

November 22, 2024

Subject: Changes to Methods of Communication with Parents/Guardians by the Western Québec School Board and its Schools

Dear Parents / Guardians:

We are writing to inform you of changes to the methods of communication by the school board and schools to our parents and guardians for emergency situations as well as all other messages.

CURRENT COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Previously, we have used various means to communicate to parents and guardians.:

From the Schools

To communicate for urgent situations such as evacuations, school closures and bus delays/cancellations, many are using a variety of tools such as email, Kiddie Mail (paper copies) as well as outside tools such as Remind and social media platforms.

From the School Board

In the past, the school board has sent messages through the school and centre principals, the WQSB website, social media and through the board's WQApp.

NEW COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Last year, we conducted an analysis of the approaches used by the school board and its schools to communicate to parents and guardians. This has resulted in the adoption of new approaches that will be implemented this year.

Effective Monday, November 25, 2024, we will be transitioning to new communication methods for our schools and centres. This will be a gradual roll-out beginning with certain types of communications as needed, such as emergency situations, bus delays/cancellations and cancellation of classes.

The following changes will take place as of Monday:

From the Schools

To communicate urgent messages such as an evacuation, cancellation of classes, cancellation of daycare services, and other situations, parents/guardians will receive a text message using our new GRICS Communication tool. The messages will be sent to the adults who are registered in our system as being the responsible adults for a student. This includes the parents or guardians of the student. The school board will also at times, send text messages directly to parents for urgent situations such as bus delays and cancellations. It is important to note that this will be a one-way communication system meaning there will be no option to reply.




Schools will gradually begin to send out other communications using the same tool but parents will also receive these through email. Examples of communications might include newsletters, Welcome Back to School letters and invitations to events. In the meantime, your child's school will continue to use the existing method of communication for the non-urgent messages. The full implementation to our new tool should be in place on Monday, December 9, 2024. All-important or urgent messages from the school principal will therefore be accessible through this new method of communication as of that date.

From the School Board

As of Monday, November 25, board-wide messages to parents/guardians that are not of an urgent matter, will be communicated centrally via email. As of Monday, please note the WQApp tool will no longer be used.

The email address that will appear in your Inbox is wqsbnotification@wqsb.qc.ca . It will be important to check your Junk Mail folder in the upcoming week since a few test messages will be sent to our users. Please note this will be a one-way communication system meaning there will be no option to reply.

Respectfully,



Eldon Keon

Directeur des communications/Secrétaire général
Director of Communications/Secretary General