



Sooke Schools

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

Many Nations.  One Remarkable Experience

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March 17, 2020

Dear International Parents and Agents,

We are writing to provide you with an update on the current situation as it pertains to COVID-19. Earlier today, the B.C. government announced that they would be suspending all in-class instruction in schools in the province until further notice.

Given this news, and the travel advisories put in place by Canada and many governments around the world, we are advising that parents take swift action to book a return flight for their child or children to return to their home country, while commercial airlines are still in operation. Many families have already made this decision. We request that parents provide confirmation of a return flight booking within 24 hours of this message being sent (by end of day, March 18), and that the flight will depart as soon as possible. Note that it is our strong recommendation to book flights from Victoria International Airport (YYJ), rather than Vancouver (YVR). Travel to Vancouver airport involves a significant amount of public transportation (ferry, bus, SkyTrain), and ferry service is limited due to decreased demand at this time. A reminder that we are only able to provide airport transportation to Victoria Airport or Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal. **Parents should provide their flight confirmation directly to their child and host family, and our office will liaise with host families to confirm information.**

The Minister of Education has said that the province is considering a transition plan to maintain continuity of instruction, and further details of that are still to come. He also mentioned that all students will receive final grades and that eligible Grade 12 students would be able to graduate, regardless of how long the closure persists. We would like to reassure students and parents that we will ensure that students receive academic credit for their program with us, and we will work with our partners around the world to navigate this.

Thank you for your understanding in this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Laura Schwertfeger

Laura Schwertfeger
District Principal