March 13, 2020

Dear students, parents and community members,

As you know, Governor Gretchen Whitmer has closed schools across the state until Monday, April 6 in an effort to slow the rapid spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). This situation is unprecedented and likely impacting you in ways for which you are not prepared. During this uncertain time, we want you to know the Jackson County ISD is committed to doing everything we can to ensure the health, safety and well-being of our school community.

There will be some big challenges for families over the course of this shutdown, including childcare. The Governor is leaving the decision up to local districts if they will continue to offer childcare in the centers attached to their buildings. Please check with your individual district for updated information.

Another challenge will be feeding our students, many of whom rely on schools for their breakfast and lunch. Please check with your individual district as some of them are developing plans to ensure meals are available at different locations. You can also get information about food pantries by calling 211.

In regards to learning, most schools are not providing academic/curriculum instruction during this time. Some are making online activities available to families, but online instruction for credit in K-12 schools is not available in most districts at this time. This is largely due to the fact that infrastructure is not in place to meet the needs of all learners, including access to technology and required internet connections.

We are waiting on updated guidance from the Governor’s office when it comes to what this closure means for missed instruction days, graduation requirements, state testing and more. Once we have those answers, we will share them with you.

Just like the questions you have, children likely have questions of their own. The Jackson County ISD Whole Child Team has gathered several helpful resources for families, including how to talk to children about this, how to deal with anxiety, and who to call for help. You can find a link to that newsletter, as well as other coronavirus communication and resources, on our website at www.jcisd.org.
During this school closure, we will be disinfecting and deep cleaning in all of our facilities. We will also be in constant communication with state and local health officials, as well as education officials, and update you with information as we get it. The best prevention for viruses, such as COVID-19, influenza or the common cold is to:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Replace handshakes with elbow bumps.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others when in a public setting.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others.
- If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, call your healthcare provider. If you do not have one, call the nearest hospital.

In uncertain and stressful times like these, it is important to come together and help each other as individuals, neighbors and as a community. Our top priority will always be the health, safety and well-being of our students, staff, families and school community. Let’s work together so we can get through this together.

Sincerely,

Kevin Oxley
JCISD Superintendent