



March 14, 2020

Dear Lakeshore Families,

The public health crisis created by COVID-19 has put our institutions, including K-12 school districts, in uncharted territory. Over the past week, Governor Whitmer issued many mandates to curb the spread of the virus, including the unprecedented step of closing schools. While I understand how disruptive these closures are to families and the community as a whole, we must do our part to take steps to prevent the spread of illness. In addition to proactive actions already taken by Lakeshore Public Schools, we will continue to follow the guidance of public health experts to protect our students, families, staff and the entire Lakeshore community. As we have more information, we will continue to communicate and provide updates on [lpslancers.net](http://lpslancers.net).

### **Evolving Situation**

As a result of this rapidly changing situation, we have reached the point where public safety concerns warrant the closing of schools. While our school facilities will be closed, plans to support student learning and provide nutrition services are being implemented.

We will use Monday and Tuesday of next week to continue our planning efforts so that we can transition effectively to a distance learning environment that supports the diverse needs of our students. We are also working on creating a list of free online resources to further student learning options. I want to thank the staff in LPS for their work in preparing for this scenario and their continued work to create options to mitigate the loss of instructional time.

We also understand that the closing of any school has significant consequences beyond the loss of instructional time and will result in challenges for many of our families. We are committed to providing available resources to support our families. With that in mind, we will continue having breakfast and lunch available for our free and reduced lunch students. These meals will begin on Monday, March 16th. We will be dropping off sack lunches and breakfast at 11:30 a.m. at the four sites listed on our website. Additional sites may be added as needed. These meals are for children under the age of 18.

I encourage you to contribute to the wellbeing of our community as well by checking in on our neighbors. If you become aware of a family that needs assistance and you cannot provide it, please email me. I will work to find resources to support those in need.

### **Cancelation of Activities and Field Trips**

Expert health agencies advise that to effectively mitigate the spread of COVID-19, a conscious effort must be made to reduce close contact between people. In an effort to support social distancing, activities that bring students together into close contact with each other have been canceled. These activities include all field trips, athletic activities (both practices and competition), and other extracurricular activities and performances. In addition, all school facilities, including sports fields, will remain closed to the public during the school closure. While children have not been shown to be a high-risk group for serious illness from this virus, these steps are critical in supporting public health as they can transmit the virus to those most vulnerable.

### **Next Steps**

Additional information regarding these supports and other services will be shared as soon as possible. On behalf of the Board of Education and staff at Lakeshore Public Schools, I appreciate your understanding as we work to implement distance learning and provide continuity of instruction and services. The evolving circumstances in Michigan and the nation will undoubtedly pose challenges. If we practice patience and understand that adapting quickly is critical, we will be able to continue to serve and support our students and families.

### **Stay Connected to LPS**

Lakeshore Public Schools will communicate with you often as we gain new information. In the meantime, continue to visit [lpslancers.net](https://lpslancers.net) for updates. If you have questions, after reviewing the resources available, please feel free to email them to me at [pfreeman@lpslancer.net](mailto:pfreeman@lpslancer.net). We will do our best to answer questions in a timely manner and will regularly update our frequently asked questions on our website. Additionally, please make sure your contact information is up to date in our parent portal as well so that you will receive emailed updates.

The strength of our District, and the community as a whole, is best demonstrated in situations such as the one we currently face. Our first priority is the safety of our students, staff, families and community. We will continue to manage the process as well as we can by staying updated with the most recent information and follow the guidance provided by the Berrien County Health Department (BCHD), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC). By working together, we can and will continue to support our students through this difficult time.

Thank you for your partnership and support.

Phil Freeman  
Superintendent  
Lakeshore Public Schools