



April 1, 2020

Raymond J. Kinder  
Superintendent

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Tamaqua Area SD Families:

I apologize for the length of this message. I just want to be as thorough as possible.

I sincerely hope that you are all healthy and safe during this unfortunate closure. We all believe in the benefits and significance of a child's education. It is why we do what we do for a living. While it still has its importance, nothing is more important than the health and well-being of our students and families.

Normally at this time of the year we are gearing up for many of the memorable moments of the school year. Olympic Days, awards ceremonies, class trips and field days are typical spring events that at this time are compromised. I find it difficult to even imagine what our Class of 2020 is experiencing with proms and graduation on the horizon. Please know that we are thinking of you and making the best decisions we can, based on the circumstances that we are dealing with each day.

A few items that have evolved since the last update:

1. Closure- Governor Wolf has extended the school closure indefinitely. At a minimum the closure will be in effect until April 30, 2020.
2. Meals- On Monday our Nutrition Group friends served over 2000 meals to students in the community. They are showing up each day to provide for our families. Now or when you return, please reach out to these individuals to thank them for stepping up to support us.
3. Communication- Teachers and administrators have been reaching out to you to determine your ability to participate in our evolving online educational program. If you are not already working with teachers and reviewing previously learned material, I ask that you reach out to your building principal to get connected. We want to hear from you.
4. Extracurricular Activities- This is still very much uncertain. One thought is to continue to take things slowly and provide hope to students that they may still occur. Another view is to cancel everything now, so as to not encourage false hope. At this point, I do not want to cancel any of the memorable activities for students unless it is an absolute certainty. With that in mind, we are working to find ways to provide what we can, as best we can.

5. Educational Program- Beginning on March 30<sup>th</sup>, we have started more formalized review activities with our students. Within the next week or so, we will begin instruction of new material. Again, if you have not started working with teachers, please reach out to them as soon as possible. Let us know how we can help you get connected. We are working with families now. Our goal is to work with you to give you the best foundation we can for future learning.

6. Providing & Distributing Devices- As mentioned, we are working to get you connected. If you have working devices at home that meet your needs, we appreciate you using those devices for your education. If you do not, please call 570-668-2570, ext 1050 to leave a message regarding your needs. Getting connected and on board as soon as you can will make things easier for you and our staff.

7. Parental Involvement- I want to thank all of the parents, guardians and family members who have embraced our efforts to provide education to our students. The cooperation between home and school is inspiring. I ask for your continued support with the following:

- Try as best you can to communicate daily with your child to ensure they are working to complete assignments.
- Start a regular educational routine with your child, so they give the work they are doing the proper attention.
- Depending on age and ability we ask that you work with your child and the teacher to ensure your child's participation.
- Check on your child's state of mind during this closure. All children react differently. We can't see all of the issues they are facing. If you need help, please let us know.
- Use direct communication with your teacher and/or principal if you have questions or concerns. We can't help you if you don't tell us what is wrong.
- Depending on age and ability some students will have higher rates of work and may be somewhat more intense. Work with teachers if you are having difficulties.
- Please be understanding of the circumstances. We are attempting to create an entirely new educational system in two-weeks. That would be a tall task if we had six months. We will make mistakes. I have asked our staff to work with you and be understanding. I ask the same of you. Students will meet expectations when they know parents and teachers are on the same page. Reach out with concerns so we can help. We stand a much better chance of making this experience meaningful if we work together.

It is my sincere hope that, while this closure has been challenging to say the least, we are all learning and growing. Not only growing with knowledge, but with supporting each other and adapting to the unknown. I hope to keep you updated as things move forward. As always, please let us know how we can help. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



Raymond J. Kinder  
Superintendent, TASD