

March 27, 2020

Dear EMS ISD Families,

After consulting with Tarrant County Health officials, EMS ISD is joining other area school districts in extending our emergency closure. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, EMS ISD buildings will remain closed to the public through April 17. Distance learning and curbside meal service will continue throughout the closure, and district office personnel will be responding to emails, voicemails, and Let's Talk messages. We will continue to assess the appropriate timing to re-open our facilities on a weekly basis and will coordinate with the appropriate authorities in doing so.

As of today, Texas has more than 1,700 confirmed cases of the virus in 105 counties, and the United States has surpassed both China and Italy in the number of COVID-19 cases. It's clear that our communities need more time to flatten the curve and prevent rapid spread of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Please join all of us in EMS ISD as we follow the emergency disaster orders and social distancing restrictions set forth by our city, county, and state officials. Together, we believe we can slow down the virus and make a difference for our health care system.

Schools are not supposed to have empty hallways and quiet classrooms. I know I speak for our more than 2,800 teachers, support staff, and administrators when I say we truly miss your children! We are doing everything we can to provide meaningful distance learning lessons and counseling resources to ensure continuity of services for our students. Our employees in the technology and child nutrition departments have been incredible in their efforts to make sure students and staff remain connected and well-fed. Our staff in custodial, maintenance, and safety and security are managing the monumental task of taking care of our buildings in your absence, and our curriculum and instruction personnel and our teachers are working overtime to make sure your children's academic goals are met. The pictures and posts being shared online tell a story of a community that is resilient in the face of adversity and committed to helping those in need.

During this time of closure, we are required to use up our bad weather days that are designated on the school calendar and built into our school day minutes. This means the bad weather days scheduled for April 10 and May 22 will now become work/school days. The State has indicated that we may be able to apply for waivers for days missed beyond our bad weather days. We do not have final information yet about the end of the school year, but we will share that with you once we receive State guidance.

Thank you, parents, for your patience and support during these difficult times. We are proud to be a part of a community that steps up to help and support one another when it's needed most. We pledge to keep you informed about any new developments during this extended school closure. We look forward to the day when we can reopen our doors and welcome your children back with a smile and a hug.

Sincerely,

Jim F. Chadwell, Ed.D.
Superintendent