

March 17, 2020

Dear Columbus School Parents,

With the recent closure of our school, there have been a lot of changes to our everyday lives. The Columbus School District is working very hard to make sure that your student's education will continue in light of the recent events surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak. Columbus Schools will be closed from March 17th to March 27th per the Governor's order. During this time, we have been directed to plan for the education of your students to be presented outside of the normal school setting. The plan for each grade and school will look different. Below this response, you will find what each building will be doing to accommodate your student during the closure of our school. At this point, we can't say how long this closure will last, but we are putting plans in place for three types of situations. Level I - is our current situation of closing the school for just two weeks. During Level I, the district is working on a plan for the future if the closure extends and will be implementing an on-line education/alternative education program to start March 23. Level II- will be an extension of the current closure. The district would then institute a full curriculum on-line. Level III- Closure of the school for the rest of this school year. At this point, I cannot speak on how Level II and Level III might look until I am given more specific guidance from the Office of Public Instruction and the Governor's office.

In the interim, the district is currently putting lessons together that will be distributed to our students starting Friday, March 20th and Monday, March 23rd. The district will use multiple platforms for this outreach: the first will be through online learning. The second will be student packets. Online learning will be available for grades 3-12 through your student's school Gmail accounts. Each student from grades 3-12 has a dedicated Gmail address. If you do not have Internet or computers for your students in those grades, please call you school's office so that we can meet your needs either with a computer to check-out or a packet system. Grades K-2 will be provided work packets while school is closed. We will set up times to deliver those packets through set pick-up and drop-off spots throughout our district. We are currently determining pick-up and drop-off spots and times on each of our bus routes. We will also have designated pick-up and drop off times at each school starting Friday, March 20th through Friday, March 27th from 8 to 10 a.m. If you are unable to pick-up your student's packet please call the office, and we will make other arrangements to get an educational packet to your child. Here are quick facts to keep in mind while school is closed:

- School offices will be open from 8 am to 10 am M through F to take homework packets, answer phones and questions, and receive meal counts. All meals must be ordered the day before delivery so that we have the correct number of meals prepared.
- All teaching staff will be available, through their school email, to answer student questions on homework from 10 am to 12 pm Monday through Friday. Emails are set up with first initial and last name@columbus.k12.mt.us. This includes all teachers and paras. We want to make sure

we are able to help students. There will be no teachers available in person to help students. All help will be provided through on-line or phone transactions.

- All ordered meals through the school will be a grab and go system available at the Stillwater Youth Center. Breakfast will be available from 7:30 to 9:30 am and Lunch from 11:30 to 1:00 pm March 18th to March 27th. We apologize for not being able to use the school as the pick-up spot but due to meal regulations and qualifications during this order from the USDA for everyone to participate, we have to serve these meals at an approved delivery point that complies with the USDA's summer meal program which the school is not a part of at this point.
- Computer pick up for those that need to check out a computer will be available starting March 19th from 8 to 12. You will be required to sign a form upon check-out that states your responsibilities while the computer is in your possession.
- If you have student medications that need to be returned, please make arrangements with your school's secretary. For everyone's safety, you will need to provide identification to have the medicine returned to you and sign a statement that the medication was delivered to you by school personnel.
- All three schools will be open from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm daily for students to get books and resources for their online classes and/or packets. These times will start Friday, March 20th until further notice.
- There will be no extra-curricular activities until further notice. This includes any MHSA sanctioned events and practices.
- The school is closed to all activities including gym use, meetings, and weight room usage by all individuals until further notice.
- All messages regarding school re-openings or further closure will be sent to all parents via our app, messenger services, and district website.
- Administration will continue to work during this closure and be here to answer any questions or concerns you might have.

The district will do everything it can to keep you up-to-date on situations regarding your child/ren's education as we proceed through this COVID-19 outbreak. I want to thank everyone for their patience as we work through this process. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns, ideas, or comments you have regarding the current situation.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bermes, Superintendent