

March 20, 2020

Dear BASD Families:

In the past week, we have had to reinvent how we deliver education to your children. You've had to reinvent what home life and work looks like as well. We've all experienced disappointment as plans got canceled. But, we've also all experienced the resilience from people in our community choosing to stay positive and be helpful. Here are the most recent updates:

VIRTUAL LEARNING

First, THANK YOU to our students and families for their positive attitude and flexibility. As educational professionals, we've learned a lot this week. One lesson is how, in our enthusiasm to teach, we may have overwhelmed families. We're working with staff to ensure that schoolwork is proportionate to age level, current personal circumstances, and sustainable for the duration of the closure. We want students to focus on what is essential, not just stay busy. Again, here is the recommendation we've given to teachers based on the expectations from the Department of Public Instruction.

Grade Level	Recommended Hours
Grades 6-12	3 hours (25 minutes / class)
Grades 3-5	2 hours
Grade 2 and younger	1 hour

Families can supplement what teachers assign with reading, writing, math, projects, life-skill learning, exercise, etc. with additional learning that is customized for your unique circumstances. And don't forget - have some fun along the way!

MEAL ASSISTANCE

This week, BASD distributed approximately 125 meals per day. The program WILL continue during spring break at the four locations. Children no longer need to be present. The meal includes milk, fruit, vegetable, sandwich, and snack.

TECH HELP

For Chromebook issues, please contact BASD's IT Department (basdtech@basd.k12.wi.us or 262-342-6883). The IT Department has office hours (by appointment only).

- Tuesday 1 pm – 4 pm
- Thursday 7 am – 10 am

Please contact your cell phone or Internet provider to see how they can help you connect to the Internet. Call the IT Department if you need further support.

VIDEO CHATTING

Zoom and Google Hangouts will be activated on Chromebooks starting Monday, March 30. We ask that families take time to read the Department of Public Instruction's guidance on Internet Safety (<https://dpi.wi.gov/internet-safety>). We recommend establishing some limits (for example, set school hours when video conferencing is allowed).

GRADING

We're currently working through what grading looks like going forward. We're looking to the Department of Public Instruction for guidance. Pending Board approval, we will be ending the third quarter on March 13 (our last day of face-to-face instruction). We're also considering a pass-fall grading model for the 4th quarter. These are decisions we will communicate after spring break.

SPRING BREAK

We hope that families will take some time to take a break. Some students may decide to continue to work on schoolwork. Please know that teachers may not be available from March 21 – March 29.

AFTER SPRING BREAK AND BEYOND

We sent students home with the work for a short-term closure. We're now considering the best way, and healthiest way, to distribute additional school work packets.

The Governor has said that schools are closed indefinitely. Therefore, we can't specify a day we will reopen. We have a solid short-term plan to get us through April 5. Now we are working on a plan if the closure extends through the end of the year, or beyond. Please look for more communication on this after spring break.

IN CLOSING

The Burlington Area School District feels it has been well positioned to adapt to what has become our new normal. We had Chromebooks ready to go home and we have staff willing and able to adjust to virtual learning. We are working to keep expectations reasonable because we understand families are experiencing their own hardships.

We can't thank you enough for walking alongside us as we figure this out together. Continue to take care of yourselves and your loved ones. And, please take time to enjoy spring break.

Yours in education,

Dr. Stephen Plank
Superintendent