

March 17, 2020

GFW Families,

We are continuing to work our way through the COVID-19 pandemic with new details being provided to us each day. Thank you for your patience and flexibility in this difficult time! We will continue to base our decisions on the safety and education of our students.

Free Meals for Individuals Ages (1-18)

Beginning on Wednesday, March 18 2020, we will be offering bag breakfasts and lunches for all students ages 1-18 in the GFW School District. These meals will be available for pick up at each of our three school sites between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Individuals will not be able to eat the lunches in the school building. When the meals are picked up you will receive a lunch for that day and a breakfast for the following day.

Beginning on Monday, March 23, 2020, if you are unable to pick the meals up at the school, we will be adding the option to have the meals delivered to your residence. Again, the delivery would be a lunch for that day and a breakfast for the following day. Due to the unknown use of this program, the delivery time will be between 11:00 and 1:00. The individual dropping the meals off will be wearing a GFW Thunderbird badge to identify themselves.

If you are interested in your child(ren) receiving meals during the school closure time, please fill out the survey on the district website.

Child-Care

The T-Bird Club will remain open for those who were using it prior to the school closure, children of healthcare workers/emergency workers and for children of school staff.

Distance Learning

Governor Walz and Commissioner of Education Mary Kathryn Ricker have made the decision to close all public and charter schools in Minnesota effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020. School personnel were also directed to develop a distance learning plan to be used to provide instruction for an extended period of time.

Timelines:

March 18 - March 27: District staff has the opportunity to work on a Distance Learning Plan. **GFW Schools will be starting Distance Learning with students prior to March 30th. Students and parents should be checking their email on a daily basis.**

March 30 - All public schools and charter schools required to begin Distance Learning for students. Distance learning will continue until the state gives a different directive.

How is Distance Learning different from the Flexible Learning used during a snow day?

Distance Learning will include some type of daily interaction between a student and a licensed teacher. This interaction can be in a variety of forms including email, phone, videoconferencing, etc. Distance Learning will also include introduction of new concepts

identified in the educational standards established by the state of Minnesota. This plan is also being developed to allow for this instruction to continue for an extended period of time if necessary. This is not simply students doing packets of worksheets, which is part of the Flexible Learning plan for snow days.

What if I don't have access to the internet at my residence?

GFW Schools are working to provide hotspots for those students without internet access at their home. We are also looking at having a system in place to distribute and collect paperwork as needed in the future.

I have no idea how long the Distance Learning Plan will be in place, but we will continue to look at how to deal with any barriers we run into during this time period. I want to thank students, parents and staff for their patience and flexibility as we work through this uncharted path in education.

Please contact classroom teachers, building principals or myself with any questions.

Thank you,
Lonnie Seifert
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