

March 13, 2020

Dear Parents, Faculty, and Staff,

The health of our students, staff, families, communities, and most vulnerable is of utmost importance, and we support all efforts to reduce the impact of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released guidelines for school districts on school closures on March 13, 2020. In consideration of the unprecedented situation in Wisconsin and the nation, both the North Shore and Washington Ozaukee Public Health Departments support “medium length” school closures for schools to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. This coincides with President Trump’s declaration of a national emergency and the declaration of a state of emergency by Washington County.

As a result, St. Gabriel Catholic Parish School--along with the following school districts: Holy Hill Area School District, Kewaskum, West Bend, Slinger, Hartford Union High School, Hartford Jt. 1, Herman-Neosho-Rubicon, and Erin--will be closing for the next four weeks. **This means that our school, along with others, will be closed for a four-week period. St. Gabriel will resume school on Monday, April 13, 2020.**

The impact of a single case of COVID-19 in any one school in a district is extremely significant. If one student or staff member becomes infected, everyone who was in close contact will need to be quarantined for 14 days. Close contacts include anyone who spends time, within six feet, of the positive case. When considering the proximity of a school environment, the contacts and exposures grow exponentially, and quickly. We are supporting closures before community transmission is confirmed to greatly reduce further spread of the COVID-19 in the community. We recommend that you follow the CDC and Public Health Department guidelines regarding social distancing and group size for gathering. In addition, please continue to follow CDC guidelines to minimize the risk of contracting illness.

In anticipation of a possible school closure, our students were encouraged to take home chromebooks, textbooks, and instructional materials today. Teachers already have been at work on preparing virtual learning activities with students in grades 4-8 via Google classroom. For students in grades K-3, teachers are making preparations for a blend of online learning resources as well as print materials. Please watch for additional information on Monday, March 16, as we plan to schedule a time early next week when parents may collect print materials and assignments. If your student was absent today or is in need of additional instructional materials, please email your student’s teacher to request the needed items so that we can have those

ready to be collected as well.

In addition, please watch for additional clarification on Monday regarding academic expectations for students during these next few weeks. Since we plan to return to school on Monday, April

13, we would be resuming classes during what previously had been our scheduled Easter break. While there have been many travel disruptions already due to coronavirus impacts, we understand that some families still may have travel plans for the week of April 13.

This has been an extraordinary week for our school community, our state, and our nation. Thank you for your continued support as we all work to minimize the risk of illness and to ensure the safety of our students and families.

With blessings to all the St. Gabriel community,

Bridget
Bartholomew
Principal