

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, March 13, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATAWA EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE TO CLOSE FOR TWO ADDITIONAL WEEKS AFTER MARCH BREAK

THUNDER BAY, ON: Today, the Matawa Education Authority, issued the following statement in response to the impact of COVID-19 on the Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC) as the 2020 March Break approaches:

“As a private Indigenous secondary school in Thunder Bay—we have been monitoring the Ontario Ministry of Education and the government of Ontario’s response to COVID-19 as an emerging public health issue and agree with the measures taken to ensure the health and well-being of elementary and secondary students. Particularly, the Ministerial Order of March 12, 2020 approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Therefore, we are announcing that the MECC will also be closed from March 14 – April 5 (two weeks following March Break).

Some of the reasons behind our decision is the wish to protect our students, families and communities using the same standards applied across the province and to provide the same continuity of care.

Unique to our school is the fact that our students typically travel to their remote communities during March Break. We recognize the significant impact this decision will have on students, families, and First Nation communities our students come from but we feel this precaution is necessary to keep people safe. We will be working with their Education Authorities to ensure logistical arrangements are as seamless as possible, and that supports are in place. The MECC will be using this time to ensure our school continues to be a safe place and is positioned for any scenario. We are confident that, through our ability to offer flexible scheduling and programming, MECC will be able to work with our students to make up for this time off and that student credits will not be impacted. We are committed to keeping our students and staff safe during this COVID-19 virus pandemic and we will be keeping families updated.”

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