

School Closure Update

April 8, 2020

Good evening, I hope this communication finds you and your family safe and healthy. I reach out tonight with a few updates.

YMCA BeforeCare & AfterCare

I have received a few inquiries from district families asking about the YMCA Before & Aftercare programs and the issue of refunds. Our business administrator and I reached out to the YMCA and are awaiting their response as to if and when they will be providing refunds to those families who have paid for what they were to believe was a full year of service. The programs are YMCA sponsored and not Board of Education programs and therefore we are at the will of the entity and await their response. Once received, I will pass along their update.

Catch Up Days

As referenced in the prior communication, we will institute "Catch Up Days" upon return from spring break so as to allow for students and staff to catch up on outstanding items as we navigate through distance learning. The first of these dates is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21st. We will back from break and go for six consecutive distance learning days and will then have the catch up day on the 7th day which is the 21st. Teachers will provide "Do Now" activities to begin the day and to note attendance and then the students will be allowed to catch up on what they need to for the day as opposed to following the prescribed schedule of classes.

Field Trips

Obviously a big part of the school experience in the spring includes field trips, both day trips and overnight trips. The two major overnight trips are Fairview Lake in Grade 6 and Washington DC in grade 8. I have been consistently communicating with teachers and advisors regarding these events and we continue to look at the feasibility of having these trips in the environment that we are in. We will update families on any decisions as soon as they are available.

Parades

I love this job and sometimes in this job I have to be the “bad guy.” Here is one time that I will be the bad guy and disappoint a few people. However, I rather disappoint some and be safe otherwise. Although I have not been asked about this yet, I wanted to get out ahead of it and hence this memo.

The well-meaning phenomenon of "Teacher Parades" has taken place in various communities around the country. We have seen and heard about them as they are convoys of teachers driving through their school communities to say hello, honk and spread cheer with their students. Our teachers undoubtedly would love to do this as would I, as we sincerely miss the kids and have cabin fever just like everyone else. Although incredibly nice and well intentioned, the District feels that it creates unnecessary gatherings of people, runs the risk of distracting vital law enforcement and public safety resources, which at present time are obviously stressed, and sets a poor example for social and physical distancing. Simply put, it flies in the face of every local, county, state and national directive from government, medical and law enforcement guidance. It is simply not safe. We hope the youtube video of what some may call dancing delighted the kids and the scavenger hunts, trivia and daily virtual interaction helps. The parade would add to the levity but it is simply not safe and therefore Maywood will not be taking part in such an activity.

We absolutely respect the decisions of other districts in the county and beyond but we feel that our collective efforts in Maywood thus far in the face of this pandemic has been well coordinated and well intentioned, and we feel this decision follows suit.

Be safe and healthy.