



District Administration Office

1877 W. Downer Place
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www.sd129.org

West Aurora Community,

COVID-19 has affected people all over the world. For some, it has meant mild to severe illness. For most, its effects have ranged from a disruption of routine to the sacrifice of experiences or the loss of wages. It seems as though there is no shortage of bad news. However, times of crisis can also bring out the best in people. Over the course of the past few days, I have had the opportunity to engage with West Aurora families, staff members as well as the greater community.

While checking in on our district's many food distribution centers, I have seen smiling staff members going "above-and-beyond" to do whatever it takes to help our students and their families. I have spoken with parents who have expressed their heartfelt gratefulness for feeding their children. I have seen teachers engage their students remotely in new and creative ways. I have received countless emails and text messages from our community partners as well as from local and state lawmakers asking what they can do to help. All of this makes me so very thankful to not only lead School District 129 but also to live in and be part of the Aurora community.

As you may have heard during Governor Pritzker's press conference earlier this afternoon, he has enacted a 'stay at home' order. This order means the closing of the West Aurora Schools has been extended by an additional 2 days. Tentatively, students will return to their home buildings on Wednesday, April 8th. There will be more thoughts and questions as to how we will continue to move forward and provide the best opportunities for our students. I firmly believe we are absolutely providing those best opportunities right now. There is great balance between physical activity, academic enrichment and various other creative digital opportunities for our students. I am extremely proud of what our staff is providing and tremendously encouraged by the response from our parents. Here is what we know and how we will respond to this latest status:

- We will remain closed through April 7th, pending further notice, with students returning to their home buildings on April 8th.
- Our outstanding teaching staff will continue to provide opportunities to engage students to the very best of their abilities, through distance learning. Don't forget that



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we have a technology helpline available to all staff and students. That number is (630) 301-5038.

- We will continue to serve meals to our community and we will share these details through our newsletter, website and social media.
- Even though we will continue to provide meals over Spring Break week, we will not have the expectation to provide distance learning activities during that time which is March 30th through April 3rd.
- As a reminder, we will be consolidating to 7 food distribution locations next week, beginning Monday, March 23. Those open locations are Greenman Elementary School, Hill Elementary School, McCleery Elementary School, Nicholson Elementary School, Jewel Middle School, Washington Middle School, and West Aurora High School.
- The hours of operation beginning Monday, March 23rd, will now be 10 am - 1 pm, Monday - Friday.
- We will also be extending our foodservice throughout our Spring Break week and through April 7th.
- We are being tasked with the order to “Stay at Home,” beginning Saturday, March 21st at 5 pm.

In closing, I will remind you that the top priority of our schools is the safety and health of our students, staff, and the greater community. We have seen challenges in the past and through collaboration with one another, we have overcome those obstacles. Our intent is to continue to keep you informed and engaged. I know that we can get a little isolated in our current status. So let's stay connected, talk to each other, email or text each other. The human connection is most valuable. Smile. Keep the faith. Keep doing your best for our students. We will talk to you soon and thank you for all that you do. It is so greatly appreciated by all.