

Hudsonville Public Schools

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March 20, 2020

Dear Parents,

Your support throughout this pandemic is greatly appreciated. We have seen so many students, families, and staff helping out those in need. We have volunteers distributing food, families checking in on each other, and a community coming together to provide strength in a time of great unknown.

I'm writing to you at the end of our first week of our students being out of school. Our entire staff is missing seeing your kids and we are all looking forward to their return as soon as it is safe. In the future, these updates will be coming about two times a week, most likely Tuesday and Friday, unless we receive news that needs to be shared sooner. In today's update (I apologize for the length of this communication), we will cover meal distribution, instructional plan, spring break travel, and our non-homestead millage.

Hudsonville Public Schools will continue to offer free breakfast and lunch for children in need during the statewide school closure. Any child age 0-18 (or up to age 26 for young adults with special needs) can get meals. **NEW: Beginning Monday, March 23**, multiple days of meals will be distributed each Monday and Wednesday.

Time: 11:00am-12:30pm

Monday, March 23: 2 days of breakfast and lunches per child

Wednesday, March 25: 3 days of breakfasts and lunches per child

Monday, March 30: 2 days of breakfast and lunches per child

Wednesday, April 1: 3 days of breakfasts and lunches per child

Locations:

Hudsonville High School – 5037 32nd Avenue

Riley Middle School – 2745 Riley Street

Baldwin Middle School – 3835 Baldwin Street

Alward Elementary School – 3811 Port Sheldon Street

You may drive-up or walk to any site, simply grab and go. Breakfast will be available at the same time for those families who wish to take it home for future use. Please also note that your children do need not to be present when picking up meals. The schools will still be closed, but the meals will be served in their parking lots. We may open up additional sites if needed or alter locations based on demand. You do NOT need to qualify for free or reduced lunch for this distribution. However, if your family is affected by job loss or reduction in work hours, resulting in a drop in your household income, you can still apply for free or reduced meals at school. If you are approved, your eligibility will be active from now through the first 30 days of the 2020-21 School Year. Please apply online at www.lunchapp.com.

Regarding instruction and learning, we would encourage you to continue to access enrichment opportunities we provided in our earlier communication and accessible on our website. Public schools can provide opportunities for learning; however, due to current federal laws and funding, we cannot require those opportunities to be completed without ensuring all students have access. At this time, we are not requiring any virtual learning or expecting any assignments to be completed by our students. As of tonight, we are still working with the Michigan Department of Education regarding providing educational opportunities. State testing, which was scheduled to begin after spring break, will not occur for the 2019-2020 school year. The College Board, who administers and scores the Advanced Placement (AP) tests (previously scheduled to take place in early May), will continue to be offered to students via the College Board and accessible electronically at home, if necessary. We have a team of administrators and teachers meeting on Monday to finalize the details for our students and will communicate information early next week.

Schools across the region, including Hudsonville Public Schools, have been receiving questions from families regarding spring break travel plans and how they might impact their student's ability to return to school once schools re-open. At this time, Hudsonville Public Schools and Ottawa County Department of Public Health strongly recommends that families consider [CDC advisories](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html) as they relate to personal travel. The following considerations may be found on their website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

Things to consider before travel:

- **Is COVID-19 spreading in the area where you're going?**
If COVID-19 is spreading at your destination, but not where you live, you may be more likely to get infected if you travel there than if you stay home. If you have questions about your destination, you should check your destination's local health department website for more information.
- **Will you or your travel companion(s) be in close contact with others during your trip?**
Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like coronavirus may increase in crowded settings, particularly closed-in settings with little air circulation. This may include settings such as conferences, public events (like concerts and sporting events), religious gatherings, public spaces (like movie theatres and shopping malls), and public transportation (like buses, metro, trains).
- **Are you or your travel companion(s) more likely to get severe illness if you get COVID-19?**
People at higher risk for severe disease are [older adults and people of any age with serious chronic medical conditions](#) (such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes). CDC recommends that [travelers at higher risk for COVID-19 complications](#) avoid all cruise travel and nonessential air travel.
- **Do you have a plan for taking time off from work or school, in case you are told to stay home for 14 days for self-monitoring or if you get sick with COVID-19?**
If you have close contact with someone with COVID-19 during travel, you may be asked to stay home to self-monitor and avoid contact with others for up to 14 days after travel. If you become sick with COVID-19, you may be unable to go to work or school until you're considered noninfectious. You will be asked to avoid contact with others (including being in public places) during this period of infectiousness.
- **Do you live with someone who is older or has a serious, chronic medical condition?**
If you get sick with COVID-19 upon your return from travel, your household contacts may be at risk of infection. Household contacts who are [older adults or persons of any age with severe chronic medical conditions](#) are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- **Is COVID-19 spreading where I live when I return from travel?**
Consider the risk of passing COVID-19 to others during travel, particularly if you will be in close contact with people who are [older adults or have severe chronic health conditions](#). These people are at higher risk of getting very sick. If your symptoms are mild or you don't have a fever, you may not realize you are infectious.

Following these guidelines is particularly important for those who may have compromised immune systems that make exposure to COVID-19 a higher risk. While this may not describe you or your family, carrying the virus may have a significant impact on other school families and community members. We are taking direction regarding school attendance from our local health department and the CDC. Please know we are doing our absolute best to promote the health and safety of our students, school families, and staff.

Of particular note to our community, we still have on the ballot in May our annual non-homestead request. Due to the current state of affairs, all voting will take place via absentee ballot. You will be receiving an application in the mail in the next couple of weeks. If you would like an absentee ballot, complete that application and return. You will then receive an absentee ballot by mail. While we know this might be an untimely request in May, this affects our operating budget for the next school year, so we need to keep this on the ballot. This is an annual renewal request that voters have approved for the past 25 years and would generate approximately 5.3 million dollars of operating revenue for our school district. Please note, this is not a tax on primary residences and is not a new tax.

At this point, we are still under the assumption that we will return to school on April 13. I know there are questions about spring sports, graduation, senior graduation requirements, and many other very important items. We will continue to keep you posted on the latest developments as they become available. Please know that while we anticipate that dates may be altered, we certainly still expect to come back to school with plenty of instruction time before we break for summer.

For now, please take good care of yourself and continue to refer to our [website](#) for up-to-date information. Our best defense is to stay at home.

Blessings,



Dr. VanderJagt

Superintendent of Schools