

Decorah Community School District
Message to Families
April 17, 2020



Good Afternoon,

Earlier today, Governor Kim Reynolds announced the current emergency closure of Iowa PK-12 public and non-public schools will continue for the remainder of the school year. While I appreciate knowing this information now, that doesn't lessen the sadness I feel. I am sorry that our students will not be together in our buildings to learn and enjoy each other's company this spring. I am especially sad for our seniors, who will not have the opportunity to have the senior year experiences that up to now we have taken for granted.

As Governor Reynolds made this announcement today, Iowa educators received new COVID-19 guidance. As we have with each new piece of guidance, we will take time to understand the expectations for school districts, we will engage with key stakeholders to gather feedback and plan, and we will communicate with our staff, students, families and community. You can review the most recent COVID-19 guidance for Iowa schools at this link.

[COVID-19 Continuous Learning and Return-to-Learn Guidance](#)

Several weeks ago, we began planning for continuous learning. When we began that work, we did so with the intent that our plans would be sustainable through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. With Governor Reynolds' announcement today, we will move forward as we did this week. You can continue to use the [DCSD Continuous Learning Site](#) as the primary point of entry for accessing PK-8 learning opportunities, and 9-12 required learning services.

We have been pleased with the engagement we have seen throughout this first week of continuous learning. Students are engaging in learning, completing activities, sharing with their teachers and each other, and receiving feedback. We are committed to learning and improving as we go. Our teachers are asking questions, collaborating, listening to feedback, and making improvements on a daily basis.

As we move into the second week of continuous learning we want to share a few reminders and key pieces of information.

Our DCSD staff is not able to provide technology support for family owned devices. If you do not yet have your student's district issued iPad or laptop, please contact your building principal to make arrangements to pick up the device.

Students should use ClassLink to access the DCSD Continuous Learning Site. This site was created using Canvas, a learning management system specially designed for educational settings. All resources your children need can be accessed through ClassLink and the site.

Here is a link to a video I created with my son demonstrating how to get to the site using his district-issued iPad and ClassLink.

[Access the DCSD Continuous Learning Canvas Site YouTube Video](#)

Once on the site, please read the slides for instructions specific to your child's grade level.

If you need assistance, or have questions for a teacher, you can use the link below to access phone numbers. Please feel free to call or email, and our staff will assist you.

[Decorah CSD Direct Dial Phone Numbers](#)

If you have specific technology questions or needs, you can reach out to members of our technology team using the contact information below.

DCSD District Technology Support Contact Information (8:00 AM - 3:00 PM)

- Decorah Middle School & Carrie Lee Elementary Technician- Theresa Stortz (563) 387-5721
- Decorah High School, John Cline Elementary, West Side Early Childhood Center Technician - Lee Fullhart (563) 387-5882
- Access and Use of Applications Questions - Shannon Quandahl - (563) 387-5882
- Any District Level Technology Questions - Kurt MJ DeVore - (563) 387-5700

I also want to share a link to the Iowa Red Cross YouTube channel. They have created some nice videos related to mental health and coping during the COVID-19 crisis. If you or someone in your family is struggling, please don't hesitate to contact us here at school, and we will do our best to provide assistance.

[Iowa Red Cross YouTube Channel: Coping with COVID-19 Videos](#)

In closing, I am incredibly grateful to our students and staff who created meaningful learning this week. I had opportunities to engage with a number of students and staff, and people were overwhelmingly positive and appreciative. Now that we know there is no possibility of a return to school for this school year, we will commit ourselves to making the best of our continuous learning options.

Please stay safe, and thank you for your support of Decorah Schools.

Mark M. Lane, Superintendent of Schools