



April 3, 2020

Dear Tiger Families,

Wow! Can I just say the last 24 hours has been busy? I really hope you are enjoying the sunshine we had yesterday and today, safely. I have been in numerous meetings with several of our leading educational organizations including legislative, Lake Superior State University, MAPSA, and most recently the awesome Tipton Academy staff. We have several updates to share and still some pieces we are finalizing. In order to efficiently answer your questions, I'll try to be as clear and concise as I can be on each item.

RETURN TO SCHOOL

At this point, the Governor has closed the school buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. The Governor has not canceled school. Each local school district is required to provide a Continuation of Learning Plan. This plan must include how we are continuing to provide curriculum and new learning to our students while they are outside of our school building. This is what people are referring to as distance learning. This can happen in many ways depending on each school's resources and community. The good news is that we, at Tipton, already have a plan in place and can continue with our distance learning with no interruptions. There are a few items we will be polishing and there are some areas we will be clarifying as we move forward. Please be patient as we are truly doing our best to move through these new pathways and provide as much support to our staff, students, and families as possible.

As of now, we will continue with our regular school calendar. Our spring break period begins today and runs through April 12th. Our last day of school remains June 11th for 1st-7th grades, June 10th for kindergarten, and June 8th for eighth grade. Other specific dates will be provided as we move forward.

DISTANCE LEARNING

The Governor's executive order requires that we continue providing learning as we have been. Please understand that participation in distance learning is not optional. I realize that there has been some confusion with this as different districts, news broadcasts, and entities have provided different messages. All of the work we have done from March 16th forward will count toward grades and report cards. We have, however, adjusted how report cards will be completed based on these changes and explain that further below.

As part of our learning plan, there will be required video meetings, lessons, and demonstrations of work planned. Participation in these is necessary for your students to not only progress in their learning, but is essential for their social and emotional growth by staying connected to their peers. Our teachers, support staff, and leaders are working hard to provide the best they can for our students. We want this time and work to be meaningful and provide purpose for our entire Tiger family. If you are not able to access these platforms, it's important that you let us know right away. You can call the school between 8-

3pm, email your teacher or leader, or send us a message on DOJO. We will find alternate opportunities to include your family in learning.

After spring break, we will provide additional guidance and clarifications for you as parents for the amount of time your child should be spending doing school work at home. Time spent on schoolwork at home does not equate to time spent in the school building. It is significantly less, but will still be daily.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be similar to the same schedule as was in place with a modification to the term. The report cards should be provided approximately April 17th for quarter 3. The Quarter 3 time-period has been adjusted to account for assignments provided through March 12th. Those grades were based on teaching and learning that took place in our traditional format. Quarter 4 will be all of the teaching and learning that took place from March 16th-June 11th. Grades for distance learning will be based upon the student's ability to show mastery of learning in the standards taught during this time period. Please be patient with our staff as we are being patient with our students and parents. This is all new. We are all on the team. We want our students to do well, continue learning, and manage through this new way of doing school as successfully as possible.

PROMOTION and RETENTION

All students that were on track to be promoted will continue to be on track for promotion. They will still participate in distance learning to continue their growth as expected and receive report cards with grades. If students were at-risk of being retained as of March 12th, their promotion or retention will depend upon evidence of growth and administrative review at the end of the school year. It is especially important that these students participate in all of the additional learning supports offered through our intervention team in addition to their classroom teacher.

GRADUATION CEREMONIES

We will still have ceremonies and/or celebrations for our GSRP, Kindergarten, and 8th Grade students. We are still exploring options for this, but we will find a way to celebrate those milestones.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

All state level assessments have been waived for the 2019-2020 school year. It is possible if you have an 8th grade student that they may take the PSAT in the fall of their 9th grade year at their high school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION and 504

Our team is continuing to service our students in these areas. We are doing our best to provide to continued growth aligned to their plans. If your student has one of these plans, it is important that you are communicating with your student's team members and making sure your child is participating in the services that are provided to them.

We have been advised that under the current circumstances, we are unable to do new evaluations. If your child was in the process of an evaluation, our team will communicate to you as we are provided more direction from the State and Federal IDEA on when and how to proceed with these evaluations.

OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS

We will communicate with the individuals this area directly impacts, as information becomes available.

STUDENT ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Under the current “Stay Put” order by the Governor, we will not be opening our school building to have students pick up their personal items. If there are critical items such as medication or something they absolutely need, please contact your child’s teacher or the office team by calling the school 8-3pm Monday-Friday, DOJO, or email. We will work with you to ensure that you receive these items. We do not want to expose our Tiger family to the potential of illness until it is safer. At the time we are able to, we will set up designated times for families to come up to the school to gather any personal items at the school.

MEAL SERVICE

Because many of our families depend on meal services, we have planned to continue with meal service during the week of spring break. It will continue as it has: Monday pick-up is from 9:30-11:30am and includes breakfast and lunch for 3 days, whereas Wednesday pick up is from 9:30-11:30am and includes breakfast and lunch for 4 days. Please follow the directions on the meal service announcements for the safety of our staff and families.

We will continue to provide meals for as long as we can have enough healthy staff or volunteers to provide it. We keep very high precautions in place to ensure that this can continue for the duration of the need. We are very thankful to the staff that have committed to work and volunteer during this time as well as to CJ’s Catering and Food Service for being able to accommodate the needs of our families.

SUPPORT

I would like to reiterate, we realize that right now the most important focus is for everyone to feel connected and supported. In addition to your child’s teacher, we have our awesome emotional support team and admin team available as well. Please don’t hesitate to let us know if you need their assistance. During spring break, take time to “just be” together! I have attached some additional resources for self care that has been shared with me. This is new for all of us! We are in this together and will continue to be in this together!

WHAT NEXT

You will take a break from school! Go on a virtual vacation! Seek out pictures of beautiful places around the world or just enjoy time on your porch with your family. Our school leadership team will be working on our learning plan approval over spring break. Our goal is to have all of the details finalized when we reconnect on April 13th. I will continue to update you as information comes or at minimum on Friday of each week. If we have any confirmed cases in our school, we will be notifying you.

Therefore, it is extremely important that if you or a member of your household are being tested for the COVID 19 virus that you contact Dr. Lackey, Mrs. Orlando, or myself through DOJO, email, or calling the school phone number as soon as possible.

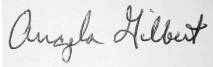
THANK YOU

Lastly, I cannot say this enough... THANK YOU to our entire Tiger Family for all of your understanding, patience, commitment, support, gratitude and everything that makes you a TIGER!!!! We have been told over and over through this situation that we are leaders and

other schools are asking for our support during this time. Thank you for helping us to make a difference in the lives of so many during this time. I will also continue to say THANK YOU to all of the dedicated frontline Tiger parents and family members that are critical infrastructure and essential personnel for helping us to all survive during this time. We recognize that you are struggling too, and if you need anything additional during this time, please don't hesitate to reach out and let me or anyone on our team know you need something. To each and every one of our Tiger family members, YOU ARE ENOUGH! YOU ARE SEEN! YOU ARE THOUGHT OF! YOU ARE IMPORTANT! AND YOU MATTER IN OUR LIVES!

We are in this together! Sending hugs and love to our entire Tiger family!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela Gilbert". The signature is written in black ink on a light gray rectangular background.

Mrs. Angela Gilbert
Superintendent, Tipton Academy