April 3, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you and your families are doing well during this unprecedented time! As you are all aware, the COVID-19 restrictions implemented by Governor Wolf have placed school districts in the unprecedented situation of mandatory school closures. In Steel Valley, we have already used our Flexible Instructional Days approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In order to provide a continuity of educational services for our students, the Steel Valley School District will begin providing distance learning through review and enrichment to all of our students beginning April 6, 2020 and throughout the school closure.

The Steel Valley School District will continue to provide your child with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) during this time. Although the determination of how FAPE is to be provided may need to be different in this time of the unprecedented national emergency, it is the District’s intention to provide student services, including related services, to the greatest extent possible.

Students with disabilities will have access to online instructional materials through Google Classroom, Google Hangout, Zoom, TeachTown and/or ClassDoJo. Related Services, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, and hearing and/or visual impairment support will continue to be provided through Google Classroom, Google Hangout and/or Zoom. Your child’s special education teacher and related service providers will contact families to discuss these services.

During group services through an on-line platform, it is not possible to ensure student privacy. During virtual group instruction, student’s names and faces may appear on a screen. Further, the virtual group instruction format could provide opportunities for individuals in other student’s households to observe the therapy sessions. As a reminder, the district will not share health and educational information with third parties without written parental consent. This letter serves to notify our families of the district’s good faith effort to provide therapies and opportunities for socialization during this unique time.

The Steel Valley School District is committed to working with the parents/guardians of our students to provide an individualized continuity of learning plan through the duration of a school closure. We plan to move forward with providing some group virtual instruction, when appropriate, unless the district receives written notification of a family’s desire to opt out due to privacy concerns. By allowing your child to participate in group virtual instruction, you agree and understand that others may view your child in the course of the delivery of services. If you do not consent, please contact me via email at dborges@steelvalleysd.org.
Annual IEP meetings will continue the week of April 6th. The District will provide opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in IEP team meetings via telephone conference or virtual participation. If your child’s annual IEP meeting is due, your child’s special education teacher will be in contact with you to schedule a meeting.

Thank you for your patience during this challenging time. As additional information becomes available, we will keep you updated. If you have any concerns about your ability to access online programming or virtual services, please contact your child’s special education teacher to discuss resources and/or alternatives for the implementation of your child’s program. Please feel free to contact me via email at dborges@steelvalleysd.org.

Sincerely,

Diana L. Borges, M.S.Ed., NCSP
Director of Pupil Personnel & Special Services