

Work Continuity Plan: African Canadian Services

May 8, 2020

This document outlines recommendations for work continuity for our online environment, in the absence of face-to-face opportunities to work with students, families, and other professional staff. Communication will need to take place through telephone, texting, online or other approved virtual platforms, respecting all current public health directives.*

This significantly changes the mechanisms of “how” work will be done, and presents the need for flexibility and adaptations to how we normally work. Please maintain sensitivity with families and engage in culturally responsive practices, this is a stressful time for all. Please continue to follow confidentiality guidelines.

It is recognized that each regional centre for education (RCE) and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) may have developed additional ways to connect with students and families via newsletters, daily or weekly email, website communication, etc. This plan is not meant to constrain methods or flexible options to reach students and their families, but rather is provided as a guide for RCEs/CSAP to use for student services staff who are supporting students remotely. As we develop and learn through experience and research we will continue to refine and share these processes.

* Please continue to follow all advice from Nova Scotia Public Health.

Accurate, up-to-date information is available at:

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>

<https://canada.ca/coronavirus>

Regional Coordinators, African Canadian Education and Services

Recommendations for Regional Coordinators, African Canadian Education and Services

1. Remember the significance of your cultural resilience and how it has sustained you in uncertain times. Draw strength from this knowledge.
2. Practise and model self-care.
3. Participate as active and valued members of senior staff and act by advising and collaborating with Student Services, School Administration and Programs and Human Resources on matters pertaining to African Nova Scotian students’ well-being and achievement.

4. Review the pre-March Break caseload, in particular with regard to well-being, achievement, data, and access to technology.
5. Identify the priorities for moving forward according to pre-existing need and those you anticipate will be most impacted by the pandemic.
6. In consultation with your direct supervisor, make a plan for communicating/connecting with students and families.
7. Follow recommendations set by the RCE/CSAP about direct communication with students and families and the approved technology that can be used to interact with them. Recognize that not all video platforms are confidential (e.g., Google); refer to your RCE/CSAP directives about direct communication with students and families.
8. Acknowledge and trouble-shoot potential barriers with your direct supervisor and Director, ACSB, to access support services.
9. Participate in weekly Regional Coordinator check-ins with the Director, ACSB, to consult about situations that are complex and require a collaborative approach.
10. Consult with your Program Director about regional updates and learning packages, and to provide advice and resources in support of African Nova Scotian student learning (e.g., links, websites, motivational quotes, FAQs, and community information).
11. Explore, research, and share “promising” practices information for supporting students of African ancestry who are working from home.
12. Consult with the Coordinator, Scholarships and Awards, about changes to enhance access to applications while students are learning at home.
13. Continue to stay well informed of regional, provincial, national, and global updates and liaise with community partners to gather current pandemic response supports available in your community.

African Nova Scotian Student Support Workers

Recommendations for African Nova Scotian Student Support Workers

1. Remember the historical significance of your cultural resilience and how it has sustained you in uncertain times.
2. Practice and model self-care.
3. Review your pre-March Break caseload, in particular with regard to well-being, achievement, data, and access to technology.
4. In consultation with your direct supervisor, make a schedule for communicating/connecting with students and families.
5. Prioritize contact according to pre-existing need and those you anticipate will be most impacted by the pandemic.

6. Continue to follow recommendations set by the RCE/CSAP about direct communication with students and families and the approved technology that can be used to interact with them. Recognize that not all video platforms are confidential (e.g., Google); refer to your RCE/CSAP directives about direct communication with students and families.
7. Continue regular check-ins with your regional coordinators, to communicate and monitor the concerns of students and families of African ancestry on your caseload; work together to trouble-shoot barriers.
8. Participate as an active and valued member in school meetings related to student supports and services for African Nova Scotian students.
9. Continue to maintain regular contact with school administration and/or teachers regarding the students they support.
10. Consult with the Scholarship and Grant Coordinator, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, African Canadian Services Branch, about changes to enhance access to applications while students are learning at home,
11. Provide support, when and where appropriate, to educational partners on alternative options to engage African Nova Scotian students and families.