

From: **Mark Flatau, Superintendent** <KPS_Notify@sd5.k12.mt.us>
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Subject: March 16, 2020 Update from KPS

March 16, 2020

Dear Families,

Thank you for your patience and understanding these past several days.

Our administrative team met today for almost five hours to plan and prepare for the rest of the week and possible additional school closures after spring break. I want you to know that high levels of care and support were consistently expressed by our administrators concerning our families and staff. We are working to navigate this uncharted territory with the best and most current information we have, which we know may change tomorrow.

Each principal will be communicating with you today or tomorrow regarding the details of the alternative learning plans each school is working on. Our goal is to maintain support for every student despite the challenges that we are currently facing.

We have a communication plan in place for our families and staff. This includes confirming all the facts - if you did not hear it from me or our building principal or supervisor, please refrain from continuing a rumor or spreading false information. Continued sharing of facts and our work plan will be a high priority.

Food Services will continue to provide daily meals to all students and children age 18 and younger. Our plan is hosting a drive thru delivery system at seven sites in Kalispell Public Schools. Each site will be open for food pick up from **11:00 am – 1:00 pm each day for the rest of this week**. Since spring break was planned for next week, no services will be provided then.

Central Kitchen	106 Northwest Lane
Edgerton	1400 WHITEFISH STAGE RD
Elrod	412 THIRD AVENUE WEST
Hedges	827 4TH AVENUE EAST
Peterson	1119 SECOND STREET WEST
Rankin	2155 AIRPORT RD
Russell	227 WEST NEVADA STREET

As we assess our ability to work remotely, we are asking all families to complete this simple and short survey on remote learning capabilities. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey today. <https://forms.gle/Ss9ih471xw69mtSe9>

Finally, I want to share some great advice I got earlier in the week from a community leader.

We are living in unprecedented times as activities of all kinds are canceled, postponed, or suspended because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). There are some commonsense ways to protect yourself from this virus and I think it is wise to follow the local and national health department suggestions.

When something of this magnitude affects our entire country it is easy to let fear and panic grab

our hearts. A very natural and human response to the uncertainty and unknown. The good news is that there is already a cure for fear. That cure is peace. So instead of worrying about what we cannot control, here are some ideas to activate peace in your life and our community in these times.

1. SMILE!!!

This is a powerful weapon against fear. Neurotransmitters called endorphins are released when you smile. A smile is contagious because a smile produces a smile. While COVID-19 is spreading and we do our best to fight and stop it, let's also work on passing a smile to others. A smile activates peace.

2. REACH OUT!!!

Fear tries to isolate and make you feel alone. Peace flourishes when people are together. So, in a time where we are wisely told to keep distant, let's also be creative in reaching out. Make time to eat together as a family. Check on loved ones and neighbors regardless if they need it or not. They will feel thought of and you will spread peace. Peace is contagious--Let's spread it! Reaching out activates peace.

3. HAVE FUN!!!

Fear wants you to cower and hide. To activate peace, do something fun and crazy. This is like spitting in the face of fear. Play games, watch a fun movie (not "Contagion") or gift wrap rolls of toilet paper you stocked up on and share it with friends. Take a break from the news for a little bit. Take a deep breath. Doing something fun activates peace.

4. GIVE THANKS!!!

Fear makes you want to react to everything that could go wrong. Giving thanks bridles fear and lets you focus on that which is true and sustaining. It controls your worrying mind and reminds you of all the good that surrounds you. It is hard to be fearful when your heart is full of thanksgiving. Giving thanks activates peace.

As always, if you have questions or other concerns do not hesitate in contacting me or your child's principal. As I shared yesterday, we will get through this challenging time and continued support of our kids is our highest priority.

Take care,

*Mark Flatau
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