March 27, 2020

Dear Hazel Park Schools’ Families and Community,

I will try to be succinct in my communication today but just a warning, it is longer than normal. I have been reminded of what Maya Angelou said, “…People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” I hope each of us is finding ways of making our kids, siblings, parents, neighbors, friends, and workers (food service, custodians, health care, police, fire, governmental officials) feel safe and appreciated. Our actions often speak louder than our words and they certainly influence how we make people feel.

**Student Education**

From the start of this health emergency two weeks ago, Hazel Park Schools elected to send out optional activities for our students (in our traditional buildings). These activities may be optional, but as a parent or guardian, you can certainly require them. It is our hope that these activities and suggestions will help support your efforts at home. Continual learning is important. We encourage you to keep your students working. Reach out to your teacher/s if you have questions and/or concerns.

The governor has been making school and community closure decisions incrementally. As we now approach the halfway point of the announced shutdown, she announced that it is “unlikely” that students will return to our traditional buildings for classroom learning. Given this potential shut-down, our dedicated administrators and staff are working to prepare what that will look like after April 13th. If the governor does announce that schools will be closed longer than through April 13, Hazel Park Schools will implement increased requirements on required daily educational activities and assignments. I can promise you that we will do everything in our power to make sure our students are not left behind. Our teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals are fantastic people who will continue their efforts with more resolve to make sure our students are not disadvantaged in any way.

With all that being said, I receive daily communication on how our amazing teachers are reaching out with students and providing optional learning resources through Zoom/seesaw and other technology resources. Our staff loves your children and desires the best education for them. Our staff continues to research additional online learning resources so your student can engage in learning activities on and off line moving forward.

Our general approach to this national health emergency has been based upon developments from the state. We have one more week and then spring break. We want to observe this break for all our employees independent upon their role/job within the district. I am sure we will be making more decisions as we lead up to April 14. Changes are happening however, at the state
and federal level hourly, and we will continue to work to communicate these to you as it relates to your student's education.

Technology
In anticipation of an additional extension, Hazel Park Schools has been requesting that you fill out this survey to determine family access to devices and the internet. Based on the results of this survey, we will develop a plan to address this issue for our individual families. Those of you that have filled this out and have technology deficits in your home, should have received a call from technology as we clarify our needs in our district. Please call 248.658-5231, if you have not heard from IT within 3 business days of filling out the survey. It is important for all families to participate in this survey! Thank you for doing this while we continue to look for ways to support our families.

State Assessments
The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has received approval from the U.S. Department of Education to waive a number of federal requirements for statewide student testing including the M-STEP, MI-ACCESS, ACT, PSAT, and SAT for this year. We are now waiting for the Michigan state legislature to waive these requirements as well. By law, participation in state assessments is both a federal and state requirement. Therefore, both government agencies must waive this requirement for all state assessments to be eliminated for this year. We anticipate that the Michigan legislature will do so soon given our unique situation.

Free Food - Seven Days A Week for Kids Program
I must give a tremendous shout-out and THANK YOU to our Nutrition Services staff who stepped up over the past two weeks by working endless hours and putting forth a great effort to feed children in need with a grand total over the past two weeks of 12,716 meals. Please remember when you come to food pick up to keep social distancing in mind.

Through April 3rd, if you are in need of delivery due to illness or disability and live within the Hazel Park School District which includes our Hazel Park or Ferndale boundaries, please email HPNutrition@hazelparkschools.org or call Lisa Chrouch-Johnson 248.658.5525 by 3 p.m. the day before for meals. Deliveries will be dropped off outside your residence following CDC Safe Space guidance.

Please include the following information:

- Your Name
- Number of Children
- Address
- Phone Number
- Days Requested.
More Food Resources:
We understand that many families have been economically impacted and cannot afford food right now. If you are in this difficult situation, here are some area resources for emergency food supplies:

- **Gleaners**
- **Food Bank of Oakland County** – 120 East Columbia, Pontiac, MI 48340  (248) 332-1473
- **Lighthouse**
  - Call Lighthouse and place food order request at: 248-920-6000 ext. 2
  - Or submit online at www. [link](https://lighthousemi.org/emergency-food-needs)
  - Closest site: 16200 W. 12 Mile, Southfield (Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday – 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.)

Mental Wellness
Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) who specialize in mental health, substance recovery, and developmental disabilities for students and adults are providing additional resources for our county families during this time of stress. Students, counselors, parents, and teachers can call the OCHN crisis line 24 hours a day at (800)231-1127. They have text and chat services available particularly for students. Non-emergency help and substance abuse counseling are available during the day as well at 248-464-6363. For more information please see their website: [link](http://oaklandchn.org/inde…/coronavirus-covid-19-information).

All of our district communications that have been sent to you regarding COVID-19 can be found on our website at: [HPS District COVID-19 Updates](http://www.hazelparkschools.org) for your reference.

We appreciate all of the support you have been giving our staff. They may be at home but they are working hard every day to keep educating your students. They tell me each day how much they miss your children, as do I. We know that this is difficult for many of you, but we are here for you. Thank you for all your hard work. Thank you for being part of our team. Together we are stronger and we can do this. It is STILL a great day to be a Viking!

With Students in Mind,

Dr. Amy Kruppe
Superintendent