

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #25 / April 21, 2020

Good Afternoon,

With classroom learning suspended for the time being, many of us are focused on the well-being of our children and concerned about the ongoing interruption to their schooling and the ability to provide the necessary learning supports at home.

Over recent days, there have been a number of Facebooks posts directing Indigenous families to apply to Jordan's Principle for laptops. This has resulted in a flurry of enquiries and requests both at the regional and national level and seems to have created the expectation that all laptop requests for Indigenous children should be directed to Jordan's Principle, which is not the case.

In today's update, we would like to clarify the mandate of Jordan's Principle and identify what educational supports are available to support First Nations children – be it in First Nation, public or independent schools throughout the province of BC. You can also see information below to help you access technology for First Nations students outside of Jordan's Principle.

We have gathered this information in collaboration with our partners at the First Nations Education Steering Committee and Ministry of Education in order to provide a coordinated approach to this issue and to ensure that children and families are not further burdened during this stressful and uncertain time and to ensure that families are directing their efforts appropriately.

We would encourage families to explore existing education supports through contact with your child's teacher and, as always, if the Region can assist, please don't hesitate to contact us at aadnc.bceducation.aandc@canada.ca.

Stay the course
help limit the spread of COVID-19



Please watch the NEW animated video:
Physical distancing: Stop the spread of COVID-19 in Indigenous communities



UPDATES

Educational supports to ensure continuity of learning in BC

CHILDREN IN FIRST NATION SCHOOLS

First Nations Leadership has the ability to connect with their respective school administrative leadership to discuss plans for continuity of learning during the suspension of classes. FNEsc and the FNSA have prepared [webpage to support continuity of learning during COVID-19](#). In addition, they have also prepared some suggestions for families to [support learning at home](#).



TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

If First Nation schools and communities are concerned about First Nations students having access to the technology and connectivity required to continue their education, ISC is providing First Nations with financial support through the **Indigenous Community Support Fund**. This funding is flexible and can be used by communities for a variety of purposes, including educational and other support for children.

CHILDREN IN PUBLIC AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BC Ministry of Education is working with all 60 school districts and independent schools authorities to ensure a coordinated approach including delivering learning opportunities in a variety of ways. Ministry of Education has launched a website, **Keep Learning**, to provide families with ideas for everyday educational activities, links to free learning resources, and tips for how to help children learn and stay well while they are at home.

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

School districts and Independent School Authorities are responsible for ensuring continuity of learning is reasonable and account for the unique circumstances and abilities of individual students in a home learning environment. They are responsible for initiating a local planning process for on-going instruction, including gathering information from families regarding access to technology within their homes. Many schools are loaning devices to the children to support their learning at home. Additionally, school districts and Independent School Authorities have been asked to develop activities, assignments and assessments that are accessible to all students and their families, recognizing there will be varying levels of access and familiarity with computer technology. Technology-based learning should not be the only way that student engagement is supported. Parents are encouraged to speak to their school principals regarding technology loans and usage or alternate learning formats.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND DIVERSE NEEDS

School districts and Independent Schools are responsible for ensuring that students with disabilities and diverse needs have access to the same level of learning opportunities. As part of the planning for on-going instruction, schools are required to proactively identify and address supports and accommodations that need to be made to support learning for students with disabilities and diverse needs. School districts and independent schools must ensure any online learning opportunities provided as a part of a continuity of learning plan are accessible to all students. As a part of planning for on-going instruction, schools should be proactively identifying supports or accommodations that need to be made to support learning for students with disabilities and diverse abilities. More information about school districts and independent schools, can be found on the **B.C. Ministry of Education Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Continuity of Learning K-12 Education System**.

B.C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION FAQS AND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

Accurate, timely information about B.C. schools, programs and educational services, including regularly updated frequently asked questions in multiple languages, is available at: www.gov.bc.ca/SafeSchools

Jordan's Principle

Jordan's Principle helps First Nations children get support **as recommended by a professional** to meet an identified health, education or social need. The aim is to ensure all First Nation children living on and off reserve have equitable access to government funded services for a wide range of health, social and educational needs.

To confirm, the considerations for Jordan's Principle funding have not been modified for Covid-19. As always, Jordan's Principle and the Inuit Child First Initiative continue to be available to address unmet needs of First Nations and Inuit children on the basis of normative standards or substantive equality, cultural appropriateness and best interests of the child.

