

stated the board is once again “in an all-too familiar position, as rising cases of COVID-19 and a new provincial stay-at-home order make the immediate future unpredictable.”

Some schools, in fact, are already seeing a surge in cases, such as St. Mary Catholic Elementary School in Cobourg. The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit identified two positive cases on April 2 and, the next day, declared the school in outbreak. The board closed the school April 4 and there are currently (as of April 8) 19 active cases.

Carragher notes that, while the province expects schools to resume in-person learning following the April break, a significant rise in COVID rates provincially or at a local level could impact the ability to safely keep all schools open for in-person learning.

“As a precaution, we are asking all students to bring home tomorrow (Friday) all the resources required to successfully transition to virtual learning if the need arises,” continued Carragher. “Our educators are ready to make the transition to virtual learning as seamlessly as possible should it be required and we will continue to keep families updated on the status of schools.”

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Communications manager Galen Eagle said the board is fully ready to transition to virtual learning for all students at any time should the province deem it necessary. Despite it being an eerie case of déjà vu – the province closed schools last year following the March Break – Eagle said it’s a “much different situation this time around.”

“The transition to virtual learning in March 2020 was a first for all boards and the focus of remote learning last year was on supporting students to advance to the next grade and to graduate if they were on track to do so,” said Eagle, noting, this time