

Twin Valley Schools

Unified District No. 240
Box 38 / Bennington, Kansas 67422-0038
(785) 488-3325

March 27, 2020

Twin Valley Parents,

I wanted to reach out as the traditional work week comes to an end to let you know what is coming for Twin Valley parents and students as it pertains to the end of the school term. Once again, I partitioned this into sections in order to make it easier for you.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING PLAN

Beginning Monday, March 30, each attendance centers will be communicating with you and your children their plans to provide for continuous learning opportunities for all Twin Valley students. As was stated in the letter emailed, posted on social media and as well as our district website on March 22, 2020, our staff began working in earnest on a plan applying the guidance from the Kansas State Department of education on March 23. They have worked tirelessly to consider the needs of families while offering legitimate educational opportunities for children to have equal access to what will be the last quarter of this abbreviated 2019-2020 school year. Many teachers and other staff may have already reached out to parents and/or students as they worked through this process to ensure access and equity for all.

As I had stated in the March 22 letter, this will not be perfect, especially in the beginning. The logistics behind this undertaking are not as simple as getting assignments ready online, etc. We continue to examine survey results from parents for our 530 plus district students to see what sort of availability to devices and/or Internet students may have as well as working to meet preferences regarding packet only, online only, or a combination of both. We also want to ensure we have social-emotional components built into the plan. Each teacher and/or staff member has considered the needs of each student as they have put together this plan.

The USD 240 BOE met on Thursday, March 26, 2020 to approve the tentative plan that we must file with the KSDE. At that meeting, the plan components were explained and approved. The plan will be posted on the district Covid-19 website. In addition, the meeting was recorded and a link to the Youtube video can be found by going to the USD 240 website and the same Covid-19 page. The meeting is approximately an hour and one-half long. The video quality is not great nor is it always easy to hear as our equipment is not set up for social distancing.

For those wanting packets only or a combination of online/packet instruction, we are still in the process of working out logistics as they relate to drop-off and pickup of materials. There will be communication coming out as buildings assemble that information from staff as they have worked through the individual responses, coordinated with teachers that have siblings to ensure we are efficient in that delivery, and a host of other things. We want this as good as it possibly be the first time while not letting perfect be the enemy of good enough to get going.

WEBSITE FOR UPDATES

Initially, buildings will be communicating their plans to you all. By the middle of next week, we plan to have an “anchor page” at the district site that will take you to buildings and other important resources during the remainder of this year. It is hard enough finding the information where and when you need it. We are truly trying to make this as easy as possible for parents and students. Please check around Wednesday of next week for that page to be in place.

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FOOD SERVICE-WHERE, WHEN AND HOW

This is another plug for free grab and go lunches along with next-day breakfasts being offered at each campus through what would be the end of school this year. For those in the rural areas, we are delivering those meals. You do not have to be a student to get the free meal, you only have to be between the ages of 1 through 18. This will run through the end of the school year.

If you do NOT sign up your child for a meal for whatever reason (via one of the two methods described below), you can still drop off at either the Bennington or the Tescott facility between 11:30 am-12:30 pm and get a meal. You may have to wait for a bit as they might have to prepare those for your children, but they will NOT turn anyone away.

For those that live in Salina, there are locations hosted by USD 305 where you can also pick up those free meals. That information listed below.

USD 305 FREE GRAB-AND-GO BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

- Open 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. weekdays, March 30-April 3.
- Available to all children ages 1-18.
- No signup, eligibility, or paperwork required.
- Children must be present per federal government (USDA) requirements.
- Visit any site regardless of school attended.

Drive-thru distribution of meals from seven school sites:

- Schilling Elementary, 3121 Canterbury
- Sunset Elementary, 1510 W. Republic
- Cottonwood Elementary, 215 S. Phillips
- Oakdale Elementary, 811 E. Iron
- South Middle School, 2015 Simmons
- Central High School, 650 E. Crawford
- Heartland Early Education, 700 Jupiter

You have two options to order meals at Twin Valley:

- **OPTION #1:** You must call 785-488-3325 ext. 279 with the number of 18 or under meals between 7:30-9:00 am. PLEASE DIAL THAT EXTENSION.
 - This form has You MAY order meals for the whole week for all of your children on any day of the week that you call.
 - Also include whether or not you want that meal(s) delivered IF you are a resident of the district in the rural areas.
 - Some families indicated that they wanted meals for the whole week available on Monday so that the child does not have to come each day. IF YOU WANT THAT OPTION, PLEASE INDICATE AS SUCH WHEN YOU ORDER.
- **OPTION #2:** If you do not want to call OR want to be able to order meals for the week of March 30-April 3, you may use the link below to place that order.
 - We are asking for a valid email address ONLY to ensure we can contact the person submitting the form.
 - Some families indicated that they wanted meals for the whole week available on Monday so that the child does not have to come each day. IF YOU WANT THAT OPTION, PLEASE INDICATE AS SUCH WHEN YOU ORDER.
 - **LINK TO ORDER MEALS:** <https://forms.gle/mGWcQUMqEQkJXUJC8>

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INTERNET ACCESS

One of the barriers we know students and families will have is Internet access. We have ordered more hotspots for student checkout that we hope will be here sometime next week. Principals will work with families on the distribution of those hotspots. For those that we cannot accommodate on a daily basis, we will be providing jump drives with the necessary files from teachers (video, etc.) for them to load onto their Chromebooks. Please reach out to principals and/or teachers if you are struggling in this regard.

Mr. Pecenka is placing additional access points towards the parking lots of our buildings so that people can get access that way. Buildings do remain locked, so that is one alternative that might be helpful to parents and students. He will also try to place an additional access point that will extend the reach out in front of the central office.

In Bennington, the fire station north of town has an open portion of their network that anyone can access without a password. The Bennington Bible Church will also have access in front of their church beginning on Monday, March 30. The Bennington Community Library also has access in front of their facility. The latter two will require a password to get on to their network. Email principals for that information or ask other students. We are looking at additional options in Tescott as well. If you know of any, please let Mr. Kimmi know so that we can publicize the information.

CLOSING

I am so proud of the way our staff has worked this week to provide these opportunities for your children. Thanks again for your patience and understanding as we work through this process. This is a very trying time for all and we are doing everything we can to serve the families at Twin Valley.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at my office or via email at fvanranken@usd240.org.

Best regards,

Fred Van Ranken-Twin Valley Superintendent