

## School Messenger and Press Release

Hello Everyone --

### Distance Learning

At the present time, there are ten active positive cases across the district among teachers and students. We currently have 210 staff members and students who are actively quarantined.

I think it's important to note that we are still not seeing a spread of COVID-19 in our schools. At this time, with the possible exception of one case which is under investigation, there has not been anyone who has tested positive as a result of a close contact at school. Our methods and protocols have been successful in limiting the spread of COVID inside our school buildings.

It has been our objective and the purpose behind our planning to provide the best educational services, under the safest conditions possible. Our goal has always been to remain in school and to provide our students with the opportunity to participate in every program and extracurricular activity.

However, due to the increasing number of cases in Pontotoc County, we are beginning to see the number of COVID related quarantines increase in our schools. The Pontotoc County Health Department has been consulted and all possibilities have been considered. While experts still believe that the virus is not spreading through our schools, there are no satisfactory answers for the reasons behind the significant increase in cases throughout Pontotoc County.

The consequences of a substantial number of quarantines is beginning to have an impact on school operations. Our ability to provide the type of instruction that we are all accustomed to and have come to expect is being compromised.

Therefore, due to the continued spread of COVID – 19 in our community and an increase of close contact quarantines, all Ada City School sites will move to Distance Learning beginning Monday, November 16th and continue through Friday, November 20th.

- Beginning Monday, November 16th, all Ada City School students will be expected to complete Distance Learning attendance requirements and classwork daily
- Distance Learning coursework and attendance requirements for all Ada City School students will continue through Friday, November 20th
- In-person learning will resume for all Ada City School sites after the Thanksgiving Break on Monday, November 30th
- Cougar Academy students will continue with their classwork and schedules as normal
- All programs and/or extracurricular activities that are in season, or in preparation for Winter Seasons (Basketball and Wrestling), will proceed as scheduled

- Students should be reminded to take their devices and Instructional Packets home with them on Friday
- Arrangements can be made for parents to pick up any necessary medications by calling the specific school sites
  
- Hot Grab and Go Meals (Breakfast and Lunch)
  - Available -- Monday, November 16th through Friday, November 20th.
  - Hot Grab and Go Meals will be served curbside from 11:00 AM until 12:00 Noon at the following locations:
    - Willard Grade Center on North Center Street
    - Ada Junior High School on Stockton Street behind the cafeteria
  
- LatchKey will not be in operation during the weeks of November 16th through November 27th. This includes the Thanksgiving Break

This was obviously a very difficult decision. However, I firmly believe that this decision gives us the best chance to continue with in-person learning over the long-term.

Some of you may ask why move to Distance Learning now instead of after the Thanksgiving Break? As of today, every individual in our district who is impacted by COVID-19, will come out of isolation or quarantine prior to our return to school date on November 30th. And if all of us do our part over the next few weeks, there should be very few individuals that will be required to quarantine upon our return to school.

By paying strict attention to the 3W's -- Wearing your mask, Watching your distance and Washing your hands, we believe that a safe return to school can occur after the Thanksgiving Holidays.

Mike Anderson