

3.25.2020

Dear Prairie Creek families,

I hope this message finds you well and healthy. I appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue adjust and respond to the Covid-19 global health pandemic.

At a press conference this afternoon, Governor Tim Walz announced that school districts will implement a period of distance learning until at least April 30, 2020, with students returning to school on May 5, 2020. This order is subject to change and could be extended.

At the same press conference, Governor Walz announced a period of “shelter-in-place” for Minnesotans from 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2020, through April 10, 2020. The shelter-in-place order is intended to ensure containment of the COVID-19 virus and prevent overwhelming our hospital system. There are only 235 intensive care unit beds in the entire state. Our efforts in the coming weeks will buy time to help support our hospital system's ability to care for those who need the most care. It will reduce the number of deaths associated with COVID-19. [You can watch Governor Walz's press conference here.](#)

On Tuesday, March 31 (the day students were scheduled to return to school after Spring Break), we will begin our distance learning days for all students. Please watch your email for the first outline of our distance learning plan. Teachers are sending emails with updates about technology tools and platforms to assist families as we prepare. Please understand that our teachers have also been on spring break during this planning period. They have been wonderfully dedicated and giving of their time. I am grateful to them all. I hope you will continue afford them some grace as they prepare for a unique situation. On Monday, prior to the launch of our distance learning on Tuesday, March 31, teachers will be sending more detailed information on how distance learning will look classroom by classroom.

I know you have many questions and we will continue to work quickly to provide accurate, timely information. We also know that our plans will need to adjust in the first days and weeks as we learn how to do this together. It will be necessary for us to start slow in order to create a successful model that serves all of our children well.

We continue to collaborate with our authorizer, Northfield Public Schools, to provide services to support emergency workers and those who need food assistance. Child care is provided for health and emergency workers whose children are in Kindergarten through age 12 from 6:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday at Bridgewater Elementary (5pm during this spring break week). [Complete this form](#) to register. Free meals to children in need from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m, Monday through Friday at multiple locations.

We are committed to having 100% of our students connected with their teachers during this time. We appreciate your patience as we reach out to establish every child's need for a device and internet connection. Teachers have been busy contacting families to assess and help with technology needs. Please contact your teacher directly, or leave a message on the school answer machine, if you have internet or computer needs. [Charter Spectrum is offering free service](#) for 60 days during this global pandemic health crisis. Families must access this option individually. Some cellular providers like T-Mobile are providing unlimited data to customers, so you may be able to turn your phone "hotspot" on to allow this access. Again, contact your child's teacher if you need help or leave a message on the school answer machine at 507 645 9640. Please identify the need (device and /or internet). We will help!

We are in an unprecedented time. The fact that I have not yet sent out the long, deserved email of gratitude for our amazingly successful auction effort, is perhaps a measure of just how busy we have been. That important message of gratitude will come in time!

We are unwavering in our commitment to serve your children and care for our families health and well-being. Thank you for all your support. Together, we will provide the very best learning environment we can for our children.

Stay well,
Simon