



ELKINS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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March 15, 2020

Parents and Guardians,

Governor Asa Hutchinson announced this afternoon that all Arkansas public schools had the option to remain open tomorrow, but would be mandated to cease onsite instruction beginning Tuesday. The decision has been made that Elkins School District will be closed tomorrow. Regular classes will not meet and we will begin functioning under the digital learning plan that can be found at elkinsdistrict.org. We will not have onsite classes until at least March 30, 2020. The Arkansas Department of Health and Arkansas Department of Education will continue to communicate on this issue and advise school districts. It is possible that the building closure could last longer than March 30, but no decision has been made at this point.

As you know, we have been planning for this, and are well prepared. All students that were at school on Friday, March 13 were sent home with their Chromebook, charger, and any other necessary learning materials. I am aware that not all of our students were present at school on Friday. In order to make sure that all students get the materials needed to continue learning we will be opening each school building office from 11 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on Monday, March 16 in order to allow pickup of student Chromebooks, chargers and other materials.

Our food service program will begin operating under the plan outlined on the district webpage that can be found by clicking on the COVID-19 tab. The cafeteria at Elkins Primary School will be the only food service site open in the District during this closure. You can follow the guidelines on the meal plan to order meals for pickup in advance if you wish, but this is not necessary. You can also drive through the Primary bus lane, place your order, and have your meals delivered to your car. We will be delivering meals to the Wifi on Wheels locations that are detailed on the district webpage starting tomorrow at the designated times.

While the buses will be parked at the Wifi on Wheels locations tomorrow to designate the site for meal deliveries, the wifi will not yet be operational. We are working as quickly as possible to get wifi operational at the bus sites, but do not expect to go live with internet service at these sites until midweek. However, once operational the wifi will be available 24 hours per day and 7 days per week including the entire week of Spring Break. If your child is dependent on Wifi on Wheels for necessary internet and is not able to complete assignments by due dates established this coming week, extensions will be granted through Spring Break to give students adequate time to complete assigned work.

If you or your child is experiencing technical difficulties while trying to complete assignments, please send an email to helpdesk@elkinsdistrict.org. Also, our IT team is currently finalizing operational plans for a live chat tech help line that will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each weekday during our closure. We will let you know as soon as the live chat tech help line is active. If you or your child has questions about specific assignments in a class those questions should be emailed directly to the classroom teacher. Our teachers will be keeping office hours of 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. during the COVID-19 closure, and you should expect quick responses to emails submitted during those hours. Emails sent outside of virtual office hours will be answered the following day. Also, students can comment directly to teachers through the Google Classroom app.

Rest assured that our teachers and staff are working extremely hard to make this process as seamless as possible. While this is an unprecedented event in our state and will certainly present challenges, I am confident that we will be able to continue teaching and learning at a high level. The most important thing to consider right

now is the health of our students, staff, parents, and patrons. Please continue to practice healthy habits to slow the spread of this very contagious virus. If you have questions or concerns that arise please feel free to contact me directly at jmangrum@elkinsdistrict.org.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Mangrum
Superintendent