



March 16, 2020

Message from Superintendent Doug Schuch Regarding COVID-19

We realize that closing schools so abruptly has created a great deal of uncertainty and unrest for our students, their families, and our community as a whole. I am so proud of the efforts of our teachers and support staff over the past several days to react to the Governor's order from Friday afternoon and plan for the weeks ahead. Our primary focus during this unprecedented closure is to support the state and national effort to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on our citizens. Though we do have questions and concerns about school-related issues (attendance, SOLs, graduation, etc.), we believe there is currently too much uncertainty for us to predict or plan for how these issues may ultimately be resolved. Instead, we will focus on following the spirit and letter of Governor Northam's school closure order, providing meals for our students, and doing our best to keep students learning while school is not in session.

The following information may be helpful in understanding what actions are currently taking place:

- All of our schools will be closed until March 30, 2020. It is possible that the Governor will extend the closure beyond that date, and we will make sure to inform you if that happens.
- All school-related activities and other functions in our schools are also suspended until March 30, 2020, and these suspensions may similarly be extended.
- Schools will be providing suggestions to students/families about learning options that enhance our regular programs. No required or graded work will be assigned during the closure; however, individual teachers may communicate directly with students/families to provide additional learning support beyond the general suggestions provided.
- All non-essential teachers and support staff will be directed to telecommute beginning March 17, 2020. Regular phone operations at schools and offices will be suspended beginning March 17, 2020 and last until the closure has ended. School and central staff will continue to read and respond to emails during the closure.
- Certain staff will be required to report to a school or office location periodically to perform essential functions. We will ensure that any staff required to report will adhere to the CDC recommendations regarding social distancing. We will also make sure that no large gatherings take place.
- We will be providing meals to students beginning March 18, 2020. (Visit our website at bedford.sharpschool.net under District News for additional information.)

We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and provide updates as new information becomes available, including but not limited to guidance we receive from national, state and local agencies.