



Brimley Area Schools

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April 3, 2020

RE: Continuation of Learning

Dear Brimley Area Schools Family:

Well, I think spring has really sprung this time. We have been blessed with some very nice, sunny days during our spring break time. I trust you have had some time to get out and do some fun things while enjoying our northern Michigan weather. I know this is not the spring break some had in mind, but we can and will make the very best out of it, because that is what we do in the U.P.

Social distancing is a fact of life for now and we all need to do our very best to follow those rules. This notion is very difficult and different for us as we are a people who enjoy being around others; family gatherings on Sundays; giving hugs; high five's when a job is well done; taking in a concert or sporting event, and so many more ways we gather to support each other. I can't wait until the day comes, soon, when we can once again gather and hug each other and show that love and support.

For those of you who pay attention to Lake Superior State University's Banned Words List produced each year, I am going to propose that we ban the words Social Distancing. Hopefully, we never have to do this type of safety measures again.

By now I'm sure you have heard that Governor Whitmer has issued an Executive Order that suspends in-person K-12 instruction for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This action is unprecedented but was necessary to help keep our children and communities safe from the continued spread of COVID-19. With this action comes several items that need to be addressed by school districts. I will attempt to outline these items in this letter so you can better understand the direction we will be taking to help continue the education of your students.

The district is required to put into action a plan for continued education of our students to the best of our abilities. This plan must be approved by the local Intermediate School District Superintendent and then sent on to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Treasury. We are also required to place our plan on our school website. The plan must include the following items:

1. A description of the methods a district will use to provide alternative modes of instruction other than in-person instruction and a summary of materials each pupil and the pupil's parents or guardians will need to meaningfully access the alternative modes of instruction.

2. A description of the methods a district will use to keep pupils at the center of educational activities, including outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections, and to help pupils feel safe and valued.
3. A description of plans to deliver content in multiple ways so that all pupils can access learning.
4. A description of plans to manage and monitor learning by pupils.
5. A budget outline estimating additional expenditures associated with the plan and sources of revenue to pay for those expenditures.
6. A description of the manner in which district administrators, board members, teachers, and any representative of teachers collaborated in development of the plan.
7. A description of methods the district will use to notify pupils and parents or guardians of the plan.
8. A best estimate of the date on which the district will begin implementation of the plan, which must be no later than April 28, 2020.
9. Provide for assistance, to the extent feasible, to pupils enrolled in any postsecondary dual enrollment courses.
10. Provide or arrange for continuation of food distribution to eligible pupils.
11. Continue to pay school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the plan, subject to any applicable requirements of collective bargaining agreement.
12. Provide for evaluation of participation in the plan by pupils.
13. Provide mental health supports to pupils affected by a state of emergency or state of disaster prompted by COVID-19.
14. Provide for district to support the efforts of the intermediate district in which the district is located to mobilize disaster relief childcare centers as described in executive Order 2020-16 or any executive order that may follow it.

I know that was a great deal to digest, but we are committed to helping all our students continue the educational process to the extent available.

There has been some concerns and questions brought to my attention about our seniors and whether they will graduate from high school. Rest assured the plan provides clarity for our seniors. If you were on track to graduate as of March 11, 2020, we will continue to provide work that keeps you on track for graduation. If you were failing a course as of March 11, 2020, an opportunity to the extent feasible to demonstrate learning in the subject matter of the course and receive credit for the course, as determined by the district, will be offered. But you must complete the work established by the district with the assistance of your faculty members. Long story short, **OUR SENIORS WILL BE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL**. For the time being, we will postpone commencement until a later date because we want to provide that capstone ceremony for our students as they deserve the spotlight. More to come on this for our seniors.

If you are a parent of a special education student, or 504 student, or have a student that receives other ancillary services, we shall strive in good faith and to the extent practicable, based upon existing resources, technology, training, and curriculum, as well as circumstances presented provide equal access to alternative modes of instruction to students for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. We anticipate more guidance in this area and will pass it along as it becomes available.

This Executive Order suspends for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year the Third Grade Reading Law that would require our district to retain students in third grade if they were more than a year behind in reading. This order further suspends all state standardized tests to include: The Michigan Merit

Examination for 11th graders and 12th graders who didn't take it the previous year; The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for current 11th grade students, this test will be taken in the fall; The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP), MI-ACCESS, Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), this will be taken in the fall; the WorkKeys Test for 11th graders, and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).

If you are a parent of a student who has left personal items, or needs other resources that were left at school, the Executive Order allows for a district to permit parents and guardians of pupils to visit school property for the purpose of obtaining those items. Of course, we require proper social distancing when coming to school. If you need to get any items from school, we will be allowing parents in the district beginning on Monday, April 6th, from 8:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m., and will hold the same hours for Tuesday and Wednesday, April 7th and 8th.

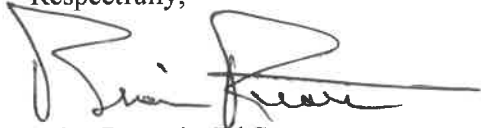
We need to know about your Internet access and whether you have access to a computer at home. If you do not have Internet access or a device at home, please contact the central office at 248-3219 and let us know. We will then work to see how we can provide some sort of access to those resources.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read the very long and somewhat wordy informational letter as I took much of it right from the Executive Order. I'm sorry it was so long, but you needed to know what was going to happen with education as we move forward to continue the school year.

Please know that your children are missed greatly. I miss the hugs and the smiles; I miss the events that we share each day; I miss the times in the cafeteria; I miss high fives and fist bumps; I miss the laughter; I miss the parents coming to school or calling to ask about things and so much more that school is each and every day. Most important, know that your children are loved and will be supported during this weird and sometimes scary time.

Thank you for allowing our faculty, staff, board of education, administration, and me to have a part in your child's life. Thank you for all the hard work you are doing to assist your children with their education. Together, we will make a difference for our children.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Reattoir', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Reattoir, Ed.S.
Superintendent of Schools

References taken from Executive Order No. 2020-35