

Oneonta City School District

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Tom Brindley
Superintendent

March 14, 2020

Oneonta City School District COVID-19 Closure Information

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to share information relative to the closing of the Oneonta City Schools as a precautionary measure relative to the concern associated with COVID-19.

I will begin by saying that it is an honor to work amongst such devoted professionals and a community filled with wonderful families and people who care. However, today we assembled our Crisis Team, Administrative Council, Chartwells Food Services, Birnie Bus, and were joined by several members of our Board of Education. The purpose of our meeting was to establish continuity of instruction as well as establish a plan to continue to serve meals to the students of our school district during this two-week closure. However, before sharing the particulars, I want to share a bit about the events of yesterday, March 13th. As routine, I called the Otsego County Department of Health to receive a morning update regarding COVID-19 cases. With zero being the case, it was business as usual for us. Later that day, I attended an Emergency Management meeting at the Oneonta Fire Department with local officials. Later that afternoon, I contacted Otsego County once again and hung up satisfied that all was well for the evening. However, at 4:36 pm., I received an email from our BOCES advising that the Otsego and Schoharie County Health Departments were recommending a two-week closure of all public schools. This was a bit of a surprise considering the telephone conversation that had occurred with Otsego County just two hours prior to that notification. This closure recommendation was out of an abundance of caution. As of the time of writing this letter, Otsego County still has zero cases of COVID-19. I am thankful and appreciative of the guidance that the Otsego County Department of Health has provided to this school district during the tremendously uncertain situation.

Unfortunately, due to the abrupt notice to all of the schools in both counties, many of our students, faculty, and staff left without needed materials from their classrooms, lockers, and without the student work materials completed by our teachers on Friday afternoon. Please know that your child's work and any essential items from his/her respective school **may be picked up** at your child's school from 3:00 pm. to 7:00 pm. on Monday, March 16th. The Oneonta Middle and High Schools have a more specific pick-up schedule:

Oneonta High School: Times by School Counselor	Oneonta Middle School: Times by School Counselor
Last Names A-G – Mrs. Segal 3:00 – 4:00 pm. Last Names H-O – Mrs. Garcia 4:00 – 5:00 pm. Last Names P-Z - Mr. Kaschak 5:00 – 6:00 pm Last hour - miscellaneous	Last Names A-L – Mr Scanlon 3:00 – 5:00 pm. Last Names M-Z – Mr. Mason 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

We will essentially be trying to form two lines of traffic: 1) for vehicles whose student(s) have no necessity to enter the building to pick up essential items, and 2) for vehicles containing a student(s) who WILL need to quickly enter a school and retrieve essential materials from lockers, etc. Our nurses will be on hand to distribute any needed student medications. Please note that a parent/guardian will need to accompany a student picking up medications from the health office. We understand that

transportation sometimes poses a challenge. As such, any student work materials left at the pick-up locations will be collected and we will establish some way of getting your child's work to him or her.

With regard to meals for our students: Chartwells, our food service contractor, will begin providing walk-up/drive-thru food distribution points at Greater Plains, Riverside, Valleyview Elementary Schools, as well as the Oneonta Middle and Oneonta High School (on the middle school side of the campus), beginning on Tuesday, March 17th from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. and then running Monday thru Friday at least throughout the two-week closure. Easy-up tents will indicate these pick-up points. Those visiting these locations will receive two meals each day (both issued at the same time): 1) lunch for the current day, and 2) breakfast for the next day. For students residing at or near the following locations; Lantern Hill Mobile Home Park, Mountainview Mobile Home Park, the Silliman Cove area, the area near 124 Oneida Street, and the Fairview Street Apartment area, our transportation contractors, Birnie Bus, will deliver packaged meals to these locations at approximately 11:00 am. beginning this Tuesday, March 17th. This service will also run from Tuesday, March 17th through at least March 27th. Students will simply need to look for the Oneonta City School Bus in/near these locations. PLEASE NOTE: Since peanut butter will be provided at these distribution points, bags will be marked with certain indicators. For example, a bag with the letter "P" written on it indicates a peanut-based food item. If you have a child with a food allergy, PLEASE pay particular attention to these very important labels.

We will also establish a way to continue the backpack program. I will send another update with such information once we have that established.

We will keep only essential personnel working during this closure. For now, we will have our administrators, clerical staff, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses, social worker, district office staff, as well as our custodians and buildings and grounds staff working. We will be deep cleaning and disinfecting and continuing to conduct the business of the school district. However, no visitors will be allowed to enter our buildings during this closure.

Attention: Innovative Program students will be contacted by the Special Education Office regarding assignments missed during closure.

I wish you all great health now and always. PLEASE continue to visit our district website and click on the yellow banner for any future updates.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Brindley