



St. Stephen Middle School

Hello SSMS Families,

This is an extra edition of the Bobcat Express this week. We want to share with you further information about what our staff has been planning.

Starting next week, our new model of distance learning is going to start taking shape. Our teachers are working together to find new ways to connect with students, and, if possible, to help students connect with each other.

Each Monday, the SSMS Team will share with our parents learning options for the week. These options will be shared in the Bobcat Express and will include online and offline options. It is recommended that middle school students spend, on average two hours a day on their learning, in addition to 30 minutes of reading and 30 minutes of physical activity. The learning options will keep this timeline in mind and suggestions will be provided for the various subject areas, including a focus on Literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies. Each week we will highlight Art/Music, Physical Education, Technology and Health and Wellness activities as well. We know that students learn at home in various ways (helping with chores, cooking, reading, talking about a favourite movie etc.). Our at-home learning suggestions are to provide options for families recognizing that every family is unique and can determine what will work best for them. You may find that a routine is helpful as youth respond well when they know expectations. That being said, flexibility is key, especially during this time. Parents know best what will work for their family, and please know that there is no pressure to complete the work each week.

Microsoft Teams, of the Office 365 suite of products, will be the online learning platform for SSMS. This is the platform used at middle and high schools throughout New Brunswick and many students will already be familiar with the system. For those new to Office 365, there is information, including a helpful video, on page 2 of this newsletter, designed to support families with using this technology. It is not expected, nor would it be healthy, for students to spend their two hours of learning online each day, and therefore, we encourage students to explore the offline activities as well.

Finally, a note on mental health and wellness. During this time, we are reminded to make personal and family health a priority. The school suggestions each week are not meant to add any stress on families during this challenging time, and please work out a learning plan that works best for your family. The SSMS shares this wellness priority and will be there to support your students when it is right for your family.

Please take care and please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Bronwyn Tanner on behalf of the SSMS Team



Please watch this great [Bobcat TV](#) episode created by the SSMS Bobcat Team (Elia, Ainsley, Georgia, Beth, Sawyer, Anna and Devon) which highlights the importance of self-care, mental health, physical distancing and staying connected. There is a helpful how-to section on Microsoft Teams and tips on healthy activities, including fitness and art. Thanks to the BTV leaders for creating this terrific episode and a special thank you to Mme. Russell, Mrs. Nozzolillo and Mrs. Grant for their help. Please stay tuned for future episodes!



What is Microsoft Teams?

Teams is part of the Microsoft Office 365 suite of products, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, among others. It is the platform that all New Brunswick students can use to connect with their teachers and classmates and is a free download. Teams will be the online platform that SSMS staff members will use to connect with their students.

How does a student log on to Microsoft Teams?

Please click [here](#) to see a video of a middle school student and his father getting started with Teams.

What if my child does not remember their password?

Not a problem! Our District has set up the following service to help students/families with account information:

Helping Students Stay Connected!

Need IT help? Send a message using one of the methods below. Include your full name, date of birth, school, grade and the type of support you require.

Example: *reset my password, I don't remember my account or what is my school email address?*

- **Txt:** Send your request by txt message to **1-506-469-5013**
- **Email:** send your request to **southstudents@nbed.nb.ca**
- **Teacher:** If you already have a means of communicating with your classroom teacher, they can initiate support on your behalf

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What will my student be doing in the Teams?

This will be where your child can connect with their teachers and classmates in a virtual setting. Teachers will be setting up weekly office hours (times when they will be online) and this will be an opportunity for your child to interact with their teacher in real time. For some subjects, teachers will place activities in Files. A schedule of office hours will be shared by the end of next week.

What if my child has not used Teams before?

Not to worry! We are all learning how to navigate this online system together. There will be a great deal of support for students. Please have your child log on to Teams and their teachers and fellow classmates will be there to help with any questions.



The SSMS Team is certainly missing being with our students. We have created a video to let the students know that we miss them! Thanks to the SSMS team for their contributions and to Mrs. Nozzolillo for pulling it all together!

[Bobcat Staff Video \(April 8, 2020\)](#)

[SSMS Website](#)



[@SSMS_Bobcats](#)

Compassion **Willingness to Learn** **Respect** TEAMWORK Honesty Empathy **Acceptance**
Creativity Community *Resiliency* Safety *Responsibility* INCLUSION

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