

Date: March 17, 2020

To: All USD 444 Parents

From: Brent Garrison, Superintendent of Schools

Today, March 17, 2020, Governor Laura Kelly announced all school facilities will be closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This may place tremendous hardship on our families and staff, and impact the social and emotional well-being of our students.

We have been working on contingency plans since mid-March, including how we can meet the ongoing learning needs of our students and provide breakfast and lunch for our students. The closing does not mean learning stops for students. We will be providing many opportunities for students to learn via virtual options. We are going to refer to this as “Continuous Learning”. Expectations will be similar, but HOW we deliver the learning opportunities will be different. We will be sharing much information over the next week so you, as parents and students, will be able to understand our expectations of students. Additionally, we may still bring students into the schools in small groups to meet with teachers. Again, thank you for your patience and support as we develop our Continuous Learning Model.

Our staff and board of education are also working on other critical issues, such as what this means for our seniors, how this will affect next school year and what impact this will have on our employees. We will provide updates on these issues as soon as the information is available.

We are committed to working together as a community to support one another throughout these unprecedented times, and communication will remain a top priority. Please continue to monitor your email, social media pages (Facebook and Twitter). Communication will also be made via text messages and or/phone calls as needed.

As a reminder, this school closure is in response to the current public health crisis. The focus should remain on preventing the spread of the coronavirus, or COVID-19 as it is also referred to.

Please be mindful of the following:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing (cough/sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue).
- Please keep sick children at home.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

Follow additional guidance from these sources:

- [National Center for Disease Control](#) (CDC)
- [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#) (KDHE)
- (local health department link)