

Kelly M. Lyman
Superintendent

March 20, 2020

Dear Mansfield Families,

What a long week it has been since I last communicated with you! I do hope that everyone in your family is healthy and you are doing all you can to stay that way. The measures in place to keep us safe are challenging and the uncertainty is anxiety producing. Please know that everyone in the Mansfield Schools shares the same feelings and emotions you are experiencing while we do our best to adapt to this new way of working and learning.

I hope you and your children have been using the learning materials sent home and have been completing the tasks. All students were provided with enough for two weeks. It is now apparent that our shutdown will extend beyond that time frame. Currently, schools have been closed by the governor and we do not yet have direction on when they will reopen. Therefore, it is time for us to move beyond the stage of Supplemental Learning to full-fledged School at Home.

Transitioning to this type of schooling will be an adjustment for all of us but I cannot emphasize enough the importance of keeping learning alive for our children. Now more than ever families and schools must work in partnership. This includes understanding each other's needs and realities and having open and frequent communication.

In the coming days teachers will be preparing daily learning tasks and sending them to you in one week increments. The tasks are intended to continue the learning that students would be doing if in school. These tasks will take less time to complete than a full school day. Often there will be choice provided including when and how the activities are completed. We know that many of you are working from home and so juggling your own responsibilities and supporting your child may be challenging. We encourage you to talk as a family to establish routines, structures, and expectations for this new way to spend our days.

We also ask that you work with us to figure out how best to make School at Home effective for all. We expect that some learning will require a computer and internet in the home. If you do not have these things available please reach out to your school now. Other tasks will require simple materials found in the home or perhaps packets of material from us. We are working on a distribution system to get materials to you and if we reach the point where residents are asked to stay in their homes then we will adjust our tasks.

Continuing to meet the individual needs of every learner remains our goal. Students who currently receive specialized instruction, including special education, special services, English language instruction, or academic support will continue to receive some of these individualized supports. In addition, a system of personal contact from a

teacher will be incorporated into our plan. We know that maintaining these relationships is not just something our children desire but can also contribute to a sense of security and familiarity.

Please know that teachers will be working hard, and likely long hours, on these plans. We welcome you reaching out with questions but please understand that our teachers too, have other responsibilities at home and many of them are juggling the needs of family and work just as you are. We welcome your emails and ask for your understanding if you do not hear back from teachers immediately. Teachers will do their best to respond within 24 hours.

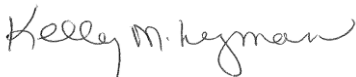
As I shared, this is an adjustment for us all and many more details will be developed and shared as we work together in the coming weeks. Many hours have been spent in preparation for this new stage of School at Home but we know it is not perfect. By starting out slow, working together, and being flexible, we will do the best we can for Mansfield's children. For now, keep using the materials sent home and expect new learning plans to be received no later than March 31.

A few other notes:

- Many internet providers are offering enhanced services with no charge and some even free internet. Please check with your local carrier.
- We know our kids love to read and we have stocked the Little Lending Libraries around town. Please access them now to get more books. Libraries can be found at each of our schools, Mansfield Supply, Thompson's Feed Store, the Martial Arts Academy at Eastbrook Mall, and at Town Hall.
- Remember that breakfast and lunch is available to all Mansfield children under 18. A detailed notice was sent with pick-up days and locations. If you need assistance with this please call my office.

The crisis continues to evolve rapidly and as it does, so too might our plans. I will continue to stay in touch.

Be well,



Kelly M. Lyman