



# Bluewater District School Board

Alana Murray, *Director of Education*

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Minister of Education Stephen Lecce announced today that all publicly funded schools in Ontario will remain closed for the rest of the current school year due to the ongoing efforts to combat COVID-19. [Click here to view today's media release by the provincial government.](#)

As a result of this decision, I can confirm that all schools in Bluewater District School Board will not reopen until the start of the 2020 – 2021 school year in September, or as determined by the provincial government.

Licensed child care centres and EarlyON programs will also remain closed with the exception of emergency child care spaces that are currently being offered to health care and other frontline workers.

I know that this news may come as a disappointment for many of our students, staff, and families, who were hoping for a return in June so that the school year could be finished in a more traditional fashion. At the very least, I hope that this decision to extend the closure period until the end of the school year will alleviate some of the uncertainty that has been lingering and help us to move forward in planning our next steps.

As communicated previously by Minister Lecce, students will still be able to complete the school year and receive their final report cards. Secondary students who were on track to graduate prior to the closure of schools will also be able to graduate. More information on report cards and this year's graduates can be found in our [continuous learning Q and A](#).

In the meantime, we will keep moving forward with distance learning, all the while gathering feedback from parents/guardians, students, and staff to improve our efforts in delivering lessons and programs as schools remain closed. Plans are also being developed for optional enhanced summer school and summer learning programs that students may wish to participate in to keep their learning active until school resumes.

I recognize that many are wondering about the status of end-of-school-year celebrations of student achievement, including secondary commencement and Grade 8 graduation. The Ministry of Education recently issued a [statement](#) encouraging school boards to preserve these opportunities so that students can participate in them once it is safe to do so. We have heard from several individuals in our school communities on this topic, and are firmly committed to ensuring that these important milestone events will proceed and be memorable for our students. Details on how these might occur will be shared soon.

There are also a number of questions regarding arrangements for students to retrieve their belongings. We are working with our local public health officials to determine the timing and proper protocols around this, which will also be communicated as soon as we know more.

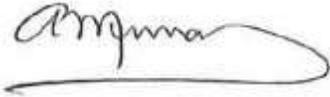
While it is hard to predict what our eventual return to school will look like, I assure you that we will be working closely with our public health, ministry, and Ontario school board partners to carefully strategize a reentry plan that is safe and reasonable for our students, staff, and families. The provincial

government has indicated that a plan for safely reentering schools at a future date will be unveiled prior to the end of the current school year. We will keep you updated as details emerge regarding how this plan will look in Bluewater District School Board.

Thank you again for all your support and efforts to go above and beyond in ensuring the success and well-being of our students during these challenging past few months. I am so proud when I reflect on the many ways in which all our school communities in Bluewater have demonstrated such strength and resiliency in the face of adversity. It goes without saying that together we will all emerge from this even stronger and more resilient than ever.

As always, I encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alana Murray", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Alana Murray  
Director of Education