

## **Dear BASD Families and Community-**

We want to start by saying how much we appreciate the outpouring of support from the families in our community as we navigate through this unprecedented worldwide health issue surrounding the coronavirus. We have had many offers to help, as well as many people reaching out to voice their concerns. Your insight and understanding has been wonderful during a period of time where what we know along with the directives we receive changes rapidly. We continue to strive to communicate new information as quickly as we can as we receive it.

## **School Closure**

**At 2:59 today** Governor Wolf issued an announcement that all schools in Pennsylvania will be closed for 10 business days beginning Monday, March 16. His administration will be working with us as we all continue to monitor the Covid-19 within the commonwealth, and at the end of the 10 days the State will reevaluate and decide whether continued closure is needed. Although no school will be penalized if it fails to meet the 180 day or school hour requirements, we are not yet sure what this means or how it will be addressed. Again, as we learn more, we will share our next steps with you.

**In the interim it is important to continue:**

## **Healthy Habits**

We continue to promote healthy habits to include regular hand washing for all students and staff. Handwashing should happen many times daily and before and after touching surfaces that are frequently touched by others. The CDC recommends avoiding unnecessary travel especially into known areas where the virus exists. Individuals who are sick should stay home and remain home until they are symptom-free. If you have symptoms (fever of over 100, difficulty breathing, etc.), please call your health care provider for guidance.

## **Cleaning Protocols**

Our custodial staff is cleaning and disinfecting high touch areas in all classrooms, including desktops and doorknobs.

## **Travel Protocols**

We have also taken steps to reduce the chance of acquiring and transmitting the virus by canceling travel to all conferences and workshops for our staff until further notice. We will review each field trip on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, we encourage that families with known travel plans into areas with identified cases upon their return from such trips, self-quarantine for 14 days and follow the CDC guidelines for self-monitoring.

## **Contingency Planning**

We are planning on how to best educate our students if schools need to be closed for an extended period. We understand not every family has access to reliable broadband internet services and some students require additional services. We are looking for ways to meet learning needs should our closure be extended. We are also looking to PDE for additional guidance.

## **Virus Information**

The populations who are at the greatest risk of this virus are the elderly and those in poor health, especially those in poor respiratory health. According to the PA DoH the COVID-19 virus is more serious than the annual flu but less serious than the Spanish Flu of 1918. We will be educating our students on what they can do to protect loved ones at home who are either elderly or suffer from any level of immunodeficiency. We also encourage you to visit the PA DoH and CDC websites for guidance on all matters.

## **Facilities Use Protocols**

As all schools in Pennsylvania are closed, so too are practices and athletic events suspended. Again, once we move past this critical period in time we will look to see if there is anything that can be rescheduled.

**After the Governors closure is lifted should we again need to temporarily close schools we will look to the following:**

- we are unable to safely operate our programming due to staffing limitations
- we have a confirmed person with COVID-19 within the building
- we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 that has direct contact with individuals who are within our buildings
- we are advised or ordered to do so by a State or Federal Agency with said authority

Any of these decisions will be based upon known facts in consultation with our local health officials. Parent should prepare in advance for continued unanticipated childcare responsibilities.

We are aware of the seriousness of this matter and continue to seek and distribute new information in a timely manner. I thank you for your continued patience and support as we educate your children, while also ensuring they have a safe environment in which to do so – today, as well as into the future.

Regards,

Michelle Saylor, Superintendent