

Parent/Guardian/Community

RASD Superintendent Update – COVID 19



March 22, 2020

Good Evening Elkers!

OUR GOALS: Parents, guardians and caregivers, the RASD staff wants your first priority to be your family's health, safety, and welfare. Please continue practicing social distancing, proper hand washing, getting plenty of rest and good nutrition. We want to keep Elk County COVID 19 free. School is important. However, at the end of the COVID 19 pandemic, there will be more important lessons for our children to have learned than the academic ones. From you, your kids are going to learn the value of time – don't fight about the math lesson we send home. They are going to learn how to handle a global pandemic with confidence and perhaps one of our students will prevent these circumstances in the future – don't sweat whether the contextual evidence in their reading passages is right or wrong. They are going to learn that they are safe and loved – don't worry about the chemistry formulas. Learning happens in a variety of ways and if what we are asking you to do is causing you or your children stress, let us know. Also know, that when school does resume, we will meet all of our students where they are and we will make sure they grow from there!

RASD EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: This coming week (March 23-27), we are going to partner with kids and families in a way we never have before. To be honest, we are nervous about this – we are outside of our comfort zones! On Monday we are going to assess the technology that our students have, including devices and internet access. This survey may be done via a Google document or an interview with your child's teacher by phone. We are going to begin to introduce everyone, parents and students, to on line learning tools and resources that your children are familiar with. Many of the resources they have used in school (for example Study Island, Accelerated Reader, AP resources, etc.) We are going to prepare for the delivery of instruction including accommodations for students who learn differently. It may be messy, links may break, Zoom rooms may be full, or there may be other hurdles. As Elkers, we believe, when we are challenged we rise

and we will overcome whatever those hurdles may be. We appreciate your patience, kindness and communication to help make this the best experience possible for you, your children and our staff. It is important to know, nothing during the week of March 23-27 will be graded. Mrs. Buhite, RASD STEM Teacher, conducted a google survey of the teachers to find out what they use most in their classes. The RASD Educational Resource Link is <https://bit.ly/rasdsites>.

RASD EDUCATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLAN: We are not sure whether the Governor will open our schools on March 27. I hope to find out tomorrow. We are developing an Educational Contingency Plan to educate our students virtually and telephonically if he does not. We are still waiting on clear guidance from the state and the passage of legislation this week. Our Educational Contingency Plan will require approval from the state in order for it to be counted as instructional days. From March 23-27, teachers are participating in virtual trainings or small group trainings to be as prepared as possible to go on line. We are also preparing to support our special education students - this requires a lot of strategic and creative thinking, support to special education teachers, the scheduling of related services, the strategic use of our paraprofessionals & consultation with outside agencies. If our schools remain closed, on April 6 we will BEGIN to implement our state approved contingency plan.

MEAL DISTRIBUTION: Our Cafeteria Ladies are doing an AMAZING job! They are risking their own health, safety and welfare to ensure that our children in our community are fed. Please be kind and patient when you are picking up your meals. For their safety we are taking the following steps starting Monday:

1. Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020 the meal distribution service will occur on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Monday, families will be given breakfast and lunch for Monday and Tuesday; on Wednesday, families will be given breakfast and lunch for Wednesday and Thursday; and on Friday, families will be given breakfast and lunch for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. This will reduce the occurrence of potential exposure for staff.
2. All staff will be gloved and masked.
3. The meals will be placed on a table at curbside, with the staff standing aside in observation, families will need to get out of their vehicle one at a time and pick up their meals. Please practice social distancing.

4. Nutrition will include a flyer in each bag Monday, to explain this as well.

We will continue meal distribution until such time that these accommodations no longer provide the staff with enough assurances for their health, safety and welfare. We are advising parents, to begin considering a backup plan in the event that we are no longer able to provide meal distribution.

Be Well and Be Kind!

Sincerely,

Heather A. McMahon-Vargas

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RASD Superintendent