We look at each request on a case by case basis and do not follow a standard, formula-based or universal funding approach. The needs of specific children (0-19 years of age) should be outlined in the request and the request should match the needs identified as well as clearly identify why the needs cannot be addressed by the existing services and supports (i.e. how this is an unmet need and a gap in government funded services and supports). Applicants will be asked to provide the required documentation from a professional to show how funding for the requested product, service, or support will meet the identified need. Email communication from professionals will be accepted in consideration of the unique circumstances of COVID-19. Visit canada.ca/jordans-principle for more information about the process and eligibility requirements.

Child and Family Services

For children in care, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs) can provide access to loaner laptops to children for the purpose of maintaining cultural connections and for social workers to maintain contact and provincial service standards. ISC continues to work with our partners at the Ministry of Children and Families and DAAs to ensure there are no gaps in the standard of care.

Support for Indigenous Businesses

Further to yesterday's update about the Government of Canada **\$306.8M support package for small and medium sized Indigenous businesses**, we can tell you that each Indigenous business will have access to a total of \$40K of support - \$30K in repayable loan and \$10K as non-repayable. These figures align with the level of support being provided to non-Indigenous businesses. Additionally, a \$38M contingency fund will be retained by HQ for distribution as appropriate. These support are destined to existing and former clients of the AFI network. It's anticipated funds will be able to flow to the AFIs within a couple of weeks. More details will be announced in the coming days at nacca.ca/covid-19.

QUESTION OF THE DAY

Where should Indigenous business owners go once the Relief Measures Package are announced to seek assistance in selecting the relief measure that best meets their business' needs?

Indigenous businesses should contact their local Aboriginal Financial Institution (AFI) or the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA) for assistance selecting the relief measure that best meets their needs. They can be reached at 1-844-827-0327 (toll-free); nacca.ca; info@nacca.ca.

NACCA and the AFI network, acting as single window delivery partners and referral service, will connect Indigenous businesses to existing business supports provided by the federal government, including those provided by Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), as well as those included in the Government of Canada's **COVID-19 Economic Response Plan**.

List of Aboriginal Financial Institutions in BC:

- **Aboriginal Business & Community Development Centre (Prince George)**
- **All Nations Trust Company (Kamloops)**
- **Burns Lake Native Development Corporation (Burns Lake)**
- **CFDC of Central Interior First Nations (Kamloops)**
- **Haida Gwaii Community Futures (Massett)**
- **Métis Financial Corporation of BC (Surrey)**
- **Native Fishing Association (West Vancouver)**
- **Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation (Port Alberni)**
- **Stó:lō Community Futures Corporation (Chilliwack)**
- **West Vancouver; Tale'Awtxw Aboriginal Capital Corporation (West Vancouver)**
- **Tribal Resources Investment Corporation (Prince Rupert)**

NATIONAL INFORMATION

- **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Prevention and risks**
- The Government of Canada has made announcements regarding financial assistance for those who will be impacted during these unprecedented times – these individuals and business are encouraged to apply for assistance. You can find further information on how to apply for financial or economic support at: Canada.ca/coronavirus and [Questions and Answers on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#).
- For a great description of what flattening the curve means, consider watching [Prime Minister Trudeau's video tweet](#)
- **Public Health Agency of Canada**
- **Resources for Canadian Businesses**
- **Transport Canada – COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada**

USEFUL LINKS

- **Indigenous Community Support Fund: Urban and off-reserve Indigenous organizations and communities**
- **Family Violence Prevention Program**
- **Virtual Doctor of the Day**
- **First Nations Public Service Secretariat**
- **First Nations Health Authority**
Summary of COVID-19 information and response.
- **COVID-19 BC Support App and Self-Assessment Tool**
The app will let you receive the latest updates, trusted resources, and alerts. The Self-Assessment Tool is built in.

REGIONAL CONTACTS

We've set up a dedicated email for any non-health COVID-19-related questions and requests: aadnc.iscbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca

The email address and other information are also available on the [FNPSS website](#).

SERVICE CANADA READY TO HELP

If you're facing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19, there is support available for individuals and businesses. Get the support you need: Canada.ca

**CANADA EMERGENCY RESPONSE
BENEFIT (CERB) CONTACT INFORMATION**

 **1-833-966-2099**

