



May 13, 2020

Dear Representative Steffen and Senator Cowles,

I hope this letter finds you and those around you safe and healthy. During these unprecedented times, our State leaders are faced with increased demands, so I thank you for your continued support and service to the members of our community and the State of Wisconsin.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an update from the Ashwaubenon School District as we continue to address the ever changing dynamics and also challenges brought upon us by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our preparations began in late February, when a team of twelve administrators and leaders from our district formed the Pandemic Planning Committee. At that time, the team began creating plans in case the COVID-19 pandemic hit our area and started affecting our schools. These initial plans included, but were not limited to:

- Determine critical business processes that must be maintained and cross-train staff
- Determine employees necessary to maintain all critical business processes
- Prepare a communications plan
- Prepare for students learning remotely, including preparing teachers to virtually share lessons and communicate with classes
- Determine necessary cleaning and PPE supplies
- Create work from home plans, including preparing necessary technology and equipment needed to work remotely
- Prepare for loss of power, internet, gas, water, telephones, and other utilities
- Teach/reinforce protective and safety actions
- Prepare for supply chain failures

Over the next couple weeks, our team continues to collaborate on our plans. I also worked with neighboring school district superintendents to determine what was best for students, families, staff and community as we saw the spread of COVID-19 occurring in Wisconsin. It was decided that schools would be closed beginning on March 17th to ensure the safety of our students, staff and community.

**Although our physical buildings were closed to students, our schools were anything but closed in regards to providing our students the education and services they needed.** Our entire staff began working diligently to prepare, collaborate and create lessons, activities and resources for our students and families to continue learning, receiving meals and needed supports while our buildings were closed.

We began our remote learning plans by preparing for lessons to be taught outside of school. One of the first tasks to complete was to ensure that all students had access to a device and the internet. Our high school and eighth grade were already in a one-to-one environment, with 712 students using school-issued chromebooks and 490 using their own devices. Our technology department went into quick action to survey families to determine who needed chromebooks and internet access. We deployed an additional 356 school chromebooks to students in need and provided resources for free and low cost internet access.

The transition of learning within our physical classrooms to a virtual environment was sudden, happening within 48 hours. Our teachers went above and beyond in adapting to this new way of educating, connecting and communicating with our students and families, utilizing online platforms such as Google Classroom, SeeSaw, and Google Meet. In addition to these previously mentioned online platforms, our staff delivered learning materials to the homes of families. Grade level and department staff worked collaboratively in creating their remote learning lessons and resources, which were then compiled into our new [Remote Learning Website](#). Please look at this website to see the incredible work our teachers have done to continue quality education, and you will see why I am so incredibly proud of the staff at the Ashwaubenon School District.

Since March 17th, I am proud to report that the Remote Learning Website has been accessed by 10,363 different devices, with 69,798 page views. The website steadily averages around 2,000 unique device views a week, proving that the information available is valuable to our students and families.

Another area of need we immediately addressed was food service. With approximately 36% of our students qualifying for free and reduced lunches, our food service staff jumped into action to provide meals to those needing them. We started our meal distribution outside four of our school buildings, but soon found that even more families were needing nutrition who were unable to travel to these locations. Because of this, we added five additional locations to our meal distribution list. Busses are loaded each morning with meals, and staff volunteers travel to these locations to get the meals to those who need it most. In all, we have served over 20,000 meals so far during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Communicating with our families, staff and community has been and continues to be a top priority. Up-to-date information can be accessed by visiting our [Coronavirus Webpages](#), which includes Coronavirus information and safety tips, mental health resources, meal pickup locations, remote learning resources, information sent out to families, and answers to frequently asked questions.

We made the decision to keep all of our employees on payroll, maintaining their salaries and benefits. At this point, we have not furloughed or laid off a single employee. We are a large employer in the village of Ashwaubenon and Green Bay area, and we clearly understand the economic impact of keeping our employees whole. Each of our employees have been working on providing the education, resources, and support that are helping all of our students and families during these times.

Despite our district doing its very best with providing quality education, communication and resources to our students and families, we are seeing some frustrations and challenges. Two of our elementary schools have poverty levels at or approaching 41%, and assuring access to the resources necessary for continued learning remotely requires continued support. A challenge we face is providing equitable access to our learning resources as well as an equitable home learning environment. These inequities include:

- Shared technology among a number of family members within one household
- Shared bandwidth to support the needs of home, work and school
- Siblings providing child care to younger children while their parents are working
- Parents unable to support student learning on a daily or week day basis

We are planning and preparing for the future, including our upcoming summer school and what the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year might look like in fall. Currently, we are working on offering virtual summer school courses to students in July. Although there are many unknowns surrounding the

start of school in fall, our leadership team has been diligent in preparing for the different possible scenarios.

In closing, I want to express how truly proud I am of the staff in the Ashwaubenon School District, as well as all educators throughout Wisconsin. I feel extremely honored to work with such a dedicated, hardworking and caring group of individuals. In addition, our students continue to amaze and inspire me. They have shown much resilience and flexibility during these unprecedented and challenging times, and I couldn't be prouder of them.

Thank you for all of your efforts in serving our community and the State of Wisconsin. I appreciate your leadership and support for the students of Wisconsin. I welcome your calls or emails, and am happy to discuss the ongoing work being done in the Ashwaubenon School District. A great deal of decisions will need to be made as we navigate the road ahead to continue providing for all of our students.

Sincerely,

Kurt Weyers  
Superintendent of Schools  
Ashwaubenon School District  
[kweyers@ashwaubenonk12.org](mailto:kweyers@ashwaubenonk12.org)  
920.492.2905 ext.1003