



03.15.20 – Letter to Families PK – 12th Grades Re: Closure for Planning

Dear Families,

Today, Governor Tim Walz and Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker announced that all Minnesota public schools will close to students starting Wednesday, March 18, 2020 with the plan to resume instruction on Monday, March 30, 2020.

However, Southland School District will be closed on **Tuesday, March 17th** as a precautionary measure due to a number of students and staff that have recently traveled out of state. During the time students and staff were traveling out of state, the Minnesota Department of Health recommended schools to cancel all interstate and international travel as a mitigation strategy. We want to stress that this is only **precautionary** and there are **no health concerns** at this time. Southland supports our student and staff travelers and does not condone any type social stigma. Southland School Age Care **will** remain open during the closure. If your student has medication at school, parents must pick it up from the office.

During the school closure for students, Southland Public Schools will be joining school districts and charter schools across the state to create plans to equitably distribute distance learning to our students should we need to close schools statewide for a longer period of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Minnesota Department of Education is defining distance learning to mean that a student receives daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s) and appropriate educational materials. Starting March 30, 2020, per the instruction from the Minnesota Department of Education, student learning will continue for the rest of the school year.

Our educators will be giving thoughtful planning to our distance learning plan, offering careful consideration for students in a variety of areas, including students receiving special education services, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students who rely on meals served at school.

Once our distance learning plan is finalized we will communicate the plan to families by Infinite Campus and email.

As always, our first priority is the safety and well-being of our students. We also want to ensure every child has access to the education they need and deserve.

We will continue to keep you informed as we navigate COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Scott Hall, Superintendent Southland School District