



School Closure Update
Monday, April 20, 2020

Dear Parents, Families and Colleagues,

As of this morning, we are in the midst of our fifth week of remote learning and the sixth week since closures were announced on March 15th. As this closure continues, our goals remain firm as each week we seek to remain connected with our students and families while providing remote learning opportunities as an extension of our classrooms. Your role in helping us continually achieve these goals has been invaluable and we remain thankful for all that our families are doing to support our students through this challenging time.

This past Friday, Governor Bullock provided [insight](#) into forthcoming plans to reopen Montana. The Governor outlined three specific metrics for the phased reopening including a sustained, 14-day reduction of positive tests, appropriately prepared and resourced hospitals and ample testing capacity. In reference to the [plan](#) released last week by the White House and the CDC, schools could be reopened as part of the second phase, should a state or region show no evidence of a rebound in relation to phase one. While we expect to learn more this week, there is no current timeframe for any of those forthcoming decisions. Rather, we will approach any and all decisions related to our schools with appropriate care and caution, keeping to our priority of ensuring a safe and healthy environment for our students and employees.

As remote learning has continued, our plans for everything from grading to graduation have also progressed. To date, decisions have not been made pertaining to either grading or graduation as both involve continually evolving factors. However, an [update](#) pertaining to both is available on our website that provides details related to developing plans. As further updates become available this week, we will look to finalize our grading criteria for this final semester/quarter of the 2019/2020 school year. Plans pertaining to graduation will remain dynamic until the point in which we must coordinate efforts and focus on one definitive plan.

In terms of decisions that have been made, please know that this year's Vigilante Parade has been postponed indefinitely with no identified timeframe for the rescheduling of this event. As you know, the parade is a large, public gathering that does not align with current public health guidance. Scheduled for Friday, May 1st, lead time to successfully host the parade is simply not available even if guidance were to change in the coming days. For now, the parade will remain postponed indefinitely and May 1st will be changed to a full day of school (remote or otherwise).

Finally, through our partner in Sodexo Foods, we continue to work to expand food service options. Over the past few weeks, we have been able to add several new sites and as of today, we were able to add-back services to Kessler Elementary and add services to Smith Elementary. We continue to provide multiple days of meals at each site including three days of provided meals each Friday to assist families through the weekends. Please note the days and time of food service below.

Eleven Grab & Go Food Service Sites:

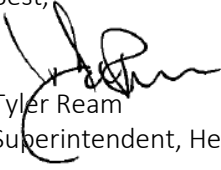
- Bryant Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11:45am to 1:00pm
- Broadwater Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00am to 11:15am
- Central Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:15pm to 2:00pm
- Four Georgians Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00am to 11:15am
- **(Added 4/20)** Kessler Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:30pm to 2:00pm

- Rossiter Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00pm to 1:00pm
- **(Added 4/20)** Smith Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:30pm to 2:00pm
- Warren Elementary: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11:45am to 1:00pm
- Dollar Tree Parking Lot (3085 N Montana Ave): Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00am to 11:15am
- CVS (603 N Montana): Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11:45am to 1:00pm
- Bob's Valley Market (7507 N Montana Ave): 10:15am to 11:30am

On behalf of the Helena Public Schools, thank you again for your time, ongoing efforts and continual support during this closure. While this is far from the fourth quarter that we had planned, we feel fortunate to remain connected in support of one another. In addition, we continue to say thank you to everyone providing essential services during this crisis across our community. From health care professionals to those working hard to keep food and supplies available, you are all heroes and we remain grateful for your continued efforts.

Please take care, stay safe and stay connected.

Best,



Tyler Ream
Superintendent, Helena Public Schools