



MOUNT HOREB AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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District Office | 1304 E. Lincoln Street, Mount Horeb, WI 53572

COVID-19–SIXTH COMMUNICATION

March 15, 2020 (6:00 PM)

Dear Vikings,

In the best interests of the health of our students, staff, and families, and based on the direction provided by [Public Health Madison and Dane County](#), the Mount Horeb Area School District closed effective Sunday, March 15, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.. This closure will extend minimally through Sunday, April 5. This closure applies to all MHASD PK-12 student instruction and extra-curricular activities.

Our COVID-19 Response Team has met, again, for the purpose of fine tuning the plan we shared with our community on Saturday, March 14, 2020 (please see the District's fourth communication). Here is our current status:

Instruction: Previously, we had communicated that we do not anticipate implementing a virtual learning environment prior to April 6; that remains true. We have begun the process of gathering materials for interested families to use as a voluntary resource from March 21-April 6, 2020. In the very immediate future, our Director of Instruction, Mrs. Sarah Straka, will be mailing a letter and supplementary enrichment resources to all K-5 elementary families. This will also be available on our website, <https://www.mounthorebschools.org> by the end of Wednesday, March 18, 2020 (NOTE: REVISED TIMELINE).

Retrieval of CRITICAL Personal Materials: As part of the Public Health Madison and Dane County's mandatory closure, all public school buildings have a capacity limit (50 people) imposed upon them. We know some families wish to retrieve their students' "must have" personal belongings (medications, medical equipment, etc.). As such we have established the following procedure:

1. Only those individuals who are symptom free of any flu like symptoms will be permitted access to our buildings.
2. Those eligible should email their building principal by Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. requesting access. Based on the number of requests, principals will develop a schedule for families to pick up their student's critical, personal materials at time convenient to both parties (during normal business hours 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.). Access to the building beyond Wednesday, March 18, 2020 will not be permitted. Each visit will not exceed twenty minutes in duration.
3. Because we have a number of essential staff continuing to work (in accordance with the exemptions by order of [Public Health of Madison and Dane County](#)), **we will not be permitting students and families access to buildings for non-critical needs** (with the exception of Board of Education meetings). I imagine this decision will frustrate some. In advance, I thank you for understanding the greater good.

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Mr. Scott DeYoung, Associate Superintendent Business and Finance | deyoungscott@mhasd.k12.wi.us | 608.437.7030

Ms. Sara Errthum, Human Resources Coordinator | errthumsara@mhasd.k12.wi.us | 608.437.7034

Mr. Brian Johnson, Director of Student Services | johnsonbrian@mhasd.k12.wi.us | 608.437.7016

Mrs. Sarah Straka, Director of Instruction | strakasarah@mhasd.k12.wi.us | 608.437.7013

Access to Meals: We have moved up our timeline for providing meals to students. Beginning, March 16, 2020 (through the mandatory period of school closure, including spring break) we will implement the following schedule for those students needing access to breakfast and lunch:

- Blue Mounds (Division Street/Main Street) 11:30-12:00
- Grundahl Park (Parking lot on S Blue Mounds Street) 11:30-11:45
- Mount Horeb Family Aquatic Center 11:50–12:05
- Waltz Park (Near Shelter) 12:10-12:30
- Zwingli United Church of Christ (Mount Vernon) 11:30-12:00
- Mount Horeb Area School District Office 7:00-3:30 (Beginning Monday, March 14, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.)

Students' Social and Emotional Needs: This, too, continues to be an area of great concern for our dedicated staff. It is comforting to know we have families that are able to provide continued monitoring of our young peoples' mental health and wellness status. We want to assist, here, as well.

1. Student Services staff members and teachers will be asked to make personal contacts to children we know experience significant anxiety and might wish to have a friendly point of contact. If you wish to reach out for support, we will be asking all employees of the District to check their emails twice daily. You may reach our talented student services colleagues using the following links:

[School Nurses](#)

[School Social Workers](#)

[School Psychologists](#)

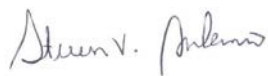
[School Counselors](#)

2. Our loving school nurses, Mrs. Pam Schaal (4K-5th) and Mrs. CJ Goodwin (6-12 grade) have spent the weekend developing two informative, age appropriate, video presentations about COVID-19 and the steps families/students can take to address the mental health side of these disconcerting developments. We will be sending links to their videos in subsequent communications to families.

Many people have asked, "What impact will this mandatory closure have on our school's calendar?" We do not know; however, we are pleased to find the following passage in [Governor Evers' update to schools](#). "The DPI has stated they will be empathetic to the ability of a district to reasonably meet the hours requirement." We will be drafting a letter asking for special dispensation. More information to follow.

I am certain there are many questions left unanswered by this letter. This is an evolving process, and our COVID-19 Response Team is deeply appreciative of your continued patience and grace. My best wishes to you, your immediate family, extended family and other loved ones.

With warmest regard,



Dr. Steve Salerno
Superintendent