

Please note this message has been edited to clarify Monday's pick-up times are 3 - 7 p.m.

The email below contains many (but not all) details on what to expect in the coming weeks amid the school closure ordered by Governor Evers. We are including this list of a few things you need to know, but please take the time to read the entire message.

- MGSD Schools are closed effective immediately.
- The closure will continue through Sunday, April 5 (this date is subject to change).
- Free grab-and-go breakfast and lunch will be provided to every student who wants and/or needs it beginning Monday, March 16.
- Medications you anticipate needing must be picked up by 4:00 pm on Wednesday, March 18.
- Technology (iPads and Chromebooks for all **K-12** students) and personal items can be picked up from your child's school
 - Monday, March 16 from 3 - 7 pm
 - Tuesday, March 17 from 7:30 am - 4 pm
 - Wednesday, March 18 from 7:30 am - 4 pm
 - If these times don't work for you please contact your student's principal.

Dear Monona Grove Families,

As you know, Governor Evers has ordered schools to close no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18. In the interest of the health and safety of our students, families, staff, volunteers, and our entire community, Monona Grove schools are closed effective immediately.

We anticipate the next few weeks to follow the schedule below, though given the rapidly changing events, these dates are all subject to change:

March 16 - 18: Medications, devices, and personal items can be picked up during specific times (see more below)

March 23 - 27: Virtual learning opportunities may be offered (see more below)

March 30 - April 3: Spring Break

April 6: Tentative re-opening (subject to change)

If the April 6 date gets extended for any reason, expect ongoing communication the virtual learning opportunities to continue.

We do not take the decision to close effective immediately lightly. However, the health and safety of our students and staff is paramount. We acknowledge that this decision may cause significant difficulties for some of our families. We are working as hard as we can to mitigate those issues as best we can.

- We are working to finalize our remote food service during the closure (see below) as soon as possible.
 - Both Monona and Cottage Grove staff and volunteers have organized food drives and donations.
 - Monona families: If you need food, toiletries, baby supplies (formula, diapers, wipes, etc.) please send an email, send a text message or call Ms. Kutschke (our school social worker) and know that your request will be kept confidential. Leah Kutschke: leah.kutschke@mgschools.net 608-616-9804
 - To donate to this drive, please drop off items Monday or Tuesday from 7:30 am to 3 pm
 - Other donations can be made to the River Food Pantry. Please call first: (608) 442-8815
 - Cottage Grove families: If you need food, toiletries, baby supplies (formula, diapers, wipes, etc.) please send an email to Ms. Dieckhoff, Ms. Thorson or Ms. Atkinson and know that your request will be kept confidential. Kelsy Dieckhoff: kelsy.dieckhoff@mgschools.net; Missy Thorson: : melissa.thorson@mgschools.net; Kendra Atkinson: kendra.atkinson@mgschools.net.
 - Donations can be made to the Cottage Grove Food Pantry. Please call first: (608) 839-4288.

- If you need any assistance during this closure, please reach out to your student's principal. They will direct your request to the person best suited to help you.
 - Cottage Grove School: Reed Foster, reed.foster@mgschools.net, 608-839-8983
 - Glacial Drumlin: Kris Langer, kristen.langer@mgschools.net, 608-839-8408
 - MGHS: Paul Brost, paul.brost@mgschools.net, 608-316-1369
 - MG21 Middle Campus: Jon Rouse, jonathan.rouse@mgschools.net, 608-316-1398
 - MG21 Upper Campus: Melissa Hahn, melissa.hahn@mgschools.net, 608-316-1370
 - Taylor Prairie: Emily Foster, emily.foster@mgschools.net, 608-839-2157
 - Winnequah: Angie Fassl, angie.fassl@mgschools.net, 608-316-1964

These are unprecedented events, and we are managing as best we can to serve our students, families, and staff. We understand, appreciate and respect that families are making many of

these same decisions about their own lives; as parents ourselves and as your friends and neighbors, we are deeply aware of the effects of our decisions. We acknowledge that these decisions have very real consequences for you and may limit the options available to you. There are no perfect options in this situation, and we are both profoundly grateful for the support and patience so many of you have already shared with us and genuinely concerned about the predicaments many of our families will face as a result of this decision.

