

March 25, 2020

Coronavirus Update #8 - School Closure Announcement

To All Watertown-Mayer Families & Staff

This is an update on the status of the school closure in Watertown-Mayer Schools in response to the coronavirus pandemic. By now you may be aware that Governor Walz has announced schools will officially begin distance learning on Monday, March 30. Distance learning will continue through at least April 30. At this point, the Governor's order allows for the possibility of students returning to school on Tuesday, May 5. The Governor also announced that Minnesotans are ordered to stay home for a period of two weeks, beginning Friday, March 27 through Friday, April 10. **It is also important to note the Governor made it clear that all elements of the order could be subject to change.**

While I am sure the weeks ahead will not be without challenge, I want you all to know that Watertown-Mayer Schools stands ready to continue to serve our students, families and staff. As shared in a previous update, Watertown-Mayer Schools is ready with a comprehensive distance learning plan for however long it will be needed. The elements of this plan include:

- Teaching and learning instructional strategies that will continue to offer relevant and authentic learning opportunities for all students in grades PK-12. **Please note that distance learning classes will begin for all students, PK-12, on Monday, March 30.** Students and parents should watch for communication from their teachers and school buildings for further direction to begin distance learning work.
- All co-curricular activities and athletic programs are suspended until further notice.
- A school nutrition program that will offer a bagged lunch and breakfast for all children ages 18 and under who are interested in receiving that service. Please go to the COVID-19 page on the district website for more information.
- Continued support of student IEPs, as well as providing access to social and emotional learning support for all students and their families.
- Community Education's continued offering of childcare services for medical and emergency worker families.
- A commitment to provide families and students ongoing updates through the district's regular channels of communication, including the coronavirus web page. Please go to that webpage for more detailed information on our distance learning plan and support for students and families. In addition, school district phone lines will continue to be open and staffed in all district facilities throughout the duration of the distance learning period.

Our district's administrative team and I are working to further unpack the Governor's order and will share information with you as needed. Please watch for additional information from the district and/or our principals and teachers as we begin distance learning next Monday, March 30.

As I have previously stated, I truly believe our Royals Community is up for the challenge that lies before us, and together, we will get through this. Our district has a distance learning plan in place to provide students with authentic and engaging learning opportunities, and our schools will support you with all that is needed to that end. However, it is equally important we all do our part to observe and comply with the Governor's stay at home expectations and guidelines for staying home to ensure we all stay safe and as healthy as possible.

Thank you for your continued support of our students and the Watertown-Mayer School District.

Sincerely,

Ron Wilke
Superintendent of Schools