

January 28, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) announced today that they will hold a one-day, province-wide full withdrawal of services (strike) on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

In light of safety concerns, **we will close all schools to students on Tuesday, February 4, 2020**, unless a strike is averted.

What Does This Mean?

The following is a summary of the plan in place for Tuesday, February 4, 2020:

What will be CANCELLED or CLOSED	What will PROCEED or remain OPEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All HCDSB elementary and secondary schools will be CLOSED to students. All Before & After School Programs will be CANCELLED. Credit courses offered at ALL Thomas Merton Centre for Continuing Education locations will be CANCELLED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare centres will remain OPEN as they run independently from our schools. Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes taking place at ALL Thomas Merton Centre locations will PROCEED as scheduled. Community use of schools will PROCEED as scheduled in all HCDSB schools.

NOTE: *Many of our extended day providers will offer a full-day program. Parents are encouraged to contact the extended day provider at their child's school about program offerings.*

Why Do We Have to Close Schools?

OECTA represents all of our HCDSB elementary and secondary school teachers, and a full withdrawal of services would mean that no instruction would take place in any of our classrooms. This poses significant student supervision challenges that would threaten the safety of our elementary and secondary students. In light of safety concerns, **we will close all schools to students on Tuesday, February 4, 2020**, unless a strike is averted.

We regret any disruption to student learning and inconvenience to families that will result from this job action. We respect that job sanctions are a legal part of the collective bargaining process. Our actions during any sanctions remain focused on the safety and well-being of the students entrusted to our care.

As a Board, we value all of our staff as dedicated, caring professionals, and we respect labour laws that affirm the legal rights of our unionized employee groups to engage in job actions.

We know that all sides are working hard to reach agreements, and we are hopeful that a new provincial agreement will soon be reached with our OECTA staff.



Pat Daly
Director of Education