



HARBOR BEACH  
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
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April 2, 2020

Dear Harbor Beach Students, Parents, and Community:

Today, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Whitmer signed Executive Order No. 2020-35. This order called for "Suspension of in-person K-12 instruction for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year." It goes without saying that this order brings us all into uncharted waters. First and foremost, I would like to share with you that our school system will not fail in giving your children every ounce of our best during this time.

You've come to expect quality education at Harbor Beach Community Schools, education that furthers both academic understanding and social/emotional learning. All of us at Harbor Beach Community Schools share a calling to better our world by developing students. The new restrictions do not change our commitment to that calling. As the Harbor Beach community and as a school system, we must dig deeply to meet these new challenges together.

We all deeply grieve the loss of our face-to-face learning and we grieve the potential loss of the wonderful gatherings as we've traditionally known them, like graduation, prom, kindergarten round up, and much more. At this time, I do not have solid answers for you about these, but I promise we will do everything we can to hold these truly important events. Obviously, we will be constrained by what's allowable under executive orders and our dedication to maintain safety for everyone. We are working to develop plans for each of these significant occasions and will share them with you when they are finalized.

Through the remainder of the regular school year, my staff and I will work together to provide online opportunities and hardcopy packets for all students to continue learning. I guarantee that our staff members are just as dedicated as always to providing continued learning for your children in this new environment. However, I do not pretend that online programming or packets of materials sent home can replace face-to-face instruction. There is no substitute for a master teacher who is tuned in to students! Our teachers deliver exceptional instruction, continually adapt lessons to meet the needs of their students, and provide reassurance at challenging moments (through a kind word, a hug, a smile, or a laugh). Today our master teachers are rising to meet the new educational challenges we face just as you are bravely meeting challenges at home.

This community, my staff, and our amazing Harbor Beach students and parents have the strength, grit, ingenuity, and skill to overcome any hurdle together. COVID-19 may separate us physically, but it cannot break us. We only need to demonstrate the WILL that already lies within each individual Pirate. Please join me in being determined. It might take us a moment, but we will rise. Be safe, check on one other, be forgiving of some missteps along the way, be flexible, and be ready for success. We are Pirates, and we don't quit.

It's a Great Day to Be a Pirate,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dr. Shawn Patrick Bishop'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Shawn Patrick Bishop  
Superintendent