August 19, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.

Dear Wildcat school family:

As you may know, we made the difficult decision this afternoon to close Salina Elementary School through August 28 because a school employee tested positive COVID-19. After learning of two positive student cases this afternoon, one at the high school and one at the middle school, we have decided to move all Salina Public Schools students to distance learning through August 28, at the advice of county health officials. Classes are expected to resume on campus August 31.

This temporary transition is not something we want to do; however, nothing is more important than the safety and health of our students, our staff and their families. Effective tomorrow, all students and teachers will move to distance learning, which consists of a combination of paper/pencil and online learning with their technology device. Teachers will contact parents and students regularly to answer questions and offer assistance. We know students may have left books and materials they need at school so we will provide information to families soon about how the items can be retrieved. We apologize for this short notice and appreciate your flexibility and understanding. While the school buildings are not in use, we will conduct deep cleanings of all facilities.

As more COVID-19 cases are being confirmed across the state, including in our community, we must remain vigilant. Please monitor yourself and your family for symptoms, which include fever, cough and shortness of breath. If you or any member of your family exhibit these symptoms, please contact your medical provider for advice immediately. Symptoms usually appear 2-14 days after exposure.

The CDC recommends the following best practices to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.
• Stay at home when you are sick.
• Practice social distancing, leaving at least six feet between you and other people.
• Wear a cloth mask in public when you cannot socially distance.

Our greatest priority is the safety of our students, staff and community members. It is important to remember that children are greatly influenced by the reactions of adults when facing difficult circumstances. I encourage everyone to remain calm and to be empathic and respectful to those affected.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve you and your family, especially as we face this challenging situation together. Thank you for your support of Salina Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Tony Thomas
Superintendent