft Teams has been introduced to replace Zoom, which has been removed from the list of acceptable programs for classroom use due the security issues (Zoom-bombing, selling of passwords) that have made headlines recently. It is unfortunate and I know it added to some families' stress, but Teams was going to be introduced in September and the risk of exposing our students to unwanted material forced the division's hand.

Another tool that was recently introduced is the provincial website "My Learning at Home" aimed at providing educational tools and activities, resources and mental health supports for families. It is a worthwhile tool to take a look at.

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/mylearning/stayinghealthy/index.html>

Lockers still contain useful items for most families, such as binders and clothing and we are wanting to return items to you in an orderly fashion. We have also been concerned with left-behind food items that may increase our rodent population. It was decided that we would clean out lockers and make the contents available for pick up. On Tuesday (April 21st) and Wednesday (April 22nd) of next week, one member of the family can enter the school to retrieve the bagged contents that sit in front of the locker. A schedule of times to ensure distancing was emailed to all BMS families, please contact the school if you did not receive the scheudle. It is also a convenient time to distribute paper version of student work for those families who need it. A package will only be available if you communicate directly with your teachers the need for paper copies by the end of Friday.

Again, thank you for your patience and support. If there is a way we can support families through this crisis – food, technology, mental health – please call us and we will do what we can. Stay safe, be there for each other and give thanks to those on the front lines keeping this world moving. Stay well.

D. MacNeil and J. O'Brien

