March 27, 2020

Hello Students and Parents,

I am writing to update you on progress we are making in your schools and to try to answer some questions I suspect many of you are having.

**Food Deliveries:** As of today we will have delivered over 5,000 meals to students. Our daily numbers appear to be increasing slightly each day (approximately 400 students getting 2 meals per day). Our staff are highly motivated and many have commented on the joy of seeing their students.

**Childcare Coordination:** We continue to receive a few requests for help in finding childcare for families with first responders and/or health care providers. In each case we have been able to assist the family in finding a community based solution (either a local provider, a volunteer, etc.). If you need assistance with finding childcare please call us 509.687.3140 or email Addie Grageda at agrageda@manson.org

**Teaching and Learning:** The guidance from the state continues to change with more recent guidance for schools across the state to begin doing something if they hadn’t yet. Fortunately, here in Manson we are making great strides in meeting the needs of students. We are now starting to shift from a “give learning opportunities” program to a “provide instruction” type of program. This is challenging in many ways but I have been impressed with the strategies and creativity our staff is showing as they change from our traditional “students in a classroom” system. Some steps we are taking:

- Using technology with older students – younger students when appropriate
  - MS and HS teachers are using videos/Youtube, video conferencing tools like Zoom or Skype, texting systems like Remind, and student email systems
- The elementary school is using a pick up/drop off system for academic materials
  - Materials (academic packets, books, math games) available in the elem gym foyer
  - Teachers will contact you to let you know if your student has materials available
  - The elementary gym foyer is open weekdays from 7:30am – 8:00pm
- Calling families and students, reviewing learning progress, checking social-emotional health
- Many online services have been made free for students during this pandemic. One great resource your students can access is free audible books from Amazon.
- Go to [https://stories.audible.com/start-listen](https://stories.audible.com/start-listen)

**Questions and Answers**

*When will students return to school?*

The official date is still set for Monday April 27. We are hearing discussion the Governor’s closure orders could be extended but nothing official has been shared with us. We will share any news with you.

*If students don’t return to school this year, how will that work?*

We are making contingency plans for this possibility. We are starting to receive more guidance from the State and are discussing how we would meet this challenged if we were shut down for the remainder of the school year. Topics of discussion: attendance, student accountability, grading, high school credits, college credits, graduation and many others.
My student is saying they don’t have any schoolwork?

- Contact your student’s teacher or principal by email if you have questions. For example Jose Smith would be jsmith@manson.org or by calling and leaving a message for a teacher to call you at 509.687.3140.
- In some cases, students are choosing not to complete school work. Parents please reinforce we are “doing school” and you expect your student to “do” their work.

What is Manson School District doing to help students who don’t have internet access?

- We have purchased “hot spots” and are awaiting their delivery. Expected arrival April 15th. Students who do not have internet access would be assigned a device temporarily.
- If your student does not have internet access or a computer, please communicate with their teacher and accommodations will be made so they can continue to learn.
  - All high school students have a computer they have taken home.

My student usually receives additional help (extra math/reading support, individual education plans, English language support). How are teachers helping them with these new learning circumstances?

- Manson Intervention and Special Education Staff have been in collaboration with teachers to assist them in providing school work at their students’ levels. These staff are available to teachers and families for further assistance. Learning packets and/or online learning programs have been sent home.
  - Please contact Sandra Clausen sclaussen@manson.org Elementary Special Education Coordinator or Joey Johanson jjohanson@manson.org Secondary Special Education Coordinator.
  - For Elementary English language support contact Katie Sperling ksperling@manson.org or for MS/HS support Jorge Lopez jlopez@manson.org.

High School Questions

- Will high school students be able to earn credits towards graduation? Yes
- Will students taking college courses still earn college credits? Yes
- Will seniors be able to earn a diploma and graduate from high school?
  - The state is creating options for local school districts
- Will Manson High School conduct a graduation ceremony? Yes
  - If allowed by law, we will hold our normal graduation ceremony. If we are following social distancing, we would try to postpone a ceremony until a ceremony could be held.

We know there are many more questions, please let us know your questions and in future communication we’ll try to answer as many as we can.

Remember to get outside, breath that fresh air and exercise responsibly. Until next time...

Stay home, stay healthy,

Matt Charlton, Superintendent
Manson School District