



STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Office of the Superintendent

March 23, 2020

Dear SCPS Families and Staff:

Virginia Governor Ralph Northam has announced that all Virginia schools are closed through the end of the academic year. We are in the midst of a public health crisis and unfortunately, this drastic action had to be taken. I recognize that this is a challenging time for children, parents, and staff. We have never experienced a situation that has created a disruption to the learning environment as we are experiencing now. I would like to share the following information as I know today:

- Within the next 24 hours, the Virginia Department of Education will provide guidance on high school graduation, verified and standard credits.
- High School seniors who are eligible will graduate this school year. The graduation ceremonies are not decided at this time. Principals are considering other options; however, we must follow any directives provided by the Governor, including the number of persons allowed to gather at one time.
- All Standards of Learning and International Baccalaureate (IB) testing will be cancelled. [Advanced Placement \(AP\) exams are being modified](#). More information will follow.
- Our Grab and Go meal program will continue until further notice. Please visit our website for the current schedule.

There are many questions about home and online instructional activities. It is my objective to give our staff, who just returned from spring break, the time necessary to design quality online instructional activities for students to complete at home. As a starting point, [there are at-home activities and digital resources available on the SCPS website](#). The Department of Education, over the next 24-48 hours, will provide all school systems guidance on what we can and cannot require students to complete at home. We will use this guidance to further develop a multi-phased approach to student learning plans.

I recognize that this is a stressful time for many of us. Your children realize this is not a normal break or vacation in the school schedule. As adults, you and I are experiencing great uncertainty as it relates to this public health crisis. Although the continuity of learning is important, I want us to remember that when people are under great stress, focus is often on other areas and not on learning. To me, it is important that the learning activities we provide as a school system do not provide greater stress than what you are already experiencing as a family.

I realize you may be working at home with disrupted work schedules. The computers you have may be needed for your own telework purposes. Your children will continue learning, and we are working through a transitional program over the next few weeks that will not cause overload or unnecessary anxiety to you and your child.

As we continue to move through this uncertain time, please be mindful of the recommendation by Governor Northam, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to maintain social distancing. Governor Northam's expectation of no more than 10 people congregating in one place is part of the plan to slow the spread of Covid-19.

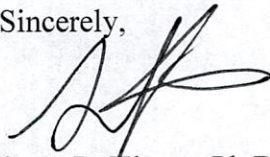
I cannot overstate the importance of following preventive measures to avoid the spread of the Covid-19 virus. **Please continue to encourage preventative measures to avoid the spread of the virus:**

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If unavailable, use a 60% or greater alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing/coughing. Use a paper tissue or cough/sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- The CDC and the VDH recommend vaccination against the flu for anyone six months of age or older.
- **If you have traveled to a high-risk country within the past 14 days or have been exposed to someone with a diagnosis of Covid-19, please refer to the VDH and CDC for guidance on self-quarantine and self-monitoring.**
- If you are experiencing fever greater than 100.4 Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius, cough, or shortness of breath, call ahead to the healthcare provider/emergency room/emergency medical services to notify of your symptoms per guidance from VDH and CDC.

SCPS will provide more guidance in the near future. Please visit the division website at www.staffordschools.net for the latest information on Covid-19 and the school system. We remain committed to the health, safety and well-being of all students and staff.

I thank all of you for your patience and understanding as we navigate a public health crisis that we have never experienced before. I am convinced that hardship and sacrifice will be required. By working together, we will get through this. As always, I appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working with you to strengthen our school system.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Kizner, Ph.D.
Superintendent