



WEST PERRY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2606 Shermans Valley Road

Elliottsburg, PA 17024

Mr. David M. Zula, Superintendent

(p) 717-789-3934

(f) 717-789-4997

[www.westperry.org](http://www.westperry.org)

3/23/2020

Dear West Perry Students, Parents/Guardians, Staff, and friends,

Greetings! I want to begin by sharing that you are all in my thoughts and prayers during these challenging times. I recognize that every family is unique in how the coronavirus has affected their lives. To say that these are troubling or challenging times would be an understatement. I think we can all agree however, that we are in uncharted territory which in and of itself can foster a variety of emotions and challenges. This is understandable given the uncertainty and physical isolation that has resulted in recent days. During uncertain times, it is essential that we find ways to connect with others and share our collective knowledge of solutions.

Students, we miss you. Please reach out to your teachers and let them know how you are doing. Do not hesitate to ask questions or ask for help. Your teachers miss you. Parents, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, building administrator, or myself with any questions or need for assistance. The West Perry School District is here to be a resource and to keep you connected with the future of the district.

**School Closure:** Governor Wolfe announced today that the two-week mandatory closure will be extended for all school districts in Pennsylvania. Under the new timeline, school buildings would reopen on April 7th for two days to allow school administrators, teachers, and other staff time to prepare classrooms, set up cafeterias, schedule transportation and arrange other business operations. Students would return to school on April 9th, unless extending the closure is needed in response to the situation with the virus at that time. Please remember that this is all dependent on what happens in the next two weeks regarding the COVID-19 virus.

**Food Distribution:** The district began food distribution today, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We are able to do the food distribution due to our School Board's commitment to providing any West Perry student under the age of 18 with a meal. If you have not already done so, please visit the West Perry School District website to sign-up for lunches. Distribution will be from 11AM-1PM at one of four locations; Blain Elementary, Carroll Elementary, New Bloomfield Elementary, and the West Perry Middle School.

**Flexible Learning:** Currently, the district is working on a plan that will provide further instruction at home for our students during this closure. While waiting for legislation that will provide us with guidance in regards to "FAPE" (Free and Appropriate Public Education), the district will continue preparing for the possibility of offering actual instruction outside of the school walls. While the majority of our teachers are ready, capable, and eager to go to a flexible environment, we have challenges beyond legislation that we have to work through such as:

- 1) Limited internet access by some learners in the district
- 2) Limited technological devices in households across our district
- 3) Accommodating our students with special needs
- 4) Determining appropriate instructional strategies for courses like Art, Music, and Physical Education

We believe we are inching closer to being able to offer some type of learning experience for our students. We are using data from the Internet and Computer Accessibility Survey, which is still available on our district website. If you have not completed this survey yet, please locate it on the Announcements link on the COVID-19 page of our website.

**Online Learning Resources:** Teachers in the West Perry School District continue to post resources and activities for students during this closure. These educational opportunities will not be graded or counted as extra credit. There truly is no teacher expectation for students to utilize these resources because of FAPE. At this point, any activities or resources provided are for enrichment and engagement purposes only.

**Building Operations:** Per the President and Governor's direction, we are operating with a skeletal crew, which we will be evaluating in the upcoming days. Administrators will be in and out of the buildings periodically. Office voice mails will be checked on a daily basis. All district facilities have been closed to the public to promote social distancing. All district communication will be placed on the district's website or social media sites. Any urgent messages will be sent via School Messenger from the Superintendent's office.

The COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly. As Superintendent, I will continue to work with the staff to balance the many needs and variables that are associated with present and future decisions. I continue to receive regular updates from our professional organizations, colleagues, the Center for Disease Control, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

In closing, I encourage everyone to practice safe habits, social distancing, and continue to be kind and respectful to others. As part of a greater community, our purpose is to emerge from this crisis with the tools to build a better world.

Sincerely,



David M. Zula  
Superintendent of Schools