



Preparing Career Ready Graduates

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Message from Superintendent Nelson

March 18, 2020

Hi, this is your Superintendent, Bob Nelson. These last few days have been extremely trying for our community, and most of all, the youth of our city who are away from their amazing teachers, their classmates and the countless caring adults who provide high-quality instruction and support every day. Please know we are thinking of you, we love you and we're doing everything we can to provide support and resources while our families are at home.

Today, Fresno city leaders announced a full city "shelter in place" order beginning at midnight tonight for the next 14 days. We need to be responsible and do our part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and that means that we all have to sacrifice for the betterment of our community as a whole. This direction to shelter in place at home is absolutely what we need to do as a community to get through this unprecedented time. City direction outlined essential business operations that will remain open, including school districts like ours continuing to provide food to students. Beginning Thursday, March 19, we are streamlining our meal distribution to 18 school sites throughout our district. Those 18 sites will provide meals from 9 to 11 a.m. every weekday. The complete list of sites serving meals can be found on Fresno unified dot org, as well as our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Here's the deal – we are sticking our necks out on behalf of our community to serve anyone that comes to our schools and provide as many meals as requested, because we believe our community needs us now more than ever. Thankfully, our state superintendent, Tony Thurmond, stated today, "Do what calls you to do the work, and we will have your back." Feeding our community is just that.

We know the delivery and distribution hasn't been perfect, but we will continue to improve every day. We served 4,700 meals on Monday in the rain, and then, as word got out, we served 14,400 meals on Tuesday and exceeded that number today. We're trying to keep up and working day and night to serve you.

Here's what we ask of you – PLEASE take only what you need. Please do not panic and stockpile this food that is meant to feed our children with need. We will not ask any questions and give you what you need, but we need you to treat us with the same respect and love we are extending to you. Be courteous, be calm, and be honest about your need.

I know there is much uncertainty and ambiguity swirling around our What we heard from Governor Newsom last night is that we need to be prepared for the possibility that school may not come back into session this academic school year – and we are preparing for that possibility. However, information is changing from moment to moment and we are not ready to make those decisions about the entire school year in one fell swoop. I will tell you; we do know that State Superintendent Thurmond shared today that state testing will not be happening this year. Outside

of that, we are having conversations day and night about what the rest of the school year looks like for our kids, with special consideration of the milestones upcoming for our seniors.

Our instructional team has been working around the clock to provide optional educational resources to students and parents to stay engaged during these unprecedented school closures. Today, we placed a number of optional TK to 12th grade level resources on our district website and through our ATLAS parent and student portals. Resources include tools like Khan Academy, the Sora Library App, Wonders, Springboard and more. These tools will grow in time, but what we've released today creates a solid baseline for optional academic exercises.

One day down the road, you're going to be back at school, back with administrators, teachers and friends and we don't want our students to miss a beat. These optional resources will assist in that effort. Exercise, engage and give that brain a workout. Again, you can visit Fresno unified dot org or your ATLAS student or parent portal for a full list of resources. For those without online access, please know we are working on providing access through alternative channels, including working with local partners like PBS. Please look for more information coming as we continue to develop those plans.

To our 74,000 students at home, please know your teachers and the adults on campus miss you, and they love you. As these school closures continue, you will certainly be hearing from them. We're going to get through this together. Until then, take care of yourselves, be good to each other and don't stop exercising that brain!