Virtual Learning Opportunities and Devices

These circumstances are disorienting and difficult times for many of us, but schools have the opportunity to have a grounding effect for our students and families. In order to provide some basic sense of normalcy, we plan to offer virtual learning opportunities. These are gradual, voluntary resources and materials to our families. More information will be sent from your child's teacher. Special education teachers will communicate with parents regarding any accommodations and supports needed to access these learning opportunities. In general, IEP meetings and evaluations will continue remotely following typical timelines. 504 plan accommodations will continue as appropriate based on a virtual learning format.

All students in MGSD have a district-assigned device. K-2 students have iPads, students in grades 3-12 have Chromebooks. These devices and chargers will be available for families to pick up on the following dates and times:

- Monday, March 16 from 3 - 7 pm
- Tuesday, March 17 and Wednesday, March 18 from 7:30 am - 4 pm

These devices connect to the internet via wi-fi. As a reminder, please fill out [this survey](#) so that we may assist you in securing access to the internet if you do not have internet at home. Local media is [reporting](#) Charter Spectrum is offering free internet and installation to families.

Please note, we are working on turning off attendance and assignment notifications in Infinite Campus during the closure.

Our plan for virtual learning is to ease into it; we know it won't be perfect and it won't replace face-to-face instruction. Our goal is to provide ongoing learning opportunities for our students. You'll hear more about this in the coming days and weeks. As with everything else, we will continually monitor and reassess as the situation evolves.

Food Service

Free grab-and-go breakfast and lunch will be provided to every student beginning Monday, March 16. This service is available for any family who needs or wants it during the school closure through our school nutrition program. We are finalizing the process and community sites now and will send you more information as soon as possible. We're grateful to our school nutrition staff and our transportation partner Nelson's Bus Service for making this essential service more accessible to families.

Please note: we are working on turning off food service balance notifications in Infinite Campus.

Event cancellations

Effective immediately and until further notice, we are canceling or postponing all events and activities. Some of these activities include:

- Weekend use or rental of facilities by outside groups. This includes after-school enrichment classes provided to students.
- Community use of the MGHS Pool.
- All field trips
- Assemblies
- All athletic and co-curricular activities
- Daytime special events, whether in our schools or elsewhere, such as math meets and parent classes

Precautions and Cleaning

Our building maintenance and custodial staff have already taken precautions to keep our schools clean and disinfected. We will continue this process during the closure and with guidance from state and local health authorities.

Communication with schools

Given the uncertainties, it is possible that we will have limited staff in our buildings on some or all days. By Monday, March 23, we will have a system in place so that you are able to reliably communicate with school and district staff during this time. In the meantime, please watch your email and our COVID-19 [webpage](#) for updates.

Resources

Consider talking with your student(s) about these developments as a family. Some suggestions include:

- Stick to the facts. It can be scary to hear about a disease outbreak, but learning the facts can help ease your mind.
- Remind your family that when we are prepared for difficult situations, we make informed decisions and have more control.
- It's important that we avoid assumptions or stereotypes about who you think may be sick. Viruses cannot target people from specific populations, ethnicities, or racial backgrounds. A person's race does not make them more or less likely to be sick or to get sick.

Additional resources for talking with your family:

- [Brainpop video](#) aimed at kids that explains coronavirus
- [Webcomic and 3-minute audio story](#) aimed at kids on coronavirus
- [How to Talk to Your Kids](#) about coronavirus (PBS/Daniel Tiger - for young children)

- Article and podcast on "[What to Say to Kids When the News is Scary](#)"
- "[Talking to Teens and Tweens About Coronavirus](#)"
- The National Association of School Psychologists have an entire page of resources on this topic [here](#).

Thank you, again, for your support as we navigate the unknowns. We understand the uncertainty people are feeling but we are confident that we will come out of this crisis stronger. Among our teachers and staff, we often use the phrase "Team MG." We're all Team MG now. I know we'll come out of this a stronger and more connected community.

In appreciation,

Dan Olson
Superintendent