

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

School Information Update

From Mr. Sjuts and Mr. King

Here is a school and COVID-19 update for our parents, students and staff. Based on the recommendation from the East Central Health District, all ESU #7 schools, within our four-county health district, were advised to close school for a period of two weeks. Our first day out-of-school was Tuesday, March 17, 2020. School will continue to be closed thru Monday, March 30, 2020. The school closure will be evaluated on or around the 30th of March to decide whether to re-open. The decision to close school was not taken lightly and children and adults should follow the advice of health authorities and limit their contact with other persons. Both the CDC and ECHD are encouraging students to avoid locations such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc. and practice social distancing to help prevent the spread.

This morning, Mr. King and I met with our staff to discuss our educational plans for students. With the third quarter ending on Thursday, March 12, we made the decision to start the fourth quarter by providing enrichment activities/opportunities for students to reinforce previous skills/standards taught, instead of teaching new information. This decision was not made lightly. We had numerous discussions with the Nebraska Department of Education, ESU #7 personnel, and school attorneys. Based on their guidance and our inability to provide every student an equal opportunity to access new information. Plus with the limited availability of internet and different data plans that cannot access video or audio downloads, we made our decision knowing not every student has the same technology access as others. Our goal is to make sure our students don't regress and lose previous learning.

Our teachers are currently preparing and working on enrichment materials to provide to all students. Because of the various academic accessibility issues stated above, students will receive either paper enrichment packets or electronic enrichment activities. Due to the time it takes to prepare materials, we are not anticipating a launch date for enrichment activities until late next week. We will provide additional details/information early next week regarding the enrichment activities and their launch date.

We also want to share with parents and students that all school activities will be suspended during the school closure. We are hopeful that some end-of-the-year activities, like graduation, can be held. Should you ever have any questions, please contact us at school at 402-923-1230.