



Bright Water to close March 18th, 2020 to April 7th due to COVID-19

Minnesota's governor has made the decision to shut down all schools in Minnesota effective Wednesday March 18th, 2020. All children and staff are still expected to attend school *Monday March 16th, 2020 and Tuesday March 17th, 2020*. This will allow us the time to prepare children and ensure they have the right materials and technology to continue their learning during this time. The current closure includes our scheduled spring break (March 27 - April 6, 2020). More details will follow if the school needs to remain closed later than April 7th.

This action is being taken in an effort to slow the rapidly spreading COVID-19 virus. During closure, students should not report to school and staff will receive an email communication regarding next steps. We know that the past few weeks have been stressful for many in our communities because of the continued spread of COVID-19.

We are grateful to all our staff and families for navigating this situation in unity. We expect to hear further guidance from state officials in the coming days and will provide updates as soon as we are able. We will communicate primarily via email. We recognize the hardship this decision places on many families but believe it is in the public's best interest if it means we can contribute to protecting our students and the community's health and well-being.

Students will be expected to complete online learning assignments and/or work packets as assigned by their classroom teachers. Families will receive emails from their child's Guide before Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Information will also be posted on our website: www.brightwatermontessori.org/COVID-19.

Also, we ask you to continue following the COVID-19/coronavirus guidelines as shared by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that are posted on their website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>. These include monitoring your family's health for flu-like symptoms and reaching out to your local health provider if these symptoms occur.

This is an unprecedented time. We do not yet have all the answers, but are committed to communicating with you as frequently and openly as possible.

Please see the following pages for additional information.

Emergency and Health Care Workers

In addition, the Emergency Order also states, “Emergency workers (including providers of healthcare, emergency medical services, long-term and post-acute care; law enforcement personnel; personnel providing correctional services; public health employees; firefighters and other first responders; and court personnel) are critical to the State's response to COVID-19. During the Closure Period, schools are directed to provide care to, at a minimum, district-enrolled students aged 12 and under who are children of emergency workers. In providing this care, schools must practice hygiene and social distancing best practices. *Schools are not required to provide this care during previously scheduled breaks reflected on a school-board approved calendar.* MDE will provide further guidance to schools and school districts about this provision.” we will continue to communicate as we receive the guidance and recommendations from the Governor and Commissioner.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Our cleaning team has been, and will continue to, clean all surfaces such as desks, tables, chairs, door knobs, light switches, railings and any other surface that is commonly accessed by children or adults. Our cleaning team has been disinfecting the school daily since January 7th, when we returned from Winter Break. We are in testing season, so all chromebooks and computers have been cleaned after every testing session. Bright Water as a practice, provides disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before each use, so many sanitary habits have been instilled well before this health crisis.

Attendance

Currently Hennepin County has agreed to suspend any cases of truancy, considering the anticipated impact on attendance. Students and families with underlying health issues should talk to their healthcare provider to develop a plan based on their specific health conditions. If you and your healthcare provider determine that your child should stay home beyond this school closure, please contact the school office to let them know and receive guidance on missed schoolwork. We respect the concern that families have and we will work together to ensure continuation of education and learning.

Communication

The Head of School will continue to monitor and communicate information about the closing of the school in coordination with the Administrative Team, Board, MDH and MDE. The early school closure procedures will be communicated to parents, guardians, and vendors through all communication channels including broadcast media, direct phone, e-mail, social media, website, and texts. Updates will be primarily communicated via email and on the school's website at: www.brightwatermontessori.org/COVID-19.

Vendors

Upon the school closure, the Food, Milk, Snack, Transportation, SPED, and all other vendors will be notified to suspend services for the duration of school closure.

Nutrition Services

According to the Executive Order, schools and school districts, in cooperation with state agencies, are directed to support communities disproportionately impacted by inequities, including, but not limited to, low-income families and families experiencing homelessness. During the Closure Period, schools are expected to provide meals to their students. We will send out additional communication of this process as we receive the guidelines from the state. We do have additional food that we would like to distribute, so that it doesn't go to waste. Please contact Ms. Williams (lorine@brightwatermontessori.org) if you are concerned about food scarcity during this time and would like to request a free bag of food to be sent home with your child.

Distance Learning

We will be joining school districts and charter schools across the state to create plans to equitably distribute distance learning to our students should we need to close schools statewide for a longer period of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Minnesota Department of Education is defining distance learning to mean that a student receives daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s) and appropriate educational materials. Distance learning days are opportunities for K-6 students to extend their learning beyond the school building when there is an unexpected school cancellation. Students will still be expected to participate in their courses online or through worksheets and activities that they can complete at home. The parameters of Distance Learning at Bright Water are as follows:

- Guides will post "office hours" during which they will be available online for at least four hours a day to answer questions and provide instructional guidance.
- Guides can be reached via email and through messaging on Zoom.
- Guides will assign at least two skills for each class; students are expected to master at least two skills daily in math and two skills daily in reading.
- Guides will prepare paper packets with grade-appropriate skills for students to complete; packets should be returned to classroom teachers upon return to school.
- Students will be allowed to check out devices to take home in order to engage in distance learning.
- Guides will assign one online reading passage daily. Students are expected to read this passage and answer the accompanying comprehension questions.
- Information regarding any additional course activities and assignments will be updated and included in the email notification, communicated individually by class and updated on the school website.
- Attendance is required on distance learning days. Attendance is taken by setting deadlines for assignments, and will be as followed:
 - Paper worksheets and activities will be due upon the student's return to school.
 - Online assignments will be determined by class.
 - Parental check in with the Guide via email based on the Lead Guides request.

- Students who are receiving services through Special Education will have the same process and access to instruction as students who are receiving services through General Education.
- Students who are receiving services through the EL Department will have the same process and access to instructions as students who are receiving services through General Education.

Again, we are committed to the health and wellbeing of everyone in our school community. We will continue to send out resources as they are made available to us. Please continue to look out for communication from the school, as the information regarding COV19 not only a new health crisis, it is also changing rapidly.

In Partnership,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is on the left and the second is on the right, both appearing to be in cursive.

Bright Water Administration
