

# PALESTINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*"Palestine ISD... A World-Class Academic Organization"*

Jason Marshall  
Superintendent

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Date: Friday, March 20, 2020 (12:00 pm)

PISD Students, Staff, and Parents,

I hope you received my School Messenger call out Wednesday afternoon and that I provided you enough information to make your family's plans for the next two weeks. At the time of the call out, I did not know the Governor of the State of Texas was planning to close all schools for the next two weeks. When Governor Abbott took that action yesterday, I was relieved that the decision PISD had previously made coincided with his decision so as not to further confuse our school community.

At this time, I want to summarize the adjustments that PISD and others have taken and are taking in order to do our part in keeping everyone as safe as we possibly can.

1. PISD will complete our current Spring Break this week. And, as a part of our Spring Break, all of our district facilities have already been closed and thoroughly cleaned.
2. In compliance with Governor Abbott's directive, PISD will further close all campuses and facilities to everyone except staff members immediately. This closure will last until at least Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.  
**Until further notified, however, we fully expect to reopen campuses for normal operation on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, at the regular time.**
3. The district's TACE program is also suspended through Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.
4. The UIL, which governs extracurricular activities in the state of Texas, has suspended all games and practices until at least Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. This means that no PISD team or group will be able to hold a formal practice or contest until the suspension is lifted. The UIL does have plans, however, to see that high school teams who have not completed their seasons are able to do so once the suspension is removed.
5. Judge Robert Johnston, Anderson County Judge, declared a state of disaster due to the COVID -19 situation yesterday. Among several other actions, Judge Johnston has restricted public gatherings to 10 or fewer people in a confined space, room, or area.

Additionally, I want to let you know each of our staff members will continue working over the next two weeks in order to continue "school" as best as we can. In order to comply with the 10 people or fewer restriction as well as practice social distancing, however, our staff members will work on a rotating basis. And due to this adjusted schedule, I think it's important for our community to know what our staff members will be doing and that they can still be contacted if you need them.

1. Custodial staff – will continue cleaning facilities as normal focusing on deep cleaning and applying germ killing chemicals.
2. Maintenance staff – will continue performing normal duties and use this campus shutdown time as an opportunity to catch up on improvement projects.
3. Transportation staff – will continue running bus routes on an abbreviated schedule focusing on the delivery of school breakfasts and lunches as well of home learning materials.

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4. Technology staff – will continue maintaining the district's servers, email, and internet; will also work to support teachers in the delivery/receipt of online learning to students.
5. Central and Campus Office staff – will continue day-to-day operations as well as answering phone calls, emails, and assisting students/parents in making contact with needed staff members; will also support teachers in the delivery/receipt of home learning information.
6. Campus Counselors and Nurses – will continue answering phone calls and emails; will be available by phone to assist students and parents with counseling/medical issues and needs.
7. Special Education staff – will continue with day-to-day operations and work to ensure that the educational/accommodation plan for SPED students continues to be implemented.
8. Campus Teachers – will develop, distribute, and grade home learning information; will also notify each student/parent of their specific time during the day to take telephone questions from students/parents; will be available via email for homework assistance at any time.
9. Campus Instructional Support Staff – will assist teachers and campus administration as necessary in the distribution and return of home learning information to students/parents.
10. Daycare staff – will continue serving the district's staff members who send their children to our daycare.  
**Employees with children who attend the district's daycare can still take their children to the daycare on a rotating basis. Contact Mrs. Brooks to verify the time for your child.**

And finally, I want to verify what the district's expectations are for you/your student during the next two weeks.

1. Complete the PISD Travel Reporting Form on our web site or Facebook if anyone in your household has traveled out-of-state or country in the last two weeks or if you have come in contact with anyone who has traveled out-of-state or country.
2. Complete the Home Learning Survey on our web site or Facebook.
3. Pick-up your child's work or sign up to have home learning materials delivered to your home.
  - a. Students who do not pick-up, return, or submit materials on a 72-hour basis will be counted absent and will be subject to not receiving course credit.
  - b. Students who do not complete materials in a satisfactory manner will be required to complete them satisfactorily when they return to school.
4. Pick-up your child's meals or sign up to have meals delivered to your home.
5. Communicate with your child's teacher(s) as necessary.
  - **Note: Meals and home learning information will begin on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. All pick-up of meals and home learning materials will take place at Palestine HS (all grade levels).**

I want to say a huge thank you to the parents of the 2,100 students who have already completed the online home learning survey (web site and Facebook). If you have not currently done that, please do so ASAP so that we can better serve your student and family during the next two weeks.

I want to continue encouraging you and your family to follow the CDC guidelines in relation to good health habits and preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. I also want to encourage your family to take advantage of the meals that PISD is providing your children. With students having to stay at home and some parents not being able to work, I certainly understand the economic hardship that missed work can cause your family. Let us at least help by providing two meals a day for your student.

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If you have any questions during this temporary shutdown, don't hesitate to call or email us. For a complete listing of campus contacts and other important information, please visit the district's web page. And for those of you who prefer social media, don't forget to visit our district's Facebook page.

In closing, I want to thank some of our staff members who gave up their spring break to prepare a quick transition into home learning next week. I also want to say thank you to our community leaders for coming together and trying to make the best decisions for our residents. I know some of the decisions being made right now are not popular, but we are in "uncharted waters", and our people are doing what they feel is the right thing for all of us. Finally, please continue to shop locally and to support our local businesses. There are many things you can still get in town even if businesses have switched to take out. Let's all make a commitment to do everything we can to get our community through this crisis.

Sincerely,

Jason Marshall  
Superintendent  
Palestine ISD