

March 26, 2020

Dear BCSC Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds everyone healthy and adjusting to a new, temporary way of life. The changes in the education of your students are being made with thought and concern for doing what is best for all. The health and safety of everyone is by far the most overriding concern in every step of the process. The uncertainty of the last couple of weeks has been difficult on all of us.

Our teachers, administrators and staff miss the interaction with the students and want to get back to having our school function with a sense of normalcy. During these next several weeks our school will work to provide assignments and communication to help educate our students. Teachers have worked, and continue to work, on making lessons relevant and meaningful while minimizing stress and anxiety for students and parents. Our teachers will be using additional resources that are being made available. Please be mindful that some items may work great while others may have some issues. By working together with your student and teacher and completing the assignments we hope to minimize any struggles. Students are being asked to put forth effort and try to complete each assignment to the best of their ability. There is enough stress without making homework a battle. The mental health of you and your children is a much greater concern than the lessons the students will do over the next several weeks. Working together, we will make eLearning successful. Please communicate any concerns to school personnel.

Governor Holcomb’s Educational Announcements

- 1 All State-wide testing is canceled for 2019-2020. A letter was sent out earlier to parents with more detail. Additionally, Dyslexia testing and the Civics test were left off but have been canceled as well.
- 2 The Governor has ordered all schools closed through May 1. This may be extended; however educational days should continue just not within the school buildings.
- 3 The Governor has granted 20 waiver days for schools. This number may be reconsidered as future decisions are made by the state.
- 4 Food Grab and Go programs and education are both listed under essential functions, as needed.

Our Schedule

Our corporation continues to follow guidance from the federal, state and local level. When changes are made, the necessary adjustments will be made and communicated to everyone. Our administrative team has met and have worked through what steps need to be addressed as we move forward.

Our schedule is as follows:

March 23 - March 26 Spring Break

March 30 - April 3 eLearning Days

April 6 - April 10 eLearning Days

New to the schedule

April 13 - April 17 Waiver Days

April 20 - April 24 eLearning Days

April 27 - May 1 Waiver Days

This schedule gets us through the Governor's ordered shutdown through May 1. I am sure that additional guidance will be given to all corporations well before this date is reached.

Our Schools, Assignment Collection and New Assignments

Our schools at this time do not have staff at the building. Arrangements for any building access for non-staff will be coordinated by the principal at their respective buildings. We will identify drop off and pick up sites for work that needs turned in or received, much like we have done for the food distribution. These will be set up to minimize interaction by all and allow social distancing while providing availability. Many are doing the online work and submission so that will occur through electronic means. We know each situation is different and we all work together to provide answers and meet everyone's needs. More information on this process will follow, possibly at the building level.

Food Grab and Gos

The program has been very successful and well used. I want to give a great shoutout to our cafeteria staff that has stepped up and worked to get this in place and running so smoothly. The numbers have increased every time at all three pickup locations. Please use the Google form that is being provided to sign-up in a timely manner if you wish to participate. This is designated as essential under Governor Holcomb's list, so driving to the collection point is fine.

Prom, Graduation and Senior Night

At this time these events are just on hold and being considered to be held when we will be allowed to return to larger gatherings. Our corporation knows these are major events for seniors and others. We plan to do everything possible to hold these events and we will keep you updated as information is available.

Seniors

School administration has been notified that more guidance will be coming in regard to graduation requirements, AP testing, and our dual credit programs. The current directive from the Department of Education is to continue working with coursework and they will provide additional direction and guidance as soon as they finalize those decisions. I feel bad for all our seniors that are not able to enjoy many of those activities and events that they have been looking so forward to. We will do everything possible to allow any and all of these activities to occur.

Technology

Our Technology team is working very hard to upgrade, add, and maintain new educational tools and software as well as equipment. Additionally, they are working with individuals to help troubleshoot or correct any issues on or off sight. They will be putting out contact information and hours of availability soon. I truly appreciate all their efforts as they work to support teachers and students.

In Conclusion

As Dr. McCormick has said directly to students at every news conference she has been a part “work hard and stay focused”. That will be our corporation’s goal as well. We will all get through this current crisis. Please follow all the guidelines on washing your hands, social distancing, essential travel and all those directives that we hear and see many times a day. My hope is that Benton County and Benton Community School Corporation can be an example of how well it works when you do it the right way. I hope that everyone stays healthy and safe. Enjoy the time together and we are all excitedly looking forward to having the students back in the building and working with them in person again!

Sincerely,

Gregg Hoover
Superintendent
Benton Community School Corporation