Dear Little Axe Parents, Guardians, and Patrons,

Yesterday, we learned that Oklahoma students will not return to the classroom for the remainder of the current school year, following a vote by the state Board of Education. Instead, districts, including Little Axe School District, will implement continuous learning plans that will allow students to complete the school year at home. State education and health officials believe this move will help our state fight the spread of COVID-19.

We are sharing this information with you now so you can prepare accordingly for your family. We understand this change is in the best interest of everyone’s health, which is our greatest priority as a district. The state board’s vote also means that all extracurricular activities and special events will be canceled or postponed as well. Making these difficult decisions, we believe, is simply the right thing to do for our students, our staff and our community.

We do have good news: Little Axe is developing a plan to ensure your child will continue to have opportunities to learn and to grow academically, especially with parental support. Because we are unable to safely gather together, these lessons and activities will be delivered and communicated electronically via the school district website at www.littleaxeps.org, via personal email, via student email, group virtual meeting platforms, and, as needed, a paper copy may be delivered via bus route as we deliver meals. As you can imagine, this is a significant transition for our students and our teachers. Little Axe School District will spend the next week planning for this effort and will share details with your family by the end of the day Thursday, April 2, 2020. You will be contacted in the next few days by a member of the Little Axe Staff to ask questions regarding your ability to receive assignments via technology. Additionally, we are taking this opportunity to progress as a district with increased technology for your student. If you child is currently in the 7th – 12th grades, please ensure that they are able to access their school email as information will be coming in that manner as well. If they are unable to access their email, please call the school and leave a message and someone will return your call and assist you with it. Students in the 6th grade will be receiving information in the near future regarding receiving an email.

If your child has an IEP, you will be contacted by a member of the special education team. They will work with you to ensure that your child is receiving needed services and make appropriate changes as needed to the IEP. Please keep in mind that this is a fluid situation and adjustments will be made as necessary with your participation in the process; we will work together for the
best of your child. If you have questions about your child’s IEP please email Jennifer Jennings, special education director at Jennifer.jennings@littleaxeps.org.

For students, it likely will be sad and disappointing to receive confirmation that school as they know it will not resume this year. Please give them a safe place to express their feelings and to vent about the changes in their life. For our seniors and their parents, we know it is an especially difficult time. We will do everything possible to ensure their efforts are recognized and celebrated in special and unique ways; we are in the process of exploring options. This is an unfair situation, but please reassure them that it does not diminish their achievements. In fact, it will become one more example of how they demonstrated their strength as a Little Axe Indian!

We have posted numerous resources on our website, including information about free breakfasts and lunches for students under the age of 18, which will continue, as well as answers to frequently asked questions regarding the school closure. You can find these details and more by visiting www.littleaxeps.org. The site also includes recommendations from the CDC about protecting your health and the health of your loved ones. We ask you to please follow their advice by: (1) washing your hands regularly; (2) staying at home, if you can; and (3) practicing social distancing of at least six feet from others.

This is an unprecedented situation, and it has required an unprecedented response. We can still continue to take care of the students of Little Axe. This is a community that sticks together in challenging times, and we know this experience will be no different. As soon as we identify our next steps, we will share them with you.

Please stay safe. As always, we appreciate your support of Little Axe School District.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jay Thomas
Superintendent

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