

## COVID-19 Update

March 15, 2020

Dear Parents, Students and Staff:

The Minnesota Department of Education led by Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker and Governor Walz have made the decision to close all Minnesota Schools as of Wednesday, March 18, 2020. From March 18th through March 27th schools will have time to develop a plan to provide distance learning to their students.

**GFW Schools will have a two hour late start on Monday, March 16th.** The late start will allow the district administration to share preliminary plans with staff and provide them with a message for the students. It will also allow students the chance to get any and all items they will need for the distance learning that will take place later. **Beginning on Tuesday, March 17th GFW Schools will be closed until further notice.**

The Minnesota Department of Education has provided school districts with a definition of distance learning and left details of the plan to the local school districts. The GFW Staff will be working to create a plan to provide equitable education for all of our students during this school closure. This will include supporting students receiving special education services, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students who depend on meals served at school each day. The specific day for starting distance learning is yet to be determined, but will be no later than March 30th. Students and parents should continue to check the district website and look for phone messages, texts and emails for updates regarding distance learning plans.

### **T-Bird Club/Child-Care Support**

GFW Schools will continue to provide the school age child-care through the T-Bird Club for those enrolled.

Also, the distance learning plan indicates schools should provide child-care for children of emergency workers critical to the State's response to COVID-19. This includes health care staff; first responders; firefighters; correctional services; essential court personnel; MN State Veterans Home staff; state and local public health agency employees; MNsure Navigators; County financial/eligibility workers; county case managers; or any county staff in emergency management or health and human services. **Pre-registration is requested and employment verification (i.e. badge, paystub) required for all attending.**

The T-Bird Club will also take names of other families in need of child-care support and provide assistance as staffing allows. Again, this will depend on what our staffing will allow.

This has proven to be an ever changing situation as you have seen over the past two days. We will continue to update you as we get additional information. Thank you for your continued support as we deal with this situation.

Sincerely,  
Lonnie Seifert  
GFW Schools Superintendent