



April 3, 2020

Marion County School District family,

As you know on April 1, 2020, Governor Tate Reeves signed a new executive order establishing a statewide “shelter-in-place” for Mississippi. The shelter-in-place began today Friday, April 3, 2020 at 5:00 PM and will be in effect until Monday, April 20, 2020 at 8:00 AM. We have all wondered whether the governor would issue any additional school closures past April 17, 2020. He did not. The following paragraph is an excerpt typed from his press conference today concerning public school closure.

Governor Reeves was asked, “When are you going to announce the shutdown of public schools for the rest of the school year?” Governor Reeves stated, “There has been no decision to shut down public schools for the rest of the year. You will notice that our shelter-in-place order, which starts at 5:00 p.m. today goes until 8:00 a.m. April 20, 2020. That coincides with how long public schools are shutdown at this moment. We are going to monitor things over the next week to ten days and make a decision about schools as soon as we make a decision as to when the shelter-in-place order may go away as well. ***We will make that decision in the coming days and weeks.***” If you would like to watch the clip of this, you can find it on the governor’s Facebook page titled, Tate Reeves. This conversation takes place at minute marker 52:58.

Our ultimate goal is to stay safe and comply with our Governor’s shelter-in-place order that begins today. Therefore, only Marion County School District essential employees will work to maintain the necessary operations of the district.

Marion County School District feeding program has been declared as essential by our state leaders. The feeding program will continue Monday – Friday each week at East Marion High School and West Marion High School with pickup times between 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Due to Easter Holidays that were already scheduled for April 11, 2020 and April 13, 2020, we will not serve on those two days. If any additional adjustments need to be made to the feeding schedule in weeks to come, we will keep you informed. Thank you for visiting our grab-n-go lunch lines. We appreciate you following our safety protocol.

All distance learning packets have been distributed and our online resources are available through your child's Clever portal. The purpose of the digital work and/or paper packets is to provide students with educational opportunities to keep their skills sharp while the schools are closed. We urge you to continue working with your children, but please do not stress yourself or your children during this time. Work on the work at your discretion.

The Mississippi Department of Education met on March 26, 2020 to discuss the extraordinary circumstances of this not-so-traditional school year and to grant school districts the flexibility needed to educate our students without the constraints of state assessments and other mandated requirements. They voted to suspend all federal and state assessments for the 2019-20 school year. The following tests **will not** be administered:

- **Pre-K and Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (post-test)**
- **Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) and MAAP-Alternate English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science Grades 3-8 and High School (Algebra I, English II, Biology, and US History)**
- **ACT for 11th graders**
- **English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT)**
- **Career Planning and Assessment System (CPAS)**

Additional information concerning grade calculations for the 2019-2020 school year will be forthcoming once we meet with the school board. Our district leadership team and administrators have met to discuss our policies in regards to the policies that MDE suspended. Our students are always our number one priority, and we appreciate your patience as we work through our policy adjustments. We want to make sure any policy changes demonstrate our commitment to serving students and families during these challenging times. Our ultimate goal is to enact policies that err on the side of the individual students.

Once again, thank you, Marion County School District family, for being so flexible during these unprecedented times. We appreciate your kindness and compassion! For that, we are so grateful. We love our students, and we miss them immensely. Please stay safe. If you have any questions, please submit them through the Q & A link on our COVID-19 page <http://www.marionk12.org/covid19/>, and we will be glad to send you our best answer.

Sincerely,



Wendy Bracey