

Athens Area Schools

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March 13, 2020

Dear Community Members:

Yesterday at 10p.m. I went to bed having been repeatedly informed that any school closures would be a local decision made involving the district and local health department. This morning we are all finding out differently. At 11:00pm last night Governor Whitmer closed all school building in the State of Michigan from March 16th until April 5th, 2020. That decision now opens a flood gate of questions for every person that has a child, works at a school, is associated with schools, and even the economy of the State of Michigan.

We have received numerous inquiries about the school calendar, including spring break, graduation, SAT/MSTEP testing and possible modifications to the last day of school. At this time, we will proceed with the calendar as it currently stands, and as we get more information from the state concerning possible modifications and mandates we will share that information with our parents, students and community members. As of now, we will work under the assumption that our Spring Break is still from April 6th-10th.

As a response to the closure of the school buildings we are suspending all extracurricular activities beginning March 14th and lasting until the Governor's closure of schools expires. This includes all spring sports as well as the sports banquet previously scheduled for March 24th. I am assuming that we will get further direction from the state and guidance from the MHSAA on how to proceed with athletics, and when that information arrives we will use parent email lists, our website, and our Facebook page to pass information along to our community.

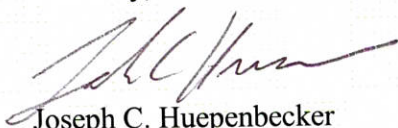
Many of our teachers are providing some work for students to take home. Unfortunately, we currently do not have a model for doing this for all classes based on no forewarning, a lack of internet access in many of our student's homes, and the inability to convey lessons in some of the classes in the high school. If this crisis continues we will make arrangement to facilitate this for students.

I know that beyond the actual health concerns and fears, that this is potentially a hardship to many of our families as they try to wrestle with childcare, time off from work, and the many other obligations and responsibilities that come with caring for your families during this uncertain time. Hopefully, we as a community can all lean on, and support each other to make these challenges less daunting.

We will communicate with you on our website, emails, and our Facebook page. Please only use these sites for official communication. Currently there is a great deal of misinformation available and I would not want anyone to get confused by incorrect information.

I thank you for your understanding and patience during this unprecedented turn of events. I had someone tell me today that we will laugh about this next year. I truly hope that person is correct. Please stay well and safe!

Sincerely,



Joseph C. Huepenbecker
Principal/Superintendent
Athens Area Schools