



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SUPERIOR

All Means All: Every Student, Every Day

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Dear Legislator,

I hope this letter finds you, your family, and your colleagues well. I would like to provide you with an update from the School District of Superior as we address the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 13th, Governor Evers informed the state of Wisconsin that school buildings would be closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier that same day, Superior students and staff left their schools for spring break, not knowing that it would be the last time we would come together this school year. **As we made the transition to at-home learning, our District's investments in instructional coaches proved invaluable.** With their leadership, we were able to use that time over spring break (when they should have been on vacation) to develop a robust and comprehensive at-home learning plan for our students. **Our students were able to come back from break and move right into this learning. Our at-home learning plan is now mapped out through June 4, our last day of school.** Our teachers have put a variety of practices in place in order to provide students with feedback and continue grading for this semester.

Meals and food security for our families was another immediate concern following the announcement of school closures. Almost half of our students in the School District of Superior qualify for free or reduced lunch, and their families rely on the meals the District provides each day. We have continued to provide food service to our students throughout this extended closure, starting immediately after our spring break. To ensure we reach as many students as possible, we established multiple community pick up locations. Our bus drivers are also distributing meals in our rural communities. I had the opportunity to assist with delivering meals to our rural homes earlier this month. It was so evident by the look on the faces of the children and families how important this service is that we are providing to our community. **We are providing approximately 3200 meals per day!**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, our District had taken many steps in supporting technology integration. We invested in laptops for students and high quality professional development for staff in recent years. Our teachers and students were already comfortable and familiar with how technology can support education. However, the rapid change from seat based learning to full virtual learning was something we never predicted. **We have been able to supply students with laptops and internet connections if needed.** We anticipate we may not get all devices back. The technology support for at-home learning will likely be a significant cost to the District. However, it was important to remove as many barriers for families to access our learning plan from our website, so all families in Superior have access to and are able to complete at-home learning.

Nevertheless, we know at-home learning has the potential to create and exacerbate inequities. **Our staff continue to go above and beyond to meet student and family needs and bridge these gaps.** Principals are working closely with teachers to identify students who have not been in touch with their teacher or have not completed coursework. If that is the case, our principal and counselors reach out to the family directly and offer support. It is not unusual for our school leaders to conduct home visits while adhering to social distancing guidelines to check on the welfare of our students and families.

While our teachers, principals and counselors have continued to educate students, our support staff have continued their work as well. **As a District, we determined early on that it was important to maintain the regular income of our support staff.** Some, like our food service employees, bus drivers, and custodians, continue to be essential workers serving our District and community. Others are expected to work from home as much as possible. However, for some (like paraprofessionals) working from home is more of a challenge given the nature of their job. We have created a comprehensive professional development plan for them to conduct at home. **We feel it will be important in the weeks ahead that we took this opportunity to move forward and grow as an organization.** As support staff submit their reflections on this learning, I am so proud of their work to improve support for children in the future.

One of the greatest challenges we are facing is summer school. We know we may need to provide some sort of virtual education next school year as part of ongoing efforts to combat this virus. As a result, our families are overwhelmingly not interested in online learning over the summer months. However, **this will negatively impact our membership count, which will reduce our funding over multiple years.** We feel it is important school district budgets are not impacted negatively over the long term as a result of trying to meet our community's needs.

As we move forward, I welcome your calls or emails so that I can explain our work and answer any questions you may have. I will also provide you with additional updates. Certainly, much work remains as we finish the school year, begin the summer school session, and prepare for the start of the new school year this fall. I am proud of everything we have accomplished so far for our students and our community.

Sincerely,



Amy Starzecki
District Administrator
School District of Superior

MISSION: The School District of Superior will ensure **all** students have the knowledge and skills for living, learning, and working successfully.

VISION: In Superior, **all means all** ... Every student, every day!

The School District of Superior does not discriminate in employment decisions based on age, religion, race, creed, color, disability, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, parental status, citizenship status, arrest record, conviction record, or membership in the National Guard or military forces of the United States, or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law.