

Brent H. Colbry
Superintendent of Schools

Jonathan D. Moody
Assistant Superintendent

David A. Leawitt
Support Services Manager

Update: MSAD 54 Distance Learning Plan
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Date: 4-10-2020

Dear MSAD 54 Parents, Guardians, Students, and Community,

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an update on our school year, share our district's plan for continued opportunities for distance learning, and to give guidance regarding "how much" schooling is appropriate for your children while learning continues at home. You will find additional details posted to our district website over the coming days and I encourage you to access these resources and call your school administrators with questions.

In light of the [Commissioner of Education and Governor's recommendation](#) for schools to move to remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, the MSAD 54 Board of Directors voted to support the implementation of our Distance Learning Plan. This plan includes the move to providing online/virtual (Level 2) learning opportunities following April vacation. In the event State and CDC guidelines change in such a way that would allow a return to school, we will adjust our plans accordingly. Although we were all hoping to return to school this spring, it remains our goal to finish the school year strong. Each school will be reaching out over the coming weeks to provide more specific details explaining what distance learning will look like at their level.

MSAD 54 [Opportunities for Distance Learning](#)

The District [Distance Learning Plan](#) was crafted with some key understandings in mind including that many of our students do not and will not have adequate access to the internet or devices, many are struggling with a variety of challenges at home, and many now have responsibilities that did not exist just a month ago. It is with these and other points in mind that our staff has developed a distance learning plan that creates opportunities for learning for our students. These opportunities began as packets that were distributed every two weeks and will grow to include ongoing and expanded Level 2 learning opportunities following April vacation. We will continue bi-weekly packet distribution for the remainder of the school year as we recognize the need to provide printed resources to families. Although we will not be grading students (complete information on grading can be found here: <https://bit.ly/54grading>), we will be providing ongoing feedback to students on their learning in ways appropriate to the type of work and their learning environment. I encourage you to review the Distance Learning Plan and reach out to your building principals with questions. The full plan can be found online at: <https://bit.ly/msad54DLP>

Community-wide Meal Distribution

In addition to the pieces mentioned above, a majority of our families have reported to us that they are benefitting from our meals program. I cannot be more proud of the effort

our staff has made to make this possible for our communities. From the routine of the bus coming, to the connection with school, and the obvious benefit the meals provide to our families, the program has been a tremendous success. It is with these points in mind that we will be running busses and delivering meals on two days over April Vacation. This approach will allow us to provide seven days of meals for our families. For more details on meal distribution visit our website at: www.msad54.org .

Expectations for Our Families

One aspect of this situation that has not been lost on us is the tremendous burden on families. We recognize that many of you are doing the very best you can with what you have, and that that may not allow for as much access to learning opportunities for your kids as you'd like. We also recognize that for many families, schoolwork and a schedule provides some much desired normalcy. Additionally, we understand that many students are ready to move forward in their learning and are craving even more work. Our plan is to meet each family where you are at. Our priority is the safety and well-being of you and your family. We give you permission to have your children do as much, or as little, as makes sense for your family. Although we believe strongly in the importance of our students continuing with learning, we absolutely recognize that families will access the learning opportunities they are able to. It is our goal to support you and your children over the remainder of the school year. I encourage you to reach out should you need anything from myself or our staff.

We recognize that nothing about this situation is ideal, and that in addition to questions about ongoing education, there remain many unanswered questions (i.e. credit, graduation, etc.). Together, over the next month, we will work to develop answers to these and other questions. I encourage you to reach out to your building administrators with your ideas and questions and we will provide more guidance in the coming weeks.

Stay Safe,



Brent Colbry
Superintendent of Schools