

# Bark River - Harris Schools

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you are reading this letter, around the entire world, scientists, economists, educators and political leaders are all making comments about how these times are unlike anything before. In fact, just this morning, the news headlines announced our Federal Government reached a \$2 trillion coronavirus stimulus deal – the largest in U.S history. Truly unprecedented times indeed. We are approaching the two-week mark since Governor Gretchen Whitmer ordered all Michigan Schools to close and I wanted to provide an update on the status of our School District.

- Length of closure – Michigan schools are closed through April 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Standardized tests – The state of Michigan has submitted an official waiver request to the Federal Government requesting all standardized tests (M-Step and SAT) are cancelled. This request has been approved, but our State Legislature still needs to act on this matter before standardized tests are cancelled. We suspect this decision will be forthcoming soon.
- Status of the building – our custodial staff has thoroughly disinfected and provided a deep clean of the entire school. Only essential school personnel are being allowed into the building during this closure.
- School activities – all school activities during this mandatory closure have been postponed or cancelled. We are hopeful to be able to resume our Spring sports when we return, but at this time, we do not know if that will be possible.
- School work – On Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, our teachers will be participating in a virtual faculty meeting and we will be planning to prepare additional school work for your children. This school work will not cover any new content, but will focus heavily on enrichment and review. Depending on the age of your children, this will look different. Some of our families have access to on-line resources, while others do not. Therefore, we will do our very best to meet the needs of our students and will either send material home, or continue to work virtually.
- School Lunch Program – During this extended closure, BRH will continue providing food for our students. We have a comprehensive program that we are offering and we are extremely committed to this cause. Throughout the state of Michigan, there are 1,400 school meal sites sponsored by nearly 600 districts. Though less than 50% of school sites in Michigan are participating in these types of programs, we are proud to say we are doing our best to go above and beyond. Our program can be accessed a number of ways:

Backpack Program – We are able to provide meals to students through our backpack program. We pack a weeks' worth of food and deliver the backpacks to the homes of these families. This program is run by a group of amazing parent volunteers that take this initiative very seriously. We are blessed to have the support of these volunteers!

Hannahville Delivery – We are able to pack lunches and deliver these lunches to the Nah Tah Wahsh School in which a team from BRH and NTW delivers the food to our students residing in this area.

Meal Pick-Up – We are packing meals and providing opportunities for families to pick up the food at the school two times a week. Monday's pick up is for two days and Wednesday's pick up is for three days' worth of food. This pick up time is from 1 p.m to 2 p.m. Originally, we asked parents to call ahead so that we had better numbers for planning purposes, but have since waived this step.

Additionally, for families that do not live in the immediate Bark River area, the School Meals Program will continue to be provided by school districts currently doing so until further notice. As previously mentioned, over 1,400 school meal sites around the state can be found at [Meet Up and Eat Up Site Locator Map](#).

Our program looks differently than neighboring schools as our demographics are very different. We have been working hard to meet the need of all our students and we've been making adjustments to these offerings as the needs have changed.

In closing, we all miss your children very much. Though we really want to see our students, social distancing requirements and recent stay at home executive orders forbids these types of opportunities. However, we will try to offer some fun on-line opportunities for students and families to participate in. Please do not hesitate to email your teachers or school personnel if you have any questions at all. Contact information can be found at [www.brhschools.org](http://www.brhschools.org). As more information becomes available, we will do our best to communicate with you through our webpage or Facebook.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Lockwood', written in a cursive style.

Jason Lockwood, Ed.S  
Bark River-Harris Superintendent.