



Mountainside Board Of Education

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Mrs. Janet Walling – Superintendent of Schools

March 12, 2020

Dear Mountainside Families:

I am writing to notify you that due to concerns over the recent increase in cases of the Novel Coronavirus throughout the state, and after consultation with the Board of Education, other superintendents, and the Westfield Regional Health Department, the Mountainside School District will be closing in order to take what we feel is the most responsible course of action for our students, staff, and families. I would like to assure everyone that there are no known cases of COVID-19 in our schools and this is being taken as a proactive measure for everyone's health and well-being. Effective Monday, March 16th, all schools in the Mountainside Public Schools will be closed for a period of at least two weeks. All extracurricular and school-related activities and events are suspended during this time. At the end of the two-week period--by Friday, March 27th - a decision will be made regarding either the continued closure of school or the resumption of school and after-school activities. We will also continue to monitor all events associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and consider additional alterations to the school calendar if necessary.

This is not a decision that was made lightly by any means and we understand the impact that this will have on all of our families. Please be aware that the entire staff has been working diligently to prepare for this potential situation. As a result, we will implement the following schedule:

Date	Students
Friday, March 13th	Full Day of School
Monday, March 16th	Unused Snow Day for students (Teachers will be in school finalizing learning plans)
Tuesday, March 17th	Distance Learning School Begins

Our "Distance Learning School" will involve daily contact with teachers where they will share home-based lessons and activities for students to work on. The structure of these lessons and the communication method may differ based upon your child's grade and familiarity with technology.

Examples of how lessons may be shared will include Google Classroom, emails, and/or teacher webpages. If your child's grade is going to use a printed packet to enhance other learning opportunities, you will receive these materials from your child's teacher on Friday. In addition to the lessons being shared with you, our staff will remain available to communicate with you on a daily basis to answer questions and provide feedback to student work. Specific details regarding communication and supports that we can provide, both educational and otherwise, will be shared with you in the next day or so.

Due to the online needs for distance learning, please complete the technology survey sent out previously if you require a Chromebook for your student to work from home. The link can be found here: <https://forms.gle/r9PYJVR8Fv25Phra9>

We fully understand that this is a very new approach for everyone, and MANY questions will arise in the coming days. We are completely aware of the stress and anxiety that this change may cause but please rest assured that we are here to support you and your children along the way. Your child's teachers, principals, and I will maintain regular communication with you and strive to make these learning opportunities personal and meaningful.

Our goal is to re-open school as soon as possible. Until that time, please know that everyone in the Mountainside community is in my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Janet Walling

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