

# Washtenaw Superintendents' Association

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Washtenaw ISD □ Ann Arbor Public Schools □ Chelsea Schools □ Dexter Community Schools  
Lincoln Consolidated Schools □ Manchester Community Schools □ Milan Area Schools  
Saline Area Schools □ Whitmore Lake Public Schools □ Ypsilanti Community Schools

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March 18, 2020

Dear Educators,

While the public school districts in Washtenaw County are closed due to coronavirus (COVID-19) until April 6, 2020, districts and schools may provide optional learning opportunities and resources for students and families. We are not providing formal instruction with any of our preK-12 programs at this time with the exception of our students already enrolled in college courses through dual enrollment or early college programs who have transitioned to online.

We encourage educators, working with families, to take this time to attend to the emergent needs of their students. This may include maintaining relationships, checking on the well-being of students, and providing learning enrichment and enhancement activities.

Teachers or staff may:

- Individually reach out to students and families to maintain a connection and relationship on an ad hoc basis, whether through phone, email, Zoom or Hangouts.
- Provide *optional* (rather than required) learning opportunities to students in their programs through online, paper, distance approaches.
- Attend to *each and every* individual student's ability to access any optional learning opportunities. We must ensure all students have access by providing appropriate options (paper, online, phone, etc.) that meet the student's and family's needs.

At this time, teachers or staff will not be:

- Collecting student work for the purpose of grading or formal evaluation.
- *Requiring* participation by students in any learning or enrichment activities.
- Giving assignments that are expected to be completed for a grade.

Please know that issues of equity are at the forefront of our minds. Schools are a place where students find a sense of safety, support, and a world of new opportunities, and this closure exposes deep inequities across our county and community. In order to honor our commitment to equitable and inclusive education, we must ensure that all students in our classrooms have a way to connect to and engage with any enrichment and enhanced learning provided by our schools.

We are engaging in ongoing planning in the event of a prolonged school closure. This planning includes looking at ways to ensure all students have ways to access formal instructional support and educational programming in the event that school closures last beyond April 6, 2020. Over the next few weeks, we will be working with our technology directors, teacher leaders,

administrators, families and others to determine the most inclusive and equitable ways to deliver instruction to all our students.

While we acknowledge the unprecedented and rapidly changing situation, we also know that the students and families in our county deeply value education, which is why we want to be thoughtful in planning our next steps to continue learning, overcoming barriers, and embracing innovative ways to approach teaching and learning.

Thank you for everything you are doing during this unprecedented time to care for the well-being of our students.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Scott Menzel**, Superintendent  
Washtenaw Intermediate School District

**Kevin Upton**, Interim Superintendent  
Manchester Community School

**Dr. Jeanice Swift**, Superintendent  
Ann Arbor Public Schools

**Bryan Girbach**, Superintendent  
Milan Area Schools

**Dr. Julie Helber**, Superintendent  
Chelsea Public Schools

**Scot Graden**, Superintendent  
Saline Area Schools

**Dr. Christopher Timmis**, Superintendent  
Dexter Community Schools

**Tom DeKeyser**, Superintendent  
Whitmore Lake Public Schools

**Robert Jansen**, Interim Superintendent  
Lincoln Consolidated Schools

**Alena Zachery-Ross**, Superintendent  
Ypsilanti Community Schools