



312 W. Maple Avenue
Byron, MI 48418
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Byron Area Schools

March 23, 2020

Dear Families:

I continue to send positive thoughts to each one of you and your families during this very difficult time!

At 11:00 a.m. today, Governor Whitmer made another announcement, followed by Executive Order #21 “Stay Home. Stay Safe” stating the following: *“To suppress the spread of COVID-19, to prevent the state’s health care system from being overwhelmed, to allow time for the production of critical test kits, ventilators, and personal protective equipment, and to avoid needless deaths, it is reasonable and necessary to direct residents to remain at home or in their place of residence to the maximum extent feasible”.*

In addition, listed below are a few other communications we have received:

- The Surgeon General released a statement today that we are probably beginning the worst week of the virus because people are not taking it seriously.
- The CEO of Memorial Healthcare, Brian Long stated *“...given the nature of this emergency, it is critical that we all do our part in helping minimize any unnecessary stress we place on our community safety net of healthcare services...”*.
- Jeff Deason, Shiawassee Chamber of Commerce CEO, encourages all of us to follow this order stating, *“...there is much debate, but I firmly believe that the sooner we stop, shelter, and flatten the curve as science tells us, the sooner that we all will be able to rebuild our businesses, and the sooner we will be able to get back to work. We should heed the recommendations of our local 100+ year old healthcare organization. We are in a war. They are the front line of our region and they have reached out for our assistance. With the exponential growth of COVID-19 infection, time is of the essence. Let us be a team right now.”*

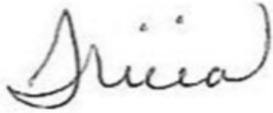
So, we are asking you to please take this seriously and do all that you can to protect yourself, your loved ones, and those with whom you may come into contact.

We continue to encourage you to visit our district Facebook page (ByronAreaSchools) as well as our Student Council Instagram (byronstuco) for our supplemental learning activities, especially our reading of books.

Lastly, you will find the information and process for Shiawassee County Child Care for essential workers.

Overall, please work with your children to read and utilize IXL and Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org)!

Thanks,



Listed below is a summary of the important messages we have received during the past few days:

March 23rd Governor Whitmer Executive Order

School Districts will continue to be closed through April 13, 2020.

March 23rd State Committee

A newly formed committee has been tasked to collect information on what distance learning would look like if it was rolled out across the State during this closure.

March 20th United States Department of Education

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced that students impacted by school closures due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can bypass standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. Upon a proper request, the Department will grant a waiver to any state that is unable to assess its students due to the ongoing national emergency, providing relief from federally mandated testing requirements for this school year. Michigan submitted this request last Tuesday.

Therefore, Michigan students will not participate in the M-STEP and other state-mandated assessments, including the SAT. However, there is discussion about Districts serving as a testing site for the June SAT administration date.

March 20th Michigan Department of Education

Existing state law and ensuring equitable education access for all students prompted the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to notify local school districts last Friday that distance learning strategies in individual schools and districts will not be counted as official student instructional time during the COVID-19 school closure.

“State law limits us in this situation – not for an individual child in an individual cyber school or an individual virtual course offering, but for children across the state, many of whom have no computers at home, no connectivity, and no adults to monitor their learning and/or technology,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice.

Please keep in mind, equitable access issues exist across our state – north to south and east to west. These access issues include the lack of internet connectivity for some families and schools, and the lack of resources, including devices for some students and staff. Additionally,

there are access issues for students with different types of learning needs. These access issues create inequitable educational opportunities for children across our state.

March 20th College Board

The College Board announced last Friday that for the 2019-20 exam administration only, students can take a 45-minute AP exam at home rather than testing in person. Details are still in development and educator-led development committees are currently selecting the exam questions that will be administered. What we do know is that the exam will only include topics and skills most AP teachers have taught in class by early March. The announcement says that colleges support this solution and are committed to ensuring that AP students receive the credit they have worked this year to earn. Students will be able to take these streamlines exams on any device they have access to – computer, table, or smartphone.



**THANK YOU TO THE
ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE IN
SHIAWASSEE COUNTY!**

IF YOU ARE PART OF THE ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE
AND ARE IN NEED OF CHILDCARE SERVICES DURING
THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL THE GREAT
START SHIAWASSEE INTAKE HUB AT:

989-725-2581
OR
1-866-725-7792