



# Grand Coulee Dam School District

*Superintendent, B. Paul Turner*

March 24, 2020

Parent/community update

Good afternoon,

Sorry I did not have an update for you yesterday. Many meetings from around the state, had our first virtual board meeting last night followed by the Governors message. It was a long day with many changes.

As of the end of today here is what I know.

Local brief: Okanogan county now has 1 confirmed case of COVID-19. Grant county has 25 confirmed cases with Mattawa and Quincy being the main areas of concern. As more tests are taken the confirmed cases continue to rise throughout the state and our counties. Expect this trend to continue.

Last night, Governor Inslee closed down the state further. All non-essential businesses are to shut down. The current tasks (student meals, educational materials and daycare for children of essential personnel) will continue at the school. The school will be closed to anyone not affiliated with the school. We are developing schedules that will continue to minimize the number of staff needed at the school to fulfill our obligations.

Working with Coulee Medical Center: We are working closely with CMC on the needs of the hospital as well as the school. If you have respiratory health symptoms, please call 509-449-1170 before going to the hospital. Any other hospital issues contact 509-633-6229 before you go. This will allow the hospital to give you directions.

Medical supplies: There continues to be a shortage of supplies especially masks. If you are able to sew you can help by making masks. This is a need and a task that can be done from your home. What a great way to help during this crisis. See [www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-face-mask](http://www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-face-mask) for directions.

Breakfast/lunch: We will continue to supply lunches for our students. For the rest of this week expect the same schedule of two deliveries per day. Today we served 300 meals. We are gearing up to only deliver 3 times per week beginning Monday. Expect more information on this throughout this week.

We are currently working out the details to distribute food during spring break. **Also note:** we will not be distributing meals on the weekend.

Educational materials: This is a great time to become educational partners with the school. We ask that you spend some time with your child and not only review their academic materials, but look around at other opportunities where they can learn. Maybe talk about the weather, have

them help you cook a meal or go on a hike and talk about nature. Our first round of educational materials went out today. If you missed today materials will be available during tomorrow's distribution.

I have added a statement that was sent from another school to their parents. I thought it would be very encouraging for parents. I hope you enjoy!

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This is a crazy time with updates from schools, posts of learning ideas for home, shared spreadsheets with days organized and planned to the second. But we want you to be a parent first.

Chances are your children may be more nervous and anxious about these changing times than they show. Chances are they are more nervous than you because they are too young to have any control over any of the things happening around them. And they, too, will be okay.

Yes, school is important. Yes, schedules are handy. Yes, teachers are amazing and do not receive the credit they deserve for their labor.

Also, this gift of time with your children is important. The way that you handle this time will be etched in your children's memory and hearts. Take this gift of time to be a parent, and take this permission to not be a teacher.

Play a board game. Chances are there is math in that game.

Lounge on the couch and read books or magazines together. Chances are the kiddos will be reading something in which they are really interested.

Take a walk outside together. Chances are nature is the best science teacher any of us will ever have.

Watch a funny TV show together. Chances are your family will have a more authentic conversation about the characters in the comedy than some scripted test question.

Make something together. Chances are your kitchen is the best makerspace of them all. Follow a recipe, or don't. Either way you'll be creating something new together and it will be great, or it won't. And that is the best kind of learning.

We have been given a gift of time. When we look back decades from now, will our children remember the color-coded schedule spreadsheets and fighting as teacher/student? Or will they remember this time as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to spend special time with a parent?

Lessen the fighting by lowering the expectations of being a perfect teacher during this less than perfect time. Be a parent. Provide reassurance that everything will be okay by providing you - not necessarily a daily curriculum. Because school activities will come and go, but -you- you have the opportunity to be the constant comforter and parent to help your children through this unusual time.

We are here to help support you and to co-navigate through these new learning adventures.

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**Important:** Buses will not be able to stop at the exact bus stop that it would normally, due to safety. They will be stopping as close to the normal stop as possible in a safe place off the road.

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We at GCDSD continue to thank you for your patience and understanding during this time. Please contact the Elementary at (509)633-0730 or the High School at (509)633-1442 if you have questions about distribution or packets.

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As we continue to evolve into this new world of education, virtual communication is becoming the mainstay. For the safety of all, reducing staff at the building continues to be a priority as more staff will be working remotely from home. We will be reducing staff at school to essential needs.

We had a successful virtual board meeting last night. I will give more information out before our next meeting as it continues to evolve. Have patience with us.

**Reminder** school extension: The end of the school year will be extended from June 11<sup>th</sup> to June 19<sup>th</sup>. Please mark your calendars.

Continue to expect a daily update as we continue to make changes.

Mr. Turner

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