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## WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear WASD Parents / Guardians

While the last few weeks have brought many changes, the purpose of this email is to provide information regarding the current school closure. Please review this information and know that updates will follow that include additional details.

### **March 15, 2020 Update**

#### **Closure:**

Governor Wolf closed all PA schools for two weeks (March 13- 27). During this time all athletics, school events, community usage of school buildings/campus, meetings and extra-curricular activities are canceled. Schools are scheduled to reopen on March 30, 2020. We expect to receive additional updates from Governor Wolf and PDE over the next two weeks and will share information as it becomes available.

#### **PDE School Year Requirements:**

During regular school years, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requires 180 school days and schools also must meet the required instructional hours. Governor Wolf and PDE Secretary Rivera have issued initial statements that districts will not be penalized for failure to meet these requirements due to the mandated school closure. We expect to receive additional information regarding this item over the upcoming week. Additional updates will follow.

#### **Visiting Campus:**

We ask that all parents, guardians, and students refrain from visiting campus during this closure. If you have an immediate issue that needs to be resolved, contact your child's principal.

#### **Cleaning:**

Our custodial and facility staff completed a deep cleaning of all District facilities over the past few days. This effort will continue, and we have contracted for additional cleaning support to augment our staff resources over the upcoming weeks.

**Educational Resources:**

WASD had planned to train all staff members over the next few days on distance learning. The Governor's state-wide closure prevents this from happening at this time in the format we had planned. WASD will send an additional email to all parents/guardians on March 16, 2020, with access to educational resources for students in grades K-12 to utilize during this closure.

**Student Lunch:**

WASD is developing a plan for the distribution of student lunches (starting Tuesday, March 17) during this closure as we know many students and families rely on school meals. Details on the plan will be sent to all WASD parents/guardians on March 16, 2020.

**Mental Health Support:**

The WASD remains committed to supporting our students' and families' needs related to mental health during this school closure. As we know the uncertainty of this pandemic can lead to stress and anxiety for children and adults, we have compiled a list of resources to support your efforts in keeping your family's mental health a priority.

How to Talk to Your Kids About COVID-19 (For younger children):

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

Talking with Children About the Coronavirus 2019:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus:

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

Additional local resources can be found below:

**Mental Health Crisis Hotlines:**

Service Access and Management (SAM)-610-236-0530 or text 484-816-7865 (RUOK)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline-1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

Crisis Text Line-Text HOME to 741741

Teen line-Text Teen to 839863

Trevor Project (LGBTQ)-1-866-488-7386, or text START to 678678

**Online Counseling Resources:**

\*Most have a cost but are reduced due to the coronavirus situation\*

Talkspace- [www.talkspace.com](http://www.talkspace.com)

Betterhelp- [www.betterhelp.com](http://www.betterhelp.com)

**Other Community Resources:**

Greater Berks Food Bank-Can provide a list of food banks near you

610-926-5802

<https://helpingharvest.org>

Salvation Army-Can provide financial, clothing and food assistance  
Offices in Reading and Boyertown  
610-373-5208 or 610-367-4089

Berks Community Action Program-Can provide financial resources, case management services and referrals

[645 Penn Street, 3rd Floor, Reading PA 19601](#)

610-376-6571

Safe Berks-Can provide free counseling, housing, and services to those experiencing domestic violence

[255 Chestnut Street, Reading PA 19601](#)

610-373-1206

Berks County Assistance Office-Can apply for food stamps, cash assistance, and medical assistance

[625 Cherry Street, Reading PA 19602](#)

866-215-3912

Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of these resources for additional support. Additionally, our school social worker, Theresa Lascala, can be reached at [tlascala@wyoarea.org](mailto:tlascala@wyoarea.org) if you require assistance in seeking services/support from the above agencies. We are all experiencing a great deal of emotions and uncertainty during this trying time and there is help available.

### **CDC Recommendations/Best Practices**

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following actions to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when sick.
- Coughing or sneezing into an elbow or use a tissue and placing immediately in the trash.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

### **Social Distancing**

Governor Wolf shared recommendations regarding social distancing during this crisis. Please see the link below:

<https://witf.org/2020/03/12/coronavirus-cases-and-testing-again-increase-in-pennsylvania/>

### **Travel**

For individuals who have traveled or have household members who have traveled recently, please visit the Travel portion of the CDC website

at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> for more information. This website also provides valuable guidance if you are considering travel outside the United States.

**Free Internet**

Effective Monday, March 16, 2020, Internet Essentials will increase speeds from 15/2 Mbps to 25/3 for all customers in response to emergency measures associated with Coronavirus (COVID-19). This speed increase will happen automatically - no action is required by customers. In addition, new customers will receive two months of free service. Click here for [more details, pricing, and other info](#).

**Additional Information**

The following link to the WASD website contains information and links from CDC, PDE, Governor Wolf, Berks County, PA Department of Health and others:  
[https://www.wyoarea.org/departments/health\\_services/coronavirus](https://www.wyoarea.org/departments/health_services/coronavirus)

The next WASD update for parents/guardians is scheduled for March 16, 2020. Thank you to all Spartans for your support and teamwork during this difficult time. We will continue to provide updates and information as it becomes available.

Thank you,  
Robert Scoboria  
WASD Superintendent