



Monday, April 6th, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This morning, your children and our staff will embark on a new, unexplored educational journey, joining thousands of students in Ontario who will begin teacher-led learning from home.

These are unprecedented times, and we are all adapting as best as we can to help ease this transition for students, you and your families as schools remain closed. We are all here to support you during this continued unprecedented time.

We understand that many students will transition into this new way of learning smoothly, while others may have to overcome some obstacles. Our principals, teachers and support staff are available to assist students through a variety of different platforms and will stay in contact throughout this new phase in education. Please continue to reach out to staff for any assistance. Principals will update you on a variety of topics from assessment and evaluation, support with technology, reimbursement of nutrition funds and decisions regarding scheduled events in May and June once finalized. We have launched a FAQ tab on our Learn at Home page that will be updated as new questions are received.

Through differentiated teacher-led learning, teachers will guide students to meet grade expectations as they complete assignments. Continue to encourage your child to do their very best, and be patient if they struggle to adapt. Please remember that you and your children are not in this alone. Niagara Catholic principals, teachers and support staff are here to support you and your family as we walk forward together.

As parents, you are your child's first teachers, and we are partners in your child's education. We know many families promote continuous learning during school holidays and on weekends, and we are grateful for your continued commitment to your child's learning and success.

We also know that many parents are juggling working from home during this global pandemic, or are working long hours outside the home in hospitals, pharmacies and grocery stores, as paramedics, firefighters and police officers while trying to support student distance learning at home. We respect the challenges you face, and are grateful for your service and for the support of parents across the system.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and understanding as we all navigate these uncharted waters, and for modelling calmness and flexibility for your children. By setting this outstanding example, you are teaching your children resilience and adaptability, which may be one of the most important lessons they will learn from this historic experience.

A reminder that support is available for families where mental health is an issue. Our [Learn at Home](#) page has two sections dedicated to mental health; one for students, and one for families. These sections offer a number of guides and supports to help through these difficult days. If someone in your family is in crisis, or in need of additional support, please call your family physician, Pathstone Mental Health at 1-800-263-4944 or Kids' Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or by texting 686868.

Recognition of our staff for their focused efforts over the past three weeks to plan, adapt and provide learning for students remotely. This has been and will continue to be a Team Niagara Catholic effort to support the diverse learners and communities we serve throughout Niagara. We are in this together and together we will do our very best to meet the challenges that are ahead.

Parents and guardians, thank you again for all you have done to help support student learning throughout this truly extraordinary time and for all you will do in the days and weeks ahead.

Student leadership and engagement is a foundational pillar of Niagara Catholic. I have remained in contact with the Co-Chairs of the Student Senate and later today I will be emailing a letter directly to all students through their Board provided Gmail account. Please invite your child to check their Gmail account for the letter.

On behalf of Bishop Bergie, Chair Fera and the Board of Trustees, members of Senior Staff, Principals, Vice-Principals and staff, Happy Easter to you and your family. We continue to offer our prayers that you and your family are healthy, safe and well.

Pray, stay healthy and safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Crocco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

John Crocco
Director of Education