



Wednesday 25th of March, 2020

Dear Parents & Caregivers,

We hope the unexpected early start to school holidays has begun well for you during these uncertain times.

The Victorian State Government announced late Sunday afternoon that Victoria would start their Term 1 school holidays early. Due to this, this week is holiday time and there is no expectation on families to replicate education activities or for children to complete school work at home.

Term 2 will resume on Wednesday 15th of April for students at Warragul & District Specialist School as Tuesday 14th of April is a statewide pupil-free day and Monday 13th of April is Easter Monday and therefore a public holiday. It is too early to confirm with families whether the first day of school on Wednesday 15th of March will be at school or whether learning will take place at home.

At this stage, we have not received any confirmation in regards to whether school will or will not be open in Term 2. As everyone is mostly likely aware the situation surrounding COVID-19 is rapidly changing and updates are occurring multiple times a day. We have been told that the 15th of April is too far way for any decision to be made by the State and Federal government in regards to school closures. This being said our school is currently preparing for both options.

In the Event of a School Closure- What is the Plan?

In the event that our school is moved to remote learning (learning from home) for Term 2 we will communicate this with all families via email and text. It is important that all families have provided the school with their correct residential address, phone numbers and email address, as all these modes of communication will also be used in the event of students being required to remote learning.

Please be rest assured that should remote learning occur during Term 2, staff at Warragul & District Specialist School will be here to support you, your child and their education. In relation to school work, all students will receive a hardcopy of work at their level, and a range of communication resources to support this including a social story and visual supports. These learning resources will be posted in the last week of school holidays if there is an announcement made and students are not allowed to physically return to school.

Our school staff have also been working very hard to set up an online learning resource space. Students and families will have an opportunity to access learning materials online. There will be a range of materials to support both academic learning and also a range of resources to continually build students life skills and independence. There will be access to a wide range of websites, interactive learning and helpful activities that families may wish to try out at home. Teaching staff will help families navigate this space next term.

Further details regarding remote learning will be provided should we need to move to this mode of learning. All families will be notified at the end of the final week of holidays whether we are or are not returning to school via text and email.

Health and Wellbeing

We understand that many people in our school community are feeling worried and scared about what lies ahead. We are here for you and working hard to have as many supports in place so that we can move through this as a school community.

During this difficult time, we must all take care to support one another. Please take all Government warnings seriously, we must reiterate that the restrictions put in place across Victoria and the country must be followed. Our thoughts are with those who may be unwell, and those who are working tirelessly to keep our community safe.

If you or a family member require further help, you can also access following services:

Lifeline 13 11 14

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800

MensLine Australia 1300 789 978

Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467

Beyond Blue 1300 22 46 36

Headspace 1800 650 890

SANE Australia 1800 18 7263

Somebody shared this lovely thought to a staff member recently which we thought would also be nice to share with you all.

***When this all ends – AND IT WILL
Every home will be snapped up,
Every football match will sell out,
Every restaurant will have a two hour wait,
Every kid will be glad to be in school,
Everyone will love their job,
The \$ will skyrocket,
Pubs will be jammed,
and gigs will be plentiful and
we'll kiss and embrace and shake hands.
That's gonna be a good day!
Hang in there, World.***

Attached with today's update is a social story from our speech therapy team called 'School Holidays Have Started Early' please read this with your child if you feel it will be helpful.

Thank you to everyone for continuous and ongoing support. Stay safe and well.

Kind regards,

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Warragul & District Specialist School

For further information regarding COVID-19 please seek helpful information from:

<https://www.health.gov.au/> <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

If you remain concerned about your health or a person you know then please call the Coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours)