W.R.D.S.B. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS ASSOCIATION

eUpdate

The Latest Information to Keep YOU Informed

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A Message From the President

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Good Day to All:

I hope this eblast finds everyone safe and healthy. It is wonderful to see the sun shining today; certainly helps to lift the spirit.

Premier Doug Ford recently announced that schools will remain closed beyond May 4, 2020. Like you, we are anxious to hear when schools will reopen. The press release did not provide an indication of when this will happen. It also did not indicate how this will financially impact our core Permanent and Term Members. As always, we will be sure to update you as soon as we learn more.

Many, if not most of you are now **supporting Students and their families at home**. If you have any questions in this regard, please reach out to your Administrator for clarification. The Board has had a number of families who have reached out and requested a **live video classroom environment** to support them and their Child's learning. The Board appreciates that this approach to distance learning is something our families may be looking for, however, we need to ensure that our Members are appropriately prepared and supported in teaching and interacting with Students in this way. Concerns regarding safety and privacy for both Students and Staff remain, and the Board is in the process of developing clear guidelines and protocols that protect the safety and privacy of all involved. The Board is reviewing a variety of options and best practices, consulting with Education Stakeholders, and are committed to finalizing guidelines for live video classroom environments by the end of this week. More information on this will be coming soon. Until these guidelines are put in place, please do not reach out to Students or their families in this manner.

Last week we as a School Board accomplished some pretty amazing things:

- Educators continued to reach out and connect with Students and families, assign learning activities and supports and reinforce safe internet practices and digital citizenship
- School Staff Members and Educators collaborated to plan for individual Student needs and provided them with meaningful learning activities
- WRDSB Staff continued to provide new at-home learning activities on WRDSB@Home as a way to supplement the learning activities provided by Educators
- Central Learning Support Services Staff have continued to update and enhance WRDSB Staff@Home
- WRDSB continued to provide professional development opportunities for our Staff
- We proudly provided over 3200 devices to Students, and over 400 devices to Staff

- We supported our local Health Providers by donating 35,000 gloves and roughly 150 N95 masks to the Cambridge Memorial Hospital
- The Waterloo Education Foundation Inc. (WEFI) donated $50,000 to support Nutrition For Learning in their work addressing food insecurity in Waterloo Region

Some Members have asked if they could be laid off so that they can collect the Canadian Emergency Response Benefits. I recommend that you check out this link: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application/questions.html

We have had a number of Members ask if there would be another **Free Sonderly Autism Training** happening. I have good news. The training is being offered again. Please refer to the email that I have put out on the Board Server today.

I would like you to know that we are in **Virtual Local Negotiations**. This is definitely a new way of bargaining, but none-the-less it is underway. When we have any news to share in this regard, we will reach out to you. I suspect that this will be a lengthy process.

Job Postings will be coming out in May. Once the Posting Dates have been confirmed, I will let everyone know, as well as the process to be followed this year. Take time to update your resume.

We all miss our Students, our classrooms and our daily traditions. We are living in uncharted territory. **The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony** came together virtually to create a recording of O Canada. Check it out! I love the fact that the Conductor is holding his baby.

I wish all of you many bright blessings over the coming days.

Sincerely,

Colleen Dietrich Sisson
President - Educational Assistants Association

Covid19 Mental health resources

During this unprecedented time it is very important that we take care of ourselves. Please see below for some links to information you may need as we navigate through the Covid 19 Pandemic.

ROW Public Health

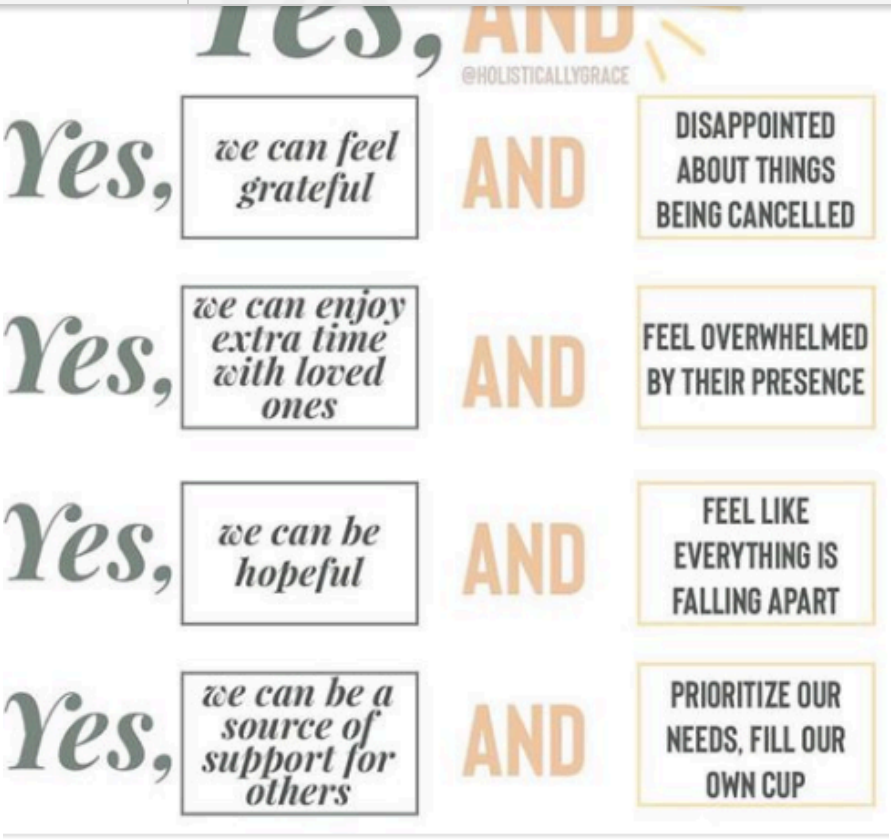
OTIP Coronavirus info

WRDSB Covid 19 information for staff

If you are struggling please reach out to Resilience, our Employee Assistance Program. Their number is 1-800-663-1142 Our contract number is 12500 and the member number is your EIN

For those with Extended Health Benefits, paramedical services are offering virtual therapy. The type of services allowed as well as specific protocols in providing virtual therapy are variable by governing body, thus we strongly recommend that members speak with their professional to get clarification on the specific services they can render online.





Information about the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and Employment Insurance What is Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB)?

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) is a new benefit to support people who have lost their income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an income replacement program, not an income supplement program. It is intended to be accessed by anyone who is not working and is not otherwise eligible for Employment Insurance (EI). It is not intended to replace Employment Insurance (EI)

Members who have questions about accessing employment insurance can visit this Government of Canada website: Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – Employment and Social Development Canada

In Order to Qualify for CERB You Will be Required to Attest to the Following:

- You did not apply for, nor receive benefits (CERB or EI) for the same eligibility period;
- You did not quit your job voluntarily;
- You reside in Canada;
- You are 15 years old or more when you apply; and
- You earned a minimum of $5000 income in the last 12 months or in 2019 from one or more of the following sources:
    - Employment income
    - Self-employment income
    - Provincial or federal benefits related to maternity or paternity leave.

For Your First CERB Application:

- You have stopped working due to reasons related to COVID-19;
- For at least 14 days in a row during the period you are applying for, you do not expect to receive more than $1000 (before taxes) from employment and self-employment income;
  OR
- You received regular EI benefits for at least 1 week since December 29, 2019 and you are no longer eligible for benefits.

For Your Subsequent CERB Applications:

- You continue to not work due to reasons related to COVID-19;
- For the 4 week period you are applying for, you do not expect your situation to change and you do not expect to receive more than $1000 (before taxes) from employment and self-employment income;
  OR
- You received regular EI benefits for at least 1 week since December 29, 2019 and you are no longer eligible for benefits.

Eligibility Periods

The eligibility periods are fixed in 4-week blocks. You can apply for multiple 4-week periods, to a maximum of 16 weeks (4 periods).

- Eligibility Period 1: March 15, 2020 to April 11, 2020
- Eligibility Period 2: April 12, 2020 to May 9, 2020
- Eligibility Period 3: May 10, 2020 to June 6, 2020
- Eligibility Period 4: June 7, 2020 to July 4, 2020
- Eligibility Period 5: July 5, 2020 to August 1, 2020
- Eligibility Period 6: August 2, 2020 to August 29, 2020
- Eligibility Period 7: August 30, 2020 to September 26, 2020

How do I Apply for CERB?

- Online with CRA My Account
- Through your secure My Service Canada Account; or
- Over the phone with an automated phone service:
    - 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-9592041

What if I've already been laid off and applied for EI?

If you submit an application for EI now or have already applied since March 15, you do not need to reapply for the CERB. If you qualify, your claim will be automatically moved over to the CERB, and benefits will be paid from this program first. If needed, you can use your hours to apply for EI benefits after you have exhausted CERB benefits.

What is Employment Insurance (EI) and Will it be Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Employment Insurance (regular benefits) is designed to provide income to those that are out of work and meet certain eligibility requirements. There will be an impact on this benefit.

There will be some changes to this benefit.

Employment Insurance (maternity, parental, and caregiver benefits) are designed to provide income to those that are off work and meet certain eligibility requirements. These benefits will continue as they normally would.

Employment Insurance (Regular Benefits)

For EI eligibility requirements, visit:

EI Regular Benefits - Eligibility - Canada.ca

Anyone who has applied for or is eligible to apply for regular benefits prior to March 15, 2020, will continue to receive their EI with no changes.

Anyone who has applied for or is eligible to apply for regular benefits on or after March 15, 2020 will be transitioned to a new EI program that aligns with the CERB payments. All EI recipients in this period will receive $500 per week for the next 16 weeks (paid bi-weekly) regardless of the amount approved for the claim. Therefore, if your approved rate was $547 per week, you will now receive $500. If you were approved for $320 per week, you will now receive $500.

After the 16 weeks are complete, you will revert to receiving the original claim amount. The number of weeks you are approved for will be preserved and will begin following the conclusion of the 16 week period.

**Other changes – EI recipients will still be required to report bi-weekly but will no longer be required to look for work.

Employment Insurance (Sickness Benefits)

For EI Eligibility requirements, visit:

EI sickness benefits: Do you qualify

This benefit applies if you are sick, injured or quarantined.

You are no longer required to provide a medical note from a health professional.

The one week waiting period usually required will be waived for this benefit, so once a claim is approved, you will be paid for each week claimed.

What if I don’t qualify for EI?

Even if you don't qualify for EI, you can qualify for the CERB if you had $5,000 in employment income, self-employment income, or maternity or parental leave benefits for 2019 or in the 12-month period preceding the day you make the application and if your job loss, income loss, sick leave or caregiving leave is because of COVID-19

Additional Supports

A number of other supports will be offered by the Canadian government. See Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan - Canada.ca for the current list.

Should I Apply for EI or CERB?

If you believe you will meet the eligibility requirements for EI, you should use that application even though you will receive the same amount of money. This will establish your EI claim for following the 16 week period. Service Canada is looking at ways to expedite the process for those that are waiting.

If you do not believe you would be eligible for EI but would be eligible for CERB, please apply directly to CERB.



Earth Day has been celebrated every April 22nd since 1970.

We celebrate Earth Day to raise awareness about the negative impact mankind has on the environment. The theme this year is climate action. It is also the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/
What are you doing to mark this day?
Check out WRDSB Backyard Bird Count #EarthDay2020

thePersonal™
Home, Auto and Business Group Insurance

An IMPORTANT message from The Personal Insurance

The current situation resulting from the spread of COVID-19 affects us all. We want you to know that The Personal is here for you. We understand that you may be struggling at this time. That's why we want to make things a little easier for you with our relief measures.

- Helping clients who are driving less during the pandemic
- Helping people make deliveries
- Protecting clients who are working from home

To learn more, please visit https://www.thepersonal.com/covid-19-en

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The Need for Blood Donors!

During these uncertain times, one thing remains constant, and that is the need for blood. This is one thing that comes from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's messages.

The EA Association has supported our local clinic by hosting Blood Drives in the past. I reached out to the clinic to see if we could set up some kind of support for another blood drive. Please read the response I received from the clinic.

"Blood donor centres are a place of wellness, and we have taken precautions to ensure the safety of donors. We have implemented wellness checks at the entrance of our centres, and we have increased our travel restrictions at this time to ensure the safety of those coming inside.

For more information and updates please visit: blood.ca/en/covid19
To book an appointment or check operating hours please visit: blood.ca/en/donate

Thank-you so much for your continued support of Canadian Blood Services and for your contribution to Canada's Lifeline."

The need for donors remains strong - KW.pdf

PLEASE SHARE THIS MESSAGE WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

Find all the info you need!

EAA: YOUR EXECUTIVE

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