



West Morris Regional High School District



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To the West Morris Regional Community:

Over the past few weeks, our educational community has been keenly tracking information related to the outbreak of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). During this time, you have received detailed guidelines from the NJ Department of Health, working in concert with the Centers for Disease Control. We have also had extensive communications with the Governor's Office, the NJ Department of Education, the Office of Emergency Management, and our local health officials in the region.

This week, as the first cases of COVID-19 are confirmed in New Jersey, I write to share with you our plans for the continued delivery of instruction in the event local health conditions and/or government mandate compel the closing of our schools.

I. What will happen immediately following a school closing?

Should the decision be made to close our school for an extended period of time, the first two days following dismissal will be non-instructional days for students. During that period, eLearning class schedules and online assignments/tutorials will be sent to all students. eLearning classes will begin on the third day following closure. Our model begins with a remote all periods meet schedule followed by a rotating schedule similar to the one students currently have. Each four-day cycle will involve one live-streamed lesson and two self-guided (teacher monitored) sessions per class.

As part of the transition process, building administration and our technology, guidance, and child study teams will be available to troubleshoot, answer questions and assist students/families.

II. How will instruction be delivered?

West Morris Regional is uniquely positioned to provide students with an authentic and engaging eLearning experience due to the extensive work we have done in this area. The district is well equipped to deliver instruction remotely as all students have been issued a Chromebook, our teachers regularly utilize PowerSchool Learning to deliver class resources/activities, and assessments and distance learning courses are already being facilitated between the two high schools with great results.

Our eLearning Plan, designed specifically for instances such as this, expands upon our existing practices to ensure continuity of instruction. Teachers and students will continue to utilize PowerSchool Learning as a platform for learning in addition to leveraging G-Suite for Education and other web-based tools designed to promote online communication and collaboration.

III. What about Special Education services?

We will make every effort to meet the requirements for teacher-student contact time for students with disabilities via distance learning. Student progress will be monitored and feedback provided online by special education teachers when

appropriate, with the opportunity to communicate directly during scheduled times. Upon returning to school, the IEP team will determine if additional services are required.

IV. Will Guidance Counselors be available?

Understanding that the closure of schools doesn't eliminate the support our students need from counselors, our guidance teams will be available (via email/Google Hangout) beginning on the second day following closure and throughout the period of remote learning.

V. What about students that qualify for free/reduced lunch?

The District is finalizing a plan with Pomptonian Food Service to provide students with lunches.

VI. Will eLearning days count towards the 180-day requirement?

Yesterday, we received guidance from the Department of Education regarding the statutory 180-day requirement. Specifically, the Department noted that "online instruction" will be permitted to count towards the 180-day requirement when: (1) it is part of a preparedness plan approved by the Executive County Superintendent; (2) it meets the home instruction requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 (6A); and (3) closure was initiated pursuant to "a written directive from either the NJDOH or health officer of the jurisdiction".

The District's eLearning Plan exceeds the requirement of 6A and is currently before the County Superintendent for approval.

VII. What will happen with athletics and extracurricular activities in the event we close schools?

Unless otherwise directed by the Department of Education/Health and the NJSIAA, all athletic events and extracurricular activities (including field trips) will be canceled.

I want to close by thanking you for your patience and understanding. The West Morris Regional community is among the strongest in the nation as a result of our commitment to advancing student growth and learning. And, while the circumstances garnering our attention and concerns are both unique and challenging, it's simply another opportunity for our students, staff, families and community to demonstrate our continued excellence and dedication to each other.

Sincerely,
Michael Ben-David J.D.
Superintendent, West Morris Regional High School District
