

# Coronavirus causes cancellation of Kawartha student art camp and overseas trips

*Catherine Whitnall*

The arts will be absent at Camp White Pines in Haliburton this spring. There will be no Trillium Lakelands Arts Camp at the site in 2020, for the first time since the program launched 15 years ago.

The Trillium Lakelands District School Board decided not to offer the program, scheduled for May 17 to 22, out of increasing concern over the spread of the novel coronavirus.

“We know this will be disappointing to all those involved — our arts instructors, camp leaders, and especially our students,” stated director of education Larry Hope in a letter home to parents. “We do not know what the coming weeks will bring related to COVID-19. There is every indication that the number of cases in Ontario will increase and we must make the health, safety, and well-being of all our first priority.”

An added issue is the current labour disruption via work-to-rule strike sanctions.

All camp fees paid by families will be refunded within the next few weeks. All registered students will be given a priority placement on the list for next year’s camp.

“It is unfortunate that we have had to come to this decision. We all hope that we see an end to the spread of this virus as soon as possible,” continued Hope.

The school board has also cancelled all out of country trips.

In the City of Kawartha Lakes, Lindsay Collegiate and Vocational Institute had joined forces with Fenelon Falls Secondary School’s Globetrotters for a trip to Central Europe this spring. Fenelon Falls teacher Julie Rocheleau said the students had planned several Second World War activities in Berlin and Dresden, Germany, a visit to Prague, Czech Republic and Krakow, Poland - with a day in Auschwitz where the students were working on a special memorial event - finishing with Budapest, Hungary.

Board communications officer Catherine Shedden said affected schools are working with tour companies and insurance groups regarding refunds.

“Some schools have raised funds, and each school will make their own determination around how those funds will be held until a trip can be rescheduled,” said Shedden.

For example, funds raised for the Globetrotter trip will be kept in the group's account until next year's trip.

"We are hoping to run this same tour as long as this virus has settled," said Rocheleau.