



MEMO

TO: Wes-Del Staff
FROM: Kyle Mealy, Superintendent
DATE: March 15th, 2020
RE: Staff Update on Coronavirus Closure

Wes-Del Community Schools administrative team continues to monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. At this time, there has been very little new information, but that can change daily and even hourly. Here is what information we have as of Sunday, March 15th, 2020:

OFFICES AND BUILDINGS

At this time, we have not been instructed to completely close our buildings to ALL individuals. I do not know how quickly that may change, but for now, we will allow ONLY staff or employees of Wes-Del Community Schools access. Our reason for remaining open to staff is the following:

1. Allow our non-certified staff hourly work and pay
2. For deep cleaning of all buildings and grounds, along with, all our busses and transportation.
3. To dispense student medications, provide "Grab and Go" lunches for those students in need, and to allow pick-up of necessary academic materials left inside the school.

My recommendation to staff is this, if you do not NEED to be in the buildings then work from home. Please do not come into the buildings if you DO NOT NEED to be there.

NO CHILDREN OR FAMILY need to be in the buildings. I know that many staff have children and the closure of school makes it difficult for you as their primary caregiver. I myself find that challenging with a fourth and seventh grader. I am asking, that if we can work from home then we should.

Please remember that our building is CLOSED to all students, parents, and community members outside of staff until further notice. NO EVENTS ARE TO BE HELD IN OUR BUILDINGS. This is to be taken seriously.

EXTENDED ELEARNING ASSIGNMENTS

We are prepared, and all of you have done a tremendous job in preparation for this unprecedented event. Utilize the plans that were covered in your faculty meetings by your building principal. As we move further into days of elearning we would like to remind you of the following:

1. The elearning work should be short (20 Minutes Max), and it should be review material.
2. Display empathy with assignments. In our population of students, many older siblings will become babysitters and caregivers as their parents have to work. Don't overload our students with school work when many will be taking care of siblings, relatives, or friends children. Don't assume parents will be home and available to help students.
3. Remember that core classes need to only have 3 assignments, and electives/specials only need to have 1.
4. Remember that some of our students are concerned, have so many questions, and even fear with the current situation. As always, we need to model that we have control, and we are available for our students.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, contact your building principal.

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TIMELINE

The news that we were closing buildings to elearning until April 3rd may have been shocking. To be honest, this moved very quickly within a 24 or 48 hour period. Each of you may be wondering how long this will last? Some may assume that we will be back in session on April 6th. But as it stands today, I can only answer in the same way I answered to the administrative team on Friday, "I don't know." The use of elearning days over the waiver days given to us by the state is to save our waiver days if we may need them after April 3rd. We are literally in a wait and see situation. The county superintendents have worked together to make sure we stay very unified in our decision making. We met with the county health department on Friday, and we have another meeting set for March 31st. I would recommend to all staff to proactively prepare for extended elearning beyond April 3rd. Currently our plan is to be back in session on April 6th, but if we are not, we will have a plan and we will communicate that plan.

COMMUNICATION

We will continue to do our best to update our staff, students, and community as the information is received. Please understand that we know very little right now. We will utilize all means of communication we have including; social media, text/call alerts, email, and memos. The central office will remain open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. until further notice. Please feel free to contact us at 765-358-4006. A good form of communication will be my email, as I will be checking in daily. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email me.

We want all of you to know that this truly is an unprecedented time. A week ago, I never would have thought we would be where we are today. My personal opinion of this situation has changed drastically within days. While I don't see any need for mass panic, I do think we need to begin acting responsibly. We need to stress to our students and parents that this is not an extended vacation or spring break. Work still needs to be done, even if that simply means to read 20 minutes a day. That is exactly why we have taken the steps we have up to this point. Today I came across a quote from another superintendent in another district that I felt summed up our current position.

"In the end, it will be impossible to know if we overreacted or did too much, but it will be QUITE apparent if we under reacted or did too little."

We all can agree that to error on the side of caution with our students, staff, and community is the right approach. We will keep you updated as information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Kyle Mealy
Superintendent