



Memorandum

To: First Nation Education Directors
Tribal Councils Education Directors

From: Angel Maracle, Policy Advisor COO Education Secretariat

Date: April 7, 2020

Re: COVID 19 – Education Update and Supports

I hope everyone is keeping safe and staying well. It certainly is an uneasy time but we all must do our part to keep our families and communities safe and supported while we weather this storm. We will get through this together.

Information Sharing

The Chiefs of Ontario secretariat has created a COVID-19 Update Page where all sectors including Education have been sharing available resources, information and funding sources. If your community or organization has educational resources that will assist families in educating and entertaining children at home, please forward and we will post and share with others on the site. If you have suggestions for content that would be useful for communities, please let us know.

The COO COVID site can be found here: <https://chiefsfontario.wordpress.com/>

Financial Assistance – Ministry of Education

Yesterday the Ministry of Education announced the Support for Families program that provides one-time financial support for families to purchase educational materials during the current school and childcare closures. Under this new program, parents are eligible for a one-time **per child** payment of:

- \$200 for children aged 0-12, or
- \$250 for children and youth with special needs aged 0-21.

All children within the identified age brackets are eligible for the program. This includes:

- Children enrolled in public school
- Children enrolled in private school (includes on reserve First Nation schools)
- Children attending child care
- Children who are homeschooled
- Children who are not enrolled in school or attending child care

All parents who are residents of Ontario are eligible for funding, including parents of First Nation children attending schools on reserve.

Please use this link and you will see further down a button that takes you to the correct page for families that are applying for the first time. Parents/guardians that had applied for the Support for Parents program during the school strike days are automatically eligible for the Support for Families program and do not have to apply again.

Link to apply can be found here - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-support-families>

The Ministry is currently working to add all First Nations schools to the drop down list of schools. Families with children in schools on reserve can still apply. If your child's school does not appear in the drop down menu, parents/guardians should select "My child is not enrolled in either public or private school" and then select the most relevant option from the drop down list.

Moving Forward

The First Nations Education Coordination Unit (FNECU) and COO will be on weekly calls with provincial and federal government agencies. This will create space for information sharing and First Nations input on appropriate supports and resources required from government during this time. We rely on the knowledge of the Education Directors of your PTO's to relay the needs of member communities as we know they working hard to stay in touch and supportive to their First Nations at this time.

We will continue to share information as it becomes available through the COO COVID-19 portal and through email. If you have any questions or require support, please reach out to either myself, Angel Maracle at angel.maracle@coo.org, Patrik Lowen at patrik.lowen@coo.org or Denise Lofstrom at denise.lofstrom@coo.org. We will do our best to get you the information or support you need.

Stay safe everyone 