

School Closure and Distance Learning Preparation

Dale N. Carlson, Superintendent

Thursday, March 26, 2020

It has been more than a week since public schools across Minnesota closed for students beginning Wednesday, March 18, through Friday, March 27. In addition to the state-wide closure, NRHEG Public Schools took unprecedented action to cancel student instruction on Monday, March 16, and Tuesday, March 17, to allow time for our staff to organize and put in place plans to provide the state-mandated child care services for children of qualifying parents and also to provide breakfast and lunch meals for our students. Thanks to many staff members, our child care and meal distribution services were up and running by Wednesday, March 18. I am happy to share that effective Monday, March 23, we were able to expand our meal distribution sites to all four of our communities.

The Governor closed schools through March 27 to give school districts time to develop distance-learning plans and have them ready to implement by Monday, March 30, should it be decided that our way of educating students for a period of time will be through our distance-learning delivery model. (At the time this article was submitted to the Star Eagle, the Governor had not announced if students would be returning to their school March 30 or if school districts would be implementing distance-learning instruction). Thank you for your understanding as we have had to limit students, parents, and visitors from coming into the school buildings since the closure started in order to maintain a healthy and safe work environment for staff. Both school buildings have put in place workplace guidelines and protocol as recommended by the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*.

I could not be more proud of how staff members have come together to do whatever is necessary to serve the families of our communities. Providing child care services to children of qualifying families, providing meals to students, and ensuring that we will have a distance-learning model for all students ready by March 30, are only possible due to the commitment of staff members who care deeply for our students and families.

This is an extraordinary and unsettling time for all of us as we are moving through uncharted waters. Like you, staff members are having to navigate through the incredible challenges of balancing work with their personal life beginning with their families and making sure they take care of their own health.

NRHEG Public Schools is in the business of educating children and we will be there for our students, families and communities as we move forward in an ever changing learning environment. Thank you for your continued support of kids and of the NRHEG Public Schools.