

April 1

Planning for the short and long-term

On March 13th, our teachers had one day to convert to online instruction. While we have all experienced challenges, including Schoology adjusting to exponentially increased use across the nation, overall I have been astounded by the work of our students and staff. Thank you for staying the course.

Thank you for being patient as teachers and administrators jump into teaching remotely, often juggling the needs of their families at the same time. Keep the photos and suggestions for balance and humor coming, and keep that line of communication open with your teachers, administrators and me. Tell us how we can continue to improve as we move from our first goal of making it successfully to this Friday and the start of spring break, to the end of April or longer.

GPPSS will continue to learn. Our community values education, and while there are many unknowns as we move forward we know this:

- 100% of our teachers are participating and offer online and remote learning opportunities
- Student participation is impressive with some secondary buildings only having less than 10 students not actively participating. Teachers, counselors and administrators will continue to reach out to reduce barriers and track involvement by class and school, focusing on balance and the mental and physical health of students first. Our goal is 100% involvement for students and staff
- 3,335 meals were served from March 13-27 through our partnership with Chartwells and we thank them for their extraordinary effort that continues every Tuesday 10-1 at Poupard Elementary, 20655 Lennon (including being open next week during spring break)
- 753 technology devices were checked out by families for online instruction
- Our district made its second collection of gloves, gowns, goggles, masks and sanitizer for local hospitals and hospice
- Essential work of the district - including board meetings and enrollment - continues using virtual platforms

Recognizing transitions and milestones

No matter what the Governor announces about closing school buildings or social distancing mandates, please know we are thinking about how this impacts our students' mental and physical health. I cannot guarantee traditional ceremonies or set dates for when these might happen, but please know this rests heavy on our hearts. We are thinking of those transitioning to kindergarten, new buildings, middle school, high school and graduation. And we are working on ways to make some of these most anticipated events special, even if timing and details remain up in the air. We welcome your input and involvement.

While we do not have all the answers, we appreciate your partnership. Families are doing an amazing job balancing school and family stresses. We are here for you, and we cannot tell you how much your kind words of support have meant to our staff and teachers. Our mission has never been so realized: Promote Innovation → Maximize Potential → Embrace Community

Sincerely,
Gary C. Niehaus