



DEXTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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Re: DCS COVID-19 Closure Update

Dear DCS Parents and Staff,

Thank you for your dedication to keeping each other safe and the tremendous support for our entire community in this unprecedented time. While it has been just three days of the statewide school shutdown, we are well-aware families and neighbors are anxious regarding the next steps as information continues to evolve and change. Our first concern, as a school district, is to attend to the basic needs of our families and students. As we work through supporting our students and community in this shutdown, we are specifically attending to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. We are first concerned with physiological needs of our students such as food and nutrition along with the safety needs of our students.

With that in mind, we started our shutdown by focusing on getting students safely home so they could practice social-distancing and immediately addressing needs for food for our students. On Tuesday, we distributed approximately 5600 meals to students. We will be distributing food again on Friday between 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m – 12:30 p.m. at Mill Creek. Details regarding food distribution are later in this communication.

After attending to the basic needs of our students and creating systems for providing food for our students, we can now focus on the educational needs for DCS students. Our role during this shutdown scheduled to end on April 7th is to Enrich and Engage our students. We are fully conscious that our parents are trying to work remotely or trying to scramble for child care as they leave for work worried about the safety of themselves and loved ones. We are also fully conscious that many of our students and families are concerned about falling behind academically during the shutdown. As a State and Nation, we are all in the same unprecedented situation. Your child is not going to fall behind.

The DCS team is working to create opportunities for enrichment and engagement while being fully-focused on the most essential needs of our students. We do not plan to formally require any work for our students through April 7th as we, as a school district, are committed to the quality of learning opportunities we provide to all students. *A detailed statement consistent across all Washtenaw County School Districts will be sent tomorrow to all families.*

That being said, DCS is working on creating learning continuity plans if the shutdown continues beyond April 7th. At this time, we have not been made aware by MDE or the Governor that the shutdown will continue but plan to spend the next two weeks working on a plan in case the situation changes. Part of this planning includes assessing the broadband access and technology access of our students along with methods to maintain equity for students. This includes reviewing supports for our students with disabilities. We are committed to quality education for ALL kids and are working through an evolving situation.

Our ask to all families: Please take a moment to enjoy the time with your children and the time as a family. There are so many wonderful family memories when we stop to embrace the unplanned moments. Please embrace the authentic opportunities you can have with your children and as a family.

Food & Nutrition Support for Students: Starting on Tuesday, March 17th, DCS began offering breakfast and lunch to any child 18-years of age or younger who attends DCS or lives in the community. This includes children who are younger than 5-years of age. Special Education students under 26-years of age with a current IEP also qualify. Meals will be distributed as bagged meals with multiple days of food.

Drive-up pickup be held on Tuesdays and Fridays in the Mill Creek Parking Lot. Drive-up pickup will be held from **8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays** until April 5th. Each pickup will include breakfast and lunch for 5 days worth per child. If demand for food exceeds our estimates, we will host additional pickup days/times. Families can pickup on both Tuesdays and Fridays each week.

For families who cannot come in to pick up food or have special dietary needs, we have established a **hotline number to call - 734-424-4186**. Children do not have to be present with their parents to pick up food.

We are able to offer up to 2 meals per day for every child in our district through specific funding from the State of Michigan and the US Federal Funds. Please do not hesitate to participate in this opportunity. We will not deny any kids food and are prepared to support ANY child with at least two meals per day from now through April 6th. Please do not feel as if you are taking resources from someone else. This is a special program to support ALL kids at a challenging time for all families.

Volunteers - Thank you to every community member who has volunteered to help. At this time, we are able to support this need utilizing our existing food and nutrition department. However, if you'd like to help support families, here are some great ways to help:

- The United Way of Washtenaw County has established a Community COVID-19 Relief Fund. Donations can be given to uwgive.org
- If you would like to volunteer, please visit volunteerwashtenaw.org. Help is needed in the community for the Coronavirus Volunteer response team. This includes both Medical and non-Medical support.
- A local community Facebook group named "Dexter Together COVID-19 Relief" has also been established.

Thank you for your continued support and we share in your concern for the safety of our students and community.

Sincerely,



Christopher Timmis, Ed.D.
Superintendent