

March 31, 2020

Dear District Administrator,

As we enter the third week of school closures, I want to express my deep appreciation for all you are doing for your students, families, and staff during this unprecedented health emergency. Schools are the cornerstone of the community, and your efforts to provide continuity of learning, food for students, and care of your staff and community have been nothing short of amazing.

I know there is no way you can replicate the rich learning experiences and personal connection provided in the school building. I applaud you for doing the best you can under these difficult conditions. Everything you are doing matters regardless of whether you are sending home packets or providing resources through an internet format. I know you are doing the best for students in your schools. No one had time to effectively plan for this emergency. We will learn from this experience and from each other moving forward.

I wish I could assure you of a certain date schools will reopen, but the situation continues to evolve. In the absence of certainty around school reopening, I encourage you to do long-range planning as if students will not be back in school for the rest of this school year. As you move ahead over the next several weeks, I encourage you to consider the following:

- **Graduation policies**
Engage with other districts and share strategies on how to ensure students who were on track for graduation prior to school closure can graduate. You will find information on the state high school graduation requirements and school board authority at https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sstp/graduation_requirements_idea_memo.pdf
- **Continuity of learning**
Consider how you continue to provide learning opportunities during the duration of the closure. Linked to this letter is a resource titled [Considerations for Teaching and Learning during COVID-19](#).
- **Social and emotional well-being**
Continuity of learning should also include paying attention to the social and emotional needs of students during these difficult times. We are currently working on resources for parents and school staff to address these issues and hope to have those to you by next week.
- **Communication with students**
Some of the most important work you will do over the next few weeks will involve connecting with your students. Make sure you know how they are doing. Students hear the news and see the changes in their lives, and your contact will make a difference.

The DPI will also continue to keep you updated as changes occur and work to minimize challenges that get in your way. The department will use the emails from Deputy State Superintendent Mike Thompson to update you. Those emails can all be found on the DPI's COVID-19 web page (<https://dpi.wi.gov/sstp/2019-novel-coronavirus>). This page will continue to be the place where

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you can access all COVID-19 related information.

Thank you for your leadership in this time of great need, your tireless and quick action, and your focus to ensure every student is cared for during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn S. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'C'.

Carolyn Stanford Taylor
State Superintendent

CST:jk