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SHANNON C. KING, SUPERINTENDENT

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” —Aristotle

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

As you know, earlier this week Governor Kemp made the difficult to decision to close schools for the remainder of the year. My heart goes out to all of our community, parents, students (especially our seniors), and staff as they are attempting to come to terms with this reality.

I have struggled over how to express my feelings and how to offer some words of comfort. I say to you with all humility, “I have no words”. To simply say that I am sorry seems so inadequate when your worries are so big. The president, the governor, and no other being on this earth has the answer for this...answers and peace will only come from above, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” ~ [Philippians 4:6-7](#)

This has reminded me that we are not in control, we can only control how we respond. Let’s think for a moment at how we have responded and the lessons our responses have taught our children (and each other).

- We need each other (Teachers and Parents are working together to help our students learn)
- We miss each other (We are struggling with not seeing each other)
- We will cherish each other more from now on (We’ve learned the importance of having friends and family to share our joys and struggles)
- We will enjoy the “little things” more (We look forward to our hugs, handshakes, and “high fives” from others)
- We can count on each other (Our community and churches have stepped up to provide meals for our kids)
- We are kind to each other (Our teachers, parents, and students are working as a team)

We have responded well! Our Echols County Board of Education, Administration team, teachers, and staff have responded with only the best interest of our students in mind. Our students are working on continued learning and our parents have been very supportive. We are so blessed to live in a community that responds to a tough situation in a Godly way. You are teaching our children such a valuable lesson through your actions.

I am certain that you have many questions and concerns. We will do our best to provide you with the information you seek, but know that we are making decisions on a daily and ever-changing basis. Please be patient and know that each decision is being made with as much thought and insight as possible.

Below are a few updates that I hope will answer some of your questions and ease your mind. I’ll provide more information as it becomes available. Feel free to contact me with additional questions and concerns.

Final Grades/Awarding Credit/Promotion/Retention:

1. K-8 students will receive grades based on the first three 9-weeks. If a student was not failing at the time the closure began, that is the grade they will receive for that class. After Spring Break, teachers will reach out to anyone who was failing at the time of closure to discuss an individualized learning plan which will allow the student an opportunity to earn a passing score based on their performance.
2. High School – All students will receive credit for the semester for whatever classes they were in, provided they were passing at the time of the closure. After Spring Break, teachers will reach out to anyone who was failing at the time of closure to discuss an individualized learning plan which will allow the student an opportunity to earn a passing credit based on their performance. This will not include Dual Enrollment; that will be up to the College. Mrs. Black, our high school Counselor, will be working with those students individually.

Continued Learning for Students:

1. **K-12 Students who were failing when the closure began** --teachers will create individualized learning plans. Teachers will contact those families after Spring Break to set up the plan.
2. **K-12 Students passing classes when then closure began-** teachers (K-12) will assign non-mandatory, enrichment-type work. This will be digital resources and/or learning packets for students without digital access. Students will not be required to return work. This is simply to extend learning. Please continue to check social media and websites for resources.
3. **Communication-** Teachers will continue to check in with students/parents periodically, though calls, Remind, or whatever method works best for that teacher/class.

Additional Information:

Next Learning Packet Pick-Up- April 29th and April 30th from 10 a.m. -12 p.m. at K-8 Campus

Kindergarten Registration- information forthcoming (postponed for now)

Graduation- May 22, 2020 (We aren't giving up yet! It may not be our typical graduation, but we will figure something out. 😊)

Although these are difficult times for all, together we can get through this. Thank you for your support and prayers!

We truly are, "The Right Size for Excellence"!

Best Regards,

Shannon C. King
Superintendent
Echols County Schools