



Solomon Islands
Government

Ministry of
Education and
Human Resources
Development



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Ref: 5th Circular/covid-19/2020

Date: 29/04/2020

CIRCULAR TO EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

Provincial Education Authorities
Faith Based Education Authorities
Private Education Authorities

Dear Chief Education Officers
Director of Education Authorities
Secretary to Education Authorities

Subject: 5th Circular to Education Authorities: Covid-19

1. I have trust that you are all well and have continued to keep yourself safe, healthy and busy since the partial re-opening of schools in the provinces was announced by my Ministry.
2. Despite the threat of COVID-19 and the unprecedented situation we have found ourselves in, there is renewed assurance that apart from the threat and challenges we currently face, it also provides new opportunities to rethink the way we do business in our respective organisations, in terms of operationalization of our education system. I am sure you will realise the gaps that may exist in your schools, in terms of the way we resource teaching and learning activities or manage our schools during this trying times and will address the issues when normalcy returns to our country and schools.
3. Indeed our efforts and experiences so far in stopping COVID-19 from entering our country has shown that the global health pandemic cannot be resolved by health measures alone. In our context, all citizens – you and I and the entire “village” would need to respond positively to the measures imposed through change of behavior and by allowing ourselves to obey orders and regulations under the State of Emergency. Together, we can address or fight the threat of coronavirus or any infectious disease including non-communicable diseases that is threatening the life of every Solomon Islander today - through showing solidarity, empathy and our appreciation of our common humanity.
4. Let me take this time to convey to you in writing the 6th Communication of key messages and information broadcasted over our Ministry’s SIBC Radio program by members of my Ministry’s Communication Committee. Those of you who may have



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listened to the SIBC radio on Tuesday 28 April at 5:45pm and Wednesday 29 April at 8:30am would have listened to the announcements made. These are as follows.

a) **Schools in the Provinces (remaining schools in non-emergency and non-high risk zones to resume classes on Monday 4th May 2020)**

The remaining schools and year levels in the provinces (**in non-emergency zones and in the non-high risk zones**) particularly, ECE centres, all year levels in primary, and Forms 1, 2 and 4 students are advised to resume classes on Monday 4th May 2020. Boarding secondary school students should return to their schools during this week (ie by Sunday 3 May 2020). Teachers who might have returned to their villages should also return to their schools before Monday 4th May 2020.

b) **Assessment of Honiara Schools**

An assessment is being jointly conducted by my Ministry and Ministry of Health and Medical Services as of today - Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th April 2020. The purpose of this assessment is to collect data on the schools, in order to ascertain the current status of school readiness for possible resumption of classes in Honiara.

Honiara based Education Authorities are kindly asked to inform their respective school principals and teachers about the assessment and to meet the team that is conducting the assessment. This assessment is urgent and important because the findings will be used to determine the schools' preparedness to resume classes.

c) **Preparedness, response and recovery plans and standard operating procedures**

Education Authorities are kindly requested to instruct their respective school principals and ECE supervisors who have already resumed classes and also those teachers who may have not yet resumed classes that they would need to work on their respective school's preparedness, response and recovery plans, as well as to draft their standard operating procedures. It is very important that these documents are in place in your schools so that in an event there is an outbreak of the corona virus, the schools can use the plan or guideline to respond to the situation by following the procedures and guidelines. You are asked to assist your school principals.

d) **Waimapuru National Secondary School**

As instructed by MEHRD Senior Management Team, Waimapuru National Secondary School is to remain close until further advice from the Ministry. All students are advised to remain in their respective villages/Provinces until further notice from the School Administration in consultation with MEHRD senior management team. MEHRD is currently negotiating with the Makira PDOC so that



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an alternative quarantine facility is identified in order for Waimapuru National Secondary School to re-open classes.

e) Alternative Learning Programme

As you may be aware, the first radio lesson for Form 3 students was broadcasted on the SIBC radio on Monday 27 April at 10:00 am. It was a science lesson which focused on ecosystems. This is the first time that MEHRD has produced a radio lesson and broadcasted it so it was both an experiment and as well as a trial of our learning continuity program. Tomorrow, that is, Thursday 30th April 2020, the second radio lesson will be broadcasted for 30 minutes and it is going to occur between 10:00 am –10.30am. A series of radio lessons are being prepared and will be presented on a daily basis as of next week. MEHRD is currently working on its TV lessons to be televised especially for students in urban and semi-urban centres where they can pick up the TV signals. We will update you in our future SIBC program on these. You are asked to inform high school students in your provinces to listen out at 10am on Thursday 30th April. Also my Ministry would appreciate if you give your feedback on the lessons aired through the SIBC radio.

f) Students Continuity Attachment

MEHRD understands that there are some students enrolled in Honiara and Guadalcanal schools who are in the province/villages. Therefore, MEHRD would like to encourage, especially students in Forms 3, 5 and 6 to attend any Community High School or Boarding secondary school close to their villages. This is a temporary measure or arrangement and students wanting to get attached to the high school near their village should talk with the school principal so that permission could be obtained to attend classes, while waiting for their schools to re-open.

Yours respectfully,

Franco Rodie, PhD
Permanent Secretary