

Dear GPPSS Families, Staff and Students,

First, I want to express my profound appreciation for our staff and students who have remotely engaged on learning tasks for these past three weeks, during the school building closure due to the COVID-19 outbreak. I continue to be proud to work with such a dedicated group of educators and students.

Earlier today Governor Whitmer issued an extensive executive order that provided direction to all of us regarding how school will occur for the remainder of the school year. If you want to read her [entire order you can at this link](#).

Over the week of spring break our administrative team will carefully review not only that document, but the expected regulations regarding this order provided by the Michigan Department of Education and Wayne RESA. I anticipate that by later next week we will have more clarity regarding this situation, but at this time based on the order from the Governor I believe the following to be true:

- GPPSS will develop a Continuity of Learning Plan, subject to approval by WRESA, that will provide a roadmap for how instruction will continue for GPPSS students through the end of this school year. That instruction will occur remotely, unless the Governor deems it safe to physically return to school.
- All GPPSS students, including our students with special needs, will receive services as determined by our Continuity of Learning Plan.
- Students and teachers will continue to work together and learn together through the end of this school year. In other words, school is not over (even for our seniors)!
- GPPSS will continue food distribution to families as we have done since the start of this situation.
- GPPSS staff will continue to work and be compensated through the end of this school year.

While at this time I believe the above to be true, we still have many unknowns as we continue down this path. The following are just some of the items that require more clarity. Some of this clarity will be provided to us by MDE and WRESA, other elements of this clarity will be identified by GPPSS during the coming weeks. Below are a list of some of the items I am most often asked about and my current thinking regarding each:

- Student recognition and transitions - While this shutdown has impacted all of us, certainly our students anticipating a transition, especially our seniors, have been profoundly affected. While I don't know at this time the details, GPPSS is committed to recognizing our students transitioning either within our district or to the next step in their life.
- Grading, credits and student grade promotion - We need to identify exactly how each student's hard work will be recognized and noted, while also recognizing that some of

our traditional practices around awarding grades will have to change. During the coming weeks administration and teachers will be working on these important questions. The one guarantee you have from me regarding this issue is that the work our students have done, and the work they will be doing through the end of the school year, will matter, be valued and count.

- Student and staff access to building - Since school abruptly closed, both staff and students have not been allowed to return to our buildings. An initial review of the governor's order seems to indicate that in some instances staff can return to buildings when Stay At Home ends. We will work to obtain more clarity on this issue. Students and families are still prohibited via the governor's order from returning to our school buildings or property for any reason.

Our administrators will be partnering with our teachers and other staff members to obtain more clarity and to create clearer expectations for staff and students in the coming weeks. I'm hoping to have more concrete information for you later next week.

Together GPPSS can do this! *Stay Home - Stay Safe - Save Lives*

Sincerely,

Gary C. Niehaus