

SO. KOOCHICHING-RAINY RIVER DISTRICT #363

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Indus Campus

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March 21, 2020

Dear Faculty, Staff, Students and Parents,

As you all know with the event of the COVID -19, the South Koochiching Rainy River School District along with the other schools in the State of Minnesota has been ordered closed by the Governor. The Indus School and the Northome School are preparing and planning to accommodate a Distance Learning Program beginning on Monday, March 30, if the Governor calls us to do so. During these planning days from March 18, 2020 to March 27, 2020, our teachers and staff are working hard to produce a couple of weeks of Distance Learning lessons and materials.

PLANNING PERIOD

During this planning period, our teachers are sending out materials and assignments as they plan and test programs and procedures. This is not just busy work, we are asking parents to take our SKRR School District efforts to plan and prepare for Distance Learning seriously. There is nothing printed in the Governor's School Closing Proclamation that says students can't be asked to participate and complete these assignments if asked by their teachers.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance Learning defined for the SKRR District: Students engaging in distance learning have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s). It is important to note that distance learning does not always mean e-learning or online learning. It is critical to provide this learning in a format that can be equitably accessed by all students. Minnesota Department of Education Guidance on Distance Learning MDE expects that students who participate in distance learning have full access to appropriate educational materials including technology. Tracking the attendance of both students and staff will be a requirement. I will be ensuring the distance learning model is secure and will not allow for the release of protected student or staff information.

EQUAL ACCESS

School districts must ensure equal access to ALL students. As the school district implements a distance learning model, the Federal and State requirements must be followed. This means that students need to be able to participate in their learning equitably and have access to all relevant services and supports. If using an online learning system, ensure it can effectively support the district's unique learning and teaching needs, including the ability to provide differentiated instruction as well as one-on-one support (not physical face to face instruction) for students who need it.

While trying to ensure top quality safe and healthy protocols, each school will determine the most appropriate way to communicate and provide instruction for each student which could include some/all of the following: Paper packets or worksheets, which could be distributed daily by bus route, textbooks, telephone instruction, online resources (taking into account the availability of broadband).

SPECIALISTS

Programming options for school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, other school specialists and cultural liaisons will be forth coming from them directly. You may also call the school offices for contact information;

Northome Office @ 218-897-5275

Indus Office@ 218-634-2425

LUNCH PROGRAM

The SKRR School District will begin daycare and lunch programs beginning on Monday, March 23, 2020. Our implementation of the breakfast and dinner delivery of lunches by school vehicles, takes careful planning. Our school district's prime food vendor needs time to "switch over" to grab and go type food products. The meals do include the small cartons of milk. School kitchens need time to order and receive the food, package the food and place it in totes on a daily basis.

Parental consent forms are required for students to participate in the lunch program. Students must be school age 4 through age 18. ALL MEALS ARE FREE and we deliver to any students in our schools or within our school district. We are asking parents to put a cooler by the front door. We will be exchanging homework and placing the food in the coolers each day. We need the parental slips to get a proper breakfast and lunch count as well as planning the school vehicle routes.

DAYCARE PROGRAM

Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, both Indus and Northome Schools are providing daycare to school age students for Tier 1 Emergency Workers and Tier 2 Critical Workers including school staff. (see details about Tier I and II on school websites). The school daycare systems will operate during the normal school hours. The School District will be providing transportation to and from the schools for the qualifying daycare students that were attending the school prior to the Governor's Closure of the schools. Qualifying students that have not previously attended the school, may utilize the daycare center, but must transport their students to the school. Daycare children will receive a "grab and go" breakfast and lunch, if the parents have completed the school lunch form.

Although we will promote social distancing to the daycare students, there will be incidental contact with other children. They are kids! Groups of students will be paired with staff members in groups of 10 or less people. The individual school administrations will determine which rooms have adequate spaces for the students to play in. The school will provide materials, games and books to help occupy the students time. According to the

MDE, school staff will be supervising the day care students. We will make every effort to provide a safe, healthy environment to the students participating in the daycare programs.

PLEASE NOTE

Beginning Monday, March 23rd. The SKRR School District will be opening the schools for daycare as well as the lunch “Grab and Go” and lunch delivery programs. Although staff is reporting for work during this week, we are asking the general community to only come out to schools when necessary. The only access will be at the front door. Only the front main entrance door has a buzzer for the secretary, for you to enter the building. Please report to the office to check in and discuss the reason for your visitation.

Students – Be sure to check your email daily if not more. This is our main way of communicating with you!

Expect a regular contact from an advisor or staff member via phone call, email, FaceTime or Zoom. We are here to help guide you through this process!

For Faculty – As you transition your courses to Distance Learning, keep in mind many students have never experienced online courses. Consider how you would present the class in Distance Learning, such as how much information you give on a daily or weekly basis. Keep that pattern so no one is overwhelmed with information in an already unfamiliar arena.

Our overarching goals right now are – to safeguard the health, safety, and well-being of our faculty, staff and students; and to enable students to be successful toward their educational goals.

Sincerely,

Steve Cairns

Superintendent Steve Cairns