

# MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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641-421-4401

Dave Versteeg  
Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Superintendent of Schools, Mason City Community School District  
DATE: March 20, 2020  
RE: Emergency Closure Update – COVID-19

As we come to the end of Week 1 of the district's emergency operating plan response to the COVID-19 Emergency School Closure, we hope you and your families are doing well. Please know continued communication with our families is still one of our top priorities. As we have indicated in previous communications, **moving forward, we are asking our families** to start accessing the district website at [masoncityschools.org](http://masoncityschools.org) for updates. Should there be an issue of access to our website/technology, please use the contact information below to share that information so we can do our best to make sure ALL families are able to access updates. All updates are listed in the COVID-19 Emergency Closure Updates article on the home page and we will continue to add updates as they are available. **Future daily updates will be accessed by visiting our website.** The school notification system will be utilized for specific, urgent information and updates that need to be shared with our families.

Please continue to contact us with your questions and concerns to:  
641-450-5001 or email [sdeike@masoncityschools.org](mailto:sdeike@masoncityschools.org).

**Here are the updates for today, Friday, March 20, 2020:**

## **Emergency Food Program**

We are very pleased with the outreach through our Emergency Food Program. 1,588 meals served this week. What a phenomenal job by our food service staff and volunteers this week. This is an ongoing program while our schools are under the state's mandatory school closure. A curbside lunch and snacks in a sack pick-up for your children ages 1-18 will be available at Roosevelt Elementary and Harding Elementary from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. daily starting Tuesday, March 17. If delivery is needed, please contact Sarah Mariner, Food Service Supervisor, at 641-421-4501. Additional food items for weekend meals will be available to pick up in addition to the grab and go lunches on Friday. Please check your email or visit the district website and social media for more details regarding this program.

## **Calendar Information and Timelines**

**River City Honor Band:** The 2020 River City Honor Band scheduled for Saturday, April 25 at Lincoln Intermediate is cancelled.

**Mason City High School College/Career Planning Night & Financial Aid Information Night:** Both of these events scheduled for Wednesday, March 25 are cancelled.

**Mason City High School National Honor Society:** The Induction Ceremony planned for Thursday, March 26 has been postponed.

**Mason City High School Vocal Music:** Concert Choir WorldStrides Trip postponed, no future date set at this time. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

**Iowa High School Speech Association All State Festival:** The Individual Events All-State Festival scheduled for Monday, March 30 at UNI is cancelled.

**K-6 Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Conferences scheduled for Monday, March 30 and Thursday, April 2 are postponed.

**Iowa high school Music Association:** IHSMA State Solo/Ensemble Contest on April 18 and IHSMA State Large Group Contest on May 9 are cancelled.

*Providing quality education for ALL in a caring and responsive environment.*

**MCHS Prom and Post Prom:** On Wednesday (3-17-2020), [Governor Reynolds issued a State of Public Health Disaster Emergency](#). In this, Governor Reynolds proclaimed the following:

A. Restaurants and Bars: All Restaurants and Bars are hereby closed to the general public except that to the extent permitted by applicable law, and in accordance with any recommendations of the Iowa Department of Public Health, food and beverages may be sold if such food or beverages are promptly taken from the premises, such as on a carry-out or drive-through basis, or if the food or beverage is delivered to customers off the premises.

E. Mass Gathering: Social, community, spiritual, religious, recreational, leisure, and sporting gatherings and events of more than 10 people are hereby prohibited at all locations and venues, including but not limited to parades, festivals, conventions, and fundraisers. **Planned large gatherings and events must be canceled or postponed until after the termination of this disaster.**

Based upon this proclamation, and a result of conversations and support from Newman Catholic Schools, the Prom Advisor, and the After Prom Committee, we are recommending the postponement of Prom, currently scheduled on April 25. We will continue to abide by and adhere to future guidance from our Governor and Legislature before making any official decisions regarding the future date of Prom. We will make every effort to have Prom. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility during this difficult time.

### **Miscellaneous Other**

**Mental Health Services:** Francis Lauer Youth Services has reached out to let us know that they have counseling services available through telehealth services. They are continuing services with current clients and are able to accept new patients, both children and parents are welcome. If anyone is looking for services in these regards, please contact FLYS at 641-423-7362.

**Student Learning Educational Opportunities:** The mission of the Mason City Community School District is to provide a quality education for all in a caring and responsive environment. With that in mind, many staff members have been reaching out to connect with the students they serve. This quick response has also resulted in unintended consequences that may be confusing for students and families.

As a district, we offer the following guidance.

- The health and safety of our students and their families is our primary consideration.
- Any communication that will impact the district students, families and staff will come from the district office.
- This is a very stressful time for our students and families. We do not want to add additional stress to anyone.
- Any communication from teachers that offers educational opportunities will not impact a student's grade, credit or opportunity for graduation. Participating in these opportunities is completely optional for students. The intent is to provide an opportunity for learning that is universal, accessible and optional; not a requirement.
- The district leaders and building principals will be working on a plan for our return to school on April 13, 2020. Further information will be shared as it becomes available.

This guidance will be in place through April 10, 2020. We want you to know that we are here to help you in any way that we can. Please feel free to reach out to us with any further questions. Take care of yourself and your families!



Remember, to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, the CDC recommends the following actions:

- Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds or more with soapy water. If unavailable, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Important Links for your family:

Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

Iowa Department of Public Health

<https://idph.iowa.gov/>

CDC Website

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>

Cerro Gordo Public Health

<https://cghealth.com/>