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March 13, 2020

Dear MUSD Parents/Guardians,

The health and safety of our students, staff and school community is of paramount concern to the Marana Unified School District (MUSD). We continue our proactive efforts to provide a healthy and positive educational environment in our schools. With the start of Spring Break, I want to provide additional precautionary measures MUSD is taking to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in our school district.

I have a lot of important information to share with you, so please take a few minutes to carefully read this communication.

Please know that at this time **there are no confirmed cases** of COVID-19 within our District. We are closely monitoring this ever-changing situation. Every day we are analyzing developments and monitoring student and staff absenteeism, and we are committed to taking actions aligned with guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pima County Health Department, the Arizona Department of Health Services, and the Arizona Department of Education. For the latest updates on COVID-19 in Arizona, please visit <http://www.azdhs.gov>.

At 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 12 superintendents across the state participated in a teleconference with Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman and Dr. Carla Christ, Director of Arizona Department of Health Service providing guidance for schools regarding COVID-19. **At this time, school closures are not recommended.**

District and School-Sponsored Community Events, Field Trips, Activities, School Assemblies, Athletics, Travel

Based on CDC recommendations, social distancing, which is the avoiding of unnecessary close interactions, can reduce community spread and protect vulnerable at-risk populations. **Beginning today Friday, March 13, 2020 through Monday, April 6, 2020, the following organized events are cancelled:**

- All evening school events and activities on campus and/or at other locations such as restaurants.
- School-wide assemblies, award events, large group student and public activities.
- Musical, dance, drama performances.
- Athletic competitions
 - MUSD will continue to monitor and re-evaluate participation in athletic competitions beyond April 6 in consultation with the Northwest League and Arizona Interscholastic Association.
- Fundraising events.

- Parent Group sponsored events and activities.
- Other school events and activities where large groups are gathered, both on the school campus or outside of the school.
- All district and school-sponsored student and staff out-of-state and international travel and field trips.
 - MUSD will continue to monitor and re-evaluate travel, aligned with CDC guidelines, to determine travel approval beyond April 6.

Based on information that we have at this time, the organized events, as identified above, will resume on Tuesday, April 7; however, future event cancellations and postponements may be forthcoming as the situation continues to be closely monitored in this rapidly changing landscape.

These decisions were not taken lightly nor easy to make. I understand they may be disappointing for our students, families, and staff. However, these decisions are made in the best interest of health and safety, aligned with many other school districts as well as with our local municipalities, towns, cities, states, and national organizations. This remains a fluid situation and we continue to monitor it day-by-day.

After school Activities, Academics, LEAP, Sport Practices

MUSD schools offer a variety of high quality programs that are an extension of the student's school day. **At this time, there are no changes to the following activities and they will continue on their regular schedule as currently offered.**

- Learning, Enrichment, And Play (LEAP) program
- 21st Century Community Learning Center and after school academic intervention and enrichment
- Tutoring
- Middle School sport practices
- High School sport practices

Absences, State Testing, Preparations for School Closure (*should it become necessary*)

Aligned with the Arizona Department of Education, our schools will work with students who experience prolonged absences. This may include providing additional time and flexibility to make up work. Students will not be penalized for an absence from school.

The Arizona Department of Education, aligned with the State Board of Education, is working on a plan regarding state testing dates. Information will be provided if there are any changes to state testing.

MUSD is developing multiple contingency plans aligned with guidance from the Pima County Department of Health and the Arizona Department of Education. Detailed information will be provided ***should school closure become necessary.***

Spring Break Travel

If you and your family have plans to travel over Spring Break, we encourage you to become familiar with the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)'s Information for Travel](#). Should you travel to an area with widespread transmission of COVID-19, public health officials will guide you in quarantine requirements.

Whether you are or are not traveling, please be sure to wash your hands with soap and water often, and cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, coughing, and/or shortness of breath, please do not go to school or work, and call your healthcare provider. Please remember that schools are not qualified or allowed to screen students to identify cases of COVID-19.

About the virus that causes COVID-19

Per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the virus that causes COVID-19 related disease causes a respiratory illness ranging from a mild cold-like illness to severe pneumonia. Signs and symptoms include a fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. It is spread between people who are in close contact with one another and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications. According to the CDC, there is no evidence that children are more susceptible. In fact, most confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported from China have occurred in adults. Read about COVID-19 at the [CDC website](#).

Preventative Measures

The public is encouraged to follow basic hygiene practices and social distancing. The following are additional preventative measures MUSD has in place to help minimize the risk of contracting many illnesses that spread from person-to-person, including respiratory viruses, such as influenza and coronaviruses.

- Disinfecting of learning, eating, play spaces, buses, and restrooms.
 - Aligned with CDC guidelines, MUSD has implemented additional cleaning measures focused on disinfecting main touchpoints such as detailing doorknobs, light switches, handles, tables, school buses, etc.
 - School buses are disinfected following the completion of the morning route and the completion of the afternoon route.
 - Cleaning products used by MUSD are effective against coronaviruses and aligned with CDC guidelines.
- Providing soap, paper towels, tissues, approved hand sanitizer and additional resources in all school health offices.
- Reminding students to wash hands frequently, avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, and to cover coughs and sneezes.
 - Our classroom teachers, counselors and staff are educating students on the importance of handwashing to prevent the spread of viruses. Students are allowed extra time for washing their hands throughout the day.
 - Teachers are encouraged to use strategies to minimize student touch/interactions.
 - Schools have a variety of fun engaging posters reminding students of the importance of hygiene.
- Employees are following proper preventative measures and are required to stay home when sick.

I want to remind parents and guardians of the critical importance of keeping their student home when sick. Students with a fever of 101.0 or greater will be sent home until they are fever-free for 24-hours without the use of fever reducing medication. We ask that you carefully follow your healthcare provider's recommendations.

We encourage our parents/guardians to practice healthy habits including develop contingency plans should their student become sick and need to stay home or in the event of school closure. Families may need to develop support systems when childcare is needed. Please keep in mind that older adults are considered to be in a high-risk category and may not be the preferred choice for childcare support in this context.

Resources for Talking with Children about COVID-19

All of the media coverage and talk of COVID-19 can be stressful for not only adults but also for our students. If your student is showing signs of anxiety related to hearing about COVID-19, below are some resources that can help you in talking with them about COVID-19.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention resources for [talking to children](#) about COVID-19
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) [parent resource](#) for talking with children about COVID-19 that school leaders can share with staff and parents when needed
 - NASP [parent resource in Spanish](#)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network [parent/caregiver guide to helping families cope with COVID-19](#).
- World Health Organization's [helping children cope with stress](#).

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we continue to monitor this rapidly changing situation. We will continue to post updates on our website at www.maranausd.org/coronavirus. You will also find a variety of helpful resources on this Webpage. I also want to remind you to please ensure that your contact information remains current at your student's school in the event we make announcements via email, telephone, text message.

Please help to keep our students and employees safe by staying informed, practicing good hygiene, and staying home when sick. It takes all of us working together to ensure healthy learning environments. Thank you for your continued support and trust in the Marana Unified School District.

Sincerely,



Doug Wilson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Inspiring students to learn today and lead tomorrow.