



# Cowessess First Nation #73

*Office of the Executive Director*

*Telephone: (306) 696-2520*

*Extension*

October 14, 2022

Good afternoon, CCEC Parents & Guardians,

This letter provides a synopsis of the week's events that resulted in the closure of CCEC due to safety reasons.

The following events occurred:

- On Wednesday afternoon, a snap chat photo was circulating that contained wording perceived as a threat to CCEC staff and students. RCMP were called to investigate. After investigation and conversations with youth and families it was determined that the original intention of the snap chat photo was not violent.
- Thursday, October 13, 2022 – CCEC was closed as a precaution
- Thursday, October 13, 2022 – a meeting was held with CCEC Administration, Chief Red Bear Lodge, Health, Justice and Elders to formulate a plan to support the youth at school moving forward. The plan includes:
  - Talking circles with the families involved and talking circles with CCEC high school students
  - Recreation evenings for youth
  - Social Media presentation to all CCEC youth (there was one held last spring, but another will be offered)
  - A student survey to identify supports needed (mental health, anxiety, counselling services) which will inform Life Skills trainers to provide workshops for all students
  - Community mentor/role model programming for CCEC to invite role models and citizens to spend time with youth planned for November
  - Violent Risk Threat Assessment training for Education and Health staff
  - Direct support and contacts with Chief Red Bear and Health were coordinated
- Late Thursday afternoon, a separate incident unfolded as staff reported information about students talking about a possible weapon. RCMP were called. The information shared was vague but out of an abundance of caution we decided to close on Friday, October 14, 2022. This gave staff and RCMP more time to respond and keep safety of students the priority.



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These events are unsettling. In light of the violence that occurred in northern communities, we are being very cautious. The routine for CCEC youth was interrupted and families were all affected, including the staff at CCEC. We apologize for this interruption.



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We assure you that the safety of CCEC students and staff are our priority. We ask that parents and caregivers have a conversation with their children about social media and appropriate behaviour. We are a community school and we are working to make it reflect community values and respect. Our youth and families have suffered mentally throughout covid and we want to ensure that attendance at school is regular and consistent in order to get back to learning and enjoying school together.

We will reopen on Monday, October 17, 2022. We thank you for your patience and your understanding in these uncertain times.

Respectfully,

**Tonii Lerat, Executive Director**

**Kelly Finkas, Director of Health**

**Sandy Pinay-Schindler, Director of Education**

**Ida Iron & Andrew Starblanket, CCEC administration**