

Office of the Superintendent

March 20, 2020

Greetings,

"Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore"



This famous movie quote from *The Wizard of Oz* is spoken by Dorothy when she realizes that she is no longer in the safety of her farm house in Kansas but rather has been chaotically thrown into the unfamiliar and somewhat bizarre land of Oz. Sound Familiar?

Major events have been cancelled; restaurants, malls, and other businesses closed; and "Social Distancing", and "Flattening the Curve" have become the trending phrases of the day. In just one short week our daily routines have changed and we are still getting used to a different way of life. Amongst all of this change, parents have had to add the role of teacher to their other responsibilities. I want to thank all of our parents for the support and kind words that have been shared with us during the past week. We appreciate all that parents are doing to support our new way of learning for the weeks ahead.

Of course, there wouldn't be any on-line lessons, virtual classrooms, or remote learning if not for the incredible work of our teachers. Almost overnight they transformed our schools by creating lessons, developing plans, and moving their classrooms from the confines of four walls to the openness of the internet. I cannot thank and compliment them enough for the outstanding work they have done to ensure our students will have meaningful learning experiences while our buildings are closed.

The learning may not look the same for each school or even each grade, but what is common is the connection these teachers are making with their students. That can be difficult to do through a computer screen, and yet our teachers are doing it. They do it by sharing personal stories; photos and videos of their pets, children or hobbies; and by demonstrating how learning can happen anywhere at any time. They are doing it because they are passionate about teaching and have the expertise in their field. I appreciate all of their hard work and commitment to our students.

There are so many people to thank for all they have done this past week. Our administrators, our engineers, crisis team, union heads, custodial staff, all district staff, and of course the hard working team in our technology department. Mr. Troy Patterson and his entire team have done, and continue to do, a tremendous job of supporting the technology needs of our teachers and students. In addition, they were instrumental in distributing more than 5,000 chrome books to students this past week.

When it comes to distributing items to the students no one does it better than our Food Service department. This week Mr. Jeff Murphy, Mr Josh Bains, and their entire team in the Food Service department were able to provide more than 35,000 meals to students in our district, 20,000 being handed out on Friday alone. Thank you to everyone who was part of that program including the dozens of volunteers coordinated by our PTA.

We are scheduled to return to our buildings and our classrooms on April 13th. As we have been saying all along, this situation is ever changing and we all must be patient to see if our efforts will help to slow the spread of this virus. We must continue to follow the recommendations of our healthcare professionals. This means avoiding groups of more than 10, keeping our social distance, washing hands, covering our mouth when coughing or sneezing, and of course if we are not feeling well, please stay in your home.

Starting Monday, March 23, the Administrative Service Center will no longer be open but, just like our schools, the work will continue. Our staff will transition to working at home and to make sure we continue to deliver services to the public, I would like to share the following contact numbers and emails:

- General Information- 313 827-3006 communications@dearbornschools.org
- Social Emotional Hotline- 313 827-8500 dss@dearbornschools.org
- Tech Support- 313 827-8400 parenthelp@dearbornschools.org
- Student Services- 313 827-3068
- Special Education- 313 827-7050

As we increase the number of people being tested for COVID-19 there will most likely be more reported cases. The whole point to all of the closures and cancellations is to keep people from gathering in large groups so that we don't spread the COVID-19 virus. It's not to stop it, cure it, or end it...only slow it down. In a few weeks, we can evaluate the situation, consideration recommendations from the state and county, and with the information available to us make decisions about the remainder of the school year.

It is the uncertainty that is most frustrating for most people. People like to have deadlines, goals, a beginning and an end. With the current state of affairs we don't have that. We only have "wait and see" with no real conclusion in sight. I ask that we all try to be patient. We are going through a very different time and learning as we live through these events. A little inconvenience for the next few weeks (and longer if necessary) is worth doing in order to keep others safe and avoid more drastic measures down the road.

Our administration has the support of our incredible Board of Education and I have witnessed first hand the awesome ability of this community to come together in the time of crisis. I know that by all of us working together, remaining calm, and being patient we will help each other through this difficult time and come out on the other side much stronger as a community, as a state, and as a nation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Maleyko". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Glenn Maleyko, Ph.D.
Superintendent