



PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL
PANTHER POST

Week of March 23, 2020

"All students will learn and grow academically, socially, emotionally and physically!"

"It is not certain that everything is uncertain"

~Blaise Pascal

It has certainly been an interesting week and it looks like things will continue to evolve as we make our way through this together.

It is heartening to see Albertans working together to do what needs to get done. This has definitely been the case in the school. The EA's and other staff worked hard to organize the return of student belongings. 94% of parents came in to gather those items and they did so in an orderly and pleasant fashion. Teachers have been working hard all week to prepare educational plans and resources in an ever-changing landscape; trying to hit a target that was constantly moving, sometimes disappearing altogether.

The staff have worked through this all while riding the COVID-19 rollercoaster with the rest of us: worrying about the health of their families; keeping food on their tables; managing child care; and dealing with the stress of the times.

Having gone through this with you, we realize that school may not be your priority right now. Indeed, teachers have spent much of this week connecting with kids to ensure they are okay. They will be moving slowly with the studies.

It should also be noted that there is no expectation for parents to become teachers. We do not expect you to set up a classroom in your home. Teachers will start providing work for your child this week. We'll provide work for them, mostly through Google Classrooms. All you need to do is provide them with time and space to work. 1-2 hours per day, on average.

However, especially for those of you at home with your kids, this is a time to connect with your children. Even if they aren't saying it, they are concerned. Talk with them about it. They are likely getting misinformation from their social media feeds. This is an opportunity to talk them through some of those concerns and misinformation. It's a great time to connect as a family. Play card & board games--board, card, & dice games in particular--, cook, take the dog for a walk, take turns reading a book out loud, follow Mr. Whitecotton's workouts as a family.

If you have not seen it already, Alberta Education has put out a news release which you can find at <https://bit.ly/3djL3nf> . It outlines some of what parents can expect regarding their child's education in the coming weeks. The highlights include:

- will offer at-home learning opportunities, either through online means or through other accommodations, such as course packages and telephone check-ins;
- at the grade 6 level, studies will be an average of 5 hours per week;
- at the grades 7 & 8 level, studies will be an average of 10 hours per week.

As far as academics are concerned, one of the best things your kids can be doing it reading. Read, read, read. And, sorry, reading social media does not count. Talk about what they are reading. Next up, is to play games that use numbers--dice games, card games, board games. And finally, talk with your children. Interact. Stay strong together.