



Elkhart Lake – Glenbeulah School District

DISTRICT OFFICE / HIGH SCHOOL

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ELEMENTARY / MIDDLE SCHOOL

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March 18, 2020

Dear Parents, Students and Staff,

While it is very “interesting times” in which we now find ourselves, I continue to be amazed and impressed how everyone in our school community and the entire District is joining together to find ways to work together (even while practicing social distancing) to do the best we can to provide for our students.

Over the past few days, the staff and administration have worked hard to put together a plan for providing “virtual” education for our students. We know it won’t be the same as if the students were on-site, but with creativity, flexibility and some trial-and-error, the staff will do their best to continue to provide relevant, engaging educational experiences for our students—it just will be different from the usual.

Even with the “best laid” plans, there are always glitches, and we know this will be no exception. This is where your patience and flexibility will be very much appreciated. We will need you to keep in communication with the school and/or staff so we can make adjustments to meet your students’ learning needs or their ability to access the learning materials. It may take some time to work out all “wrinkles” but it will happen. As you were notified in the original Blackboard alert and via the website, our virtual learning delivery system was piloted on Thursday, March 19. The goal is to be able to work out any issues that arise so all is set to go with the official “launch” on Monday, March 23. Specific guidelines/expectations for students at the various levels are included in this mailings. Additional questions can be directed to the building principals, Mr. Fischer and Mr. Faris, and also Mr. Petrie, assistant M.S. principal. Special education questions should be directed to Mrs. Hammann or Mrs. Roth (elem./m.s.) or Dr. Buechel Haack or Mrs. Coulter (h.s.).

It does appear most likely that the initial projected ending date of April 6 will be extended. In fact, I would plan for it to be so. However, if this happens, we would hold “school” on Monday, April 6-Wednesday, April 8. Spring Break would remain as scheduled with NO classes Thursday, April 8 through Monday, April 13. Classes would resume on Tuesday, April 14. Stay tuned to learn how this would occur.

There was one additional schedule change. As teachers had three days for preparation this week, the inservice that had originally been scheduled for Friday, March 27 has now been cancelled. Students will be expected to participate in instruction on that day. An updated 2019-20 calendar is enclosed for your reference.

While doing lessons, teachers may direct students to pick up packets and/or return work to school (if not able to do so virtually). To accommodate this, the lobbies of both offices will be open each Thursday from 2 to 8 p.m. This will begin this Thursday, March 19. For the first week only, the lobbies will also be open on Friday, March 20.

We are providing Child Care services for those with a need. Even if you had not started with us, as time goes on or if a need arises, your child would be very welcome. There will be technology resources available so the students can access their learning materials. Families who would be new to the Child Care are welcome. Registration fees for new families during this time period are being waived. Contact Diane Schwaller, Child Care Director, to make arrangements.

Also, as a District, with financial support from the ELG Education Foundation and generous community donors, we have begun providing meals and/or gift cards for families in need. If you were not contacted and could use

assistance now or if personal situations change and you could use assistance at a later date, please contact Debbie Hammann at 876-3307. We will do all we can to help our families.

You may be wondering...for now, what can you do? Continue to make plans for the supervision of your children. If possible set up a student work station. This space should be comfortable, well-lighted and have the resources to work for longer periods of time. A comfortable couch or lounge chair might not be the best options. Start planning for how you and your family members can work together with tasks that your child will be asked to complete. Is there someone you can enlist to help to offer guidance and maintain a schedule? Think about creating a schedule that builds in breaks and times for recreation. Kids thrive with structure. Having an established routine will help “normalize” the situation for them -- even if the “routine” varies from home-to-home and student-to-student. That’s okay.

Please be assured, you as parents are NOT going to be judged for the “job” you do as teachers. You are parents and as such, we know you have much on your plates already and now have just added “teacher” on top of everything else. We understand that everyone will do the best they can but everyone will not be able to provide and do everything. Again that is OKAY. It will be a learning experience for us all. And even a “little” something, will be better than nothing. It’s just important that parents and students, working with the teaching staff, just try to start. The principals and teachers will be available to assist you – just reach out to them.

We all need to stay calm and focused on doing what’s best for our families, our students and ourselves. School is important – but it’s not the Most Important. Maintaining a balance will be important for families, especially as it seems things are changing by the hour. Included in this mailing is a packet provided by Samantha Bons, our elem./m.s. guidance counselor, titled “My Kids’ School is Closed, So Now What?” You may find some helpful strategies and ideas within it.

If we as your “school family” can be of assistance to you during this time, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are in this together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ann Buechel Haack

Note: A copy of an article about free internet service from Spectrum/Charter is included—just in case it may be helpful for some of our families.