March 27, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I hope you were able to make the most of spring break during the Stay-at-Home mandate by relaxing a bit, taking long walks, reading a good book and spending time with family.

Tipp City Schools returns to distance learning on Monday, for at least one week. Students should have paper packets from the March 13th distribution, and/or access to assignments through their teachers’ websites. Assignments are for the week of March 30 to April 3. This covers the remainder of the three week state-mandated closure.

My administration team and I have been working on how this will look should the school closure be extended. We are not trying to duplicate the learning experiences students receive while in our classrooms. This is simply unrealistic. Learning is disrupted in a significant way and no one should be expecting the same student outcomes. The goal is to ensure lessons are meaningful, reasonable, and age appropriate so students can stay engaged, learning can continue, and we remain connected. More detailed information will be distributed next week.

This is a challenging time for all of us. Life is dramatically different, infused with anxiety, stress, and even fear. Many parents and guardians are working from home, while caring for children and helping them with their distance learning. Many parents are in the medical field, first responders, or an essential industry, all of whom are working long hours. I am mindful of a new home life and committed to providing a remote learning plan that provides balance for everyone.

We are also working on plans to ensure students have access to internet service and technology in their homes. We sent out a One-Call and text message to identify families in need of the internet and/or devices. We will then decide if and how we can safely distribute technology where there is internet. We also must consider how we will distribute paper packets to students who need them. If you do not have internet and/or a device for students to use, please call 937-669-6311. Leave your name, your children’s names, grades, and a phone number. Also specify if you need internet and/or a device.

Many parents are asking about upcoming events such as Prom, Senior Week, and Graduation. We are waiting for guidance from state officials before making any decisions. For now, it is an unknown. Unfortunately, there are many unknowns.

The General Assembly today passed House Bill (HB) 197 in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis. Gov. Mike DeWine signed the bill into law this afternoon. Here are some of the education-related changes the bill makes:

- eliminates state and federal testing for the 2019-2020 school year;
- prohibits the issuance of state report cards for the 2019-2020 school year and provides a one-year safe harbor from sanctions related to the report card;
• waives the third-grade reading guarantee retention requirement;
• permits schools to grant high school diplomas to students on track to graduate and for whom the principal determines that the student has successfully completed the curriculum;
• permits schools to make up through distance learning any number of days or hours necessary to meet minimum instructional hour requirements;
• freezes EdChoice eligibility at the 2019-2020 list of 517 buildings;
• permits boards of education to use electronic communication for in-person meetings and hearings during the emergency period but not later than Dec. 1, 2020;
• sets April 28 as the final day of voting for the March 17 primary election and prohibits in-person voting for that election.

Please understand this is an evolving and ever-changing situation. We must remain flexible, patient and kind to each other. We don’t have all of the answers. I wish we did.

If you have concerns or questions, please reach out to your child’s teachers, building principals, guidance counselors, Assistant Superintendent Steve Verhoff, or me. We are in this together! We are a strong community! WE are TIPP!

Stay Safe. Stay Healthy.

Take care,

Dr. Gretta Kumpf