



DEWEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#1 BULLDOGGER ROAD DEWEY, OK 74029

(918) 534-2241 • FAX (918) 534-0149

www.deweyk12.org

VINCE VINCENT

SUPERINTENDENT

vwvincent@deweyk12.org

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It's been a week since the announcement of the statewide school closure due to COVID-19. I know there are many unanswered questions as things have and continue to change rapidly. I hope to address some of the questions within this communication but please understand, there are some things that simply cannot be determined at this time.

For the duration of the school closure, Dewey Schools will be offering a "grab and go" meal program. The details of this program are as follows:

- A breakfast and lunch meal can be picked up Monday-Friday from 11:00am - 12:00pm.
- At this time, the offering will be in drive-through fashion in front of the school district's cafeteria located on Bulldogger Road across from the High School entrance.
- Because these are federally approved reimbursable meals for the school, there can only be 1 breakfast and lunch meal provided daily per child between the ages of 2-18. This means children **must be present**, either by walking up or in a vehicle, to be eligible for a meal. We are required to conduct counts on meals distributed.
- The drive-through option is being used to encourage meal program participants to remain in vehicles limiting person to person contact as much as possible. If students must walk from home to the pick-up area, they will be provided meals as well.
- Vehicles will enter along Bulldogger Road heading East, pull up to the designated meal pick-up area, receive their meals from food service personnel, then merge back onto Bulldogger Road toward the stop light at Highway 75.

We really want to encourage everyone who needs meal service during this closure to participate in this program so that we may continue to offer it until school is back in session.

Because the closure currently extends through April 5th, any school related activities previously scheduled during this time period will either be postponed or canceled. **So, all activities previously scheduled between March 17 - April 5 will not be allowed to continue as scheduled.** No specific Dewey Public Schools activities have been completely canceled beyond April 5th at this time but no rescheduled dates have been determined either. However, based on uncertainties surrounding closures and social distancing guidelines, some events may be forced to be canceled in the coming weeks and months. Although it's impossible to plan for events that are scheduled a few months from now, every attempt will be made to provide an opportunity for graduation ceremonies on May 15th. It's simply too early though to know what that will look like and what restrictions might be in place at that time.

The State Board of Education will meet again on Wednesday, March 25th. I am anticipating that several items will be discussed including waiving the requirement for schools to make-up forced school closure days. State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister has applied for a federal waiver requesting that all required testing be canceled for the 2019-2020 school year. I anticipate we'll receive information regarding all testing requirements in the very near future. Rest assured that steps are being taken at the federal, state, and local levels to ensure that school employee jobs, pay, and benefits are protected during any length of school closure.

Our administration and school offices will be open and staffed Monday-Friday with school Principals starting Monday, March 23rd from 9:00am - 2:00pm. This will allow parents/guardians to contact the office with questions or pick up personal items like medications. The limited number of employees returning to work will be diligent in practicing social distancing and illness prevention.

We will continue to offer updates as more decisions come forth.

Thank you and please do everything possible to stay safe and healthy.

Vince Vincent