



School District of the City of Iron Mountain

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Good Afternoon Iron Mountain Families,

This is a short update from Iron Mountain Public Schools regarding our current status both locally and across the state regarding the state of public education. Today, Thursday, April 2, 2020, Governor Whitmer announced that she is suspending in-person instruction for Michigan children for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Although this decision by the Governor brings us into unprecedented times for education, we believe she made the necessary choice as we must put the health and safety of our students and families first. We are very confident the Governor acted only after the very best advice from national and local medical professionals.

Although in-person instruction has been suspended, the Governor's orders have provided some guidance on continued education. IMPS will be creating a continuity of learning plan on how we will deliver instruction for the remainder of the year. Later today, I am meeting with district administrators and the school board of education as we begin to develop the framework for this plan. I will then be meeting, in the coming days, with district administrators and educators and begin putting the details of the plan together. Certainly our teachers and educators face challenges with this process, but with several educational waivers put in place, I am confident we will be able to provide quality instruction, which will minimize the effects of lost in-person learning.

Several of our teachers and support staff have already begun researching best practice instructional methods and resources we could utilize in the coming weeks. We fully understand the digital divide within our community and are preparing to work with students and families to be able to meet every student's needs. Instruction may not look the same for all students, even students within the same grade level, therefore we are working hard to plan for several different options so as to ensure pathways for student success.

In addition to the educational piece, we also understand that for students, families, and the community at large, school provides much more than instruction and learning in the classroom. School events, friendships, field trips, and assemblies are all a part of this community we call school. In particular we will be addressing graduation, awards, and scholarships for the class of 2020. Although these things have been placed on hold for the time being and we are unable to end the school year following our traditional celebrations, we will be working hard to find ways to give our students and families something they can hold on to.

While we address the many educational and support needs in the coming days, we ask for your patience. We are working with area schools as well as looking for guidance from several outside agencies. IMPS has every student's best interest at heart, and we will work with all our families to do what is best for our children. How we do things from this point forward will look very different and decisions made may cause stress. Please stay in contact with your teachers and building administrators. We know these are trying times, and we want to do our best in working with you, not adding to the difficulties we are all experiencing.

As soon as we have our learning plan in place and approved, we will be providing training for our staff to help ensure we can deliver our instruction as efficiently and effectively as possible. We will communicate this information to our families as soon as it becomes available. Thank you for your understanding, patience, and trusting us with your children. After serving in several districts across the state, I'm pleased to say Iron Mountain is second to none in regards to a community caring for each other.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Jerry Sardina
Superintendent