



Rains Independent School District

P. O. Box 247
1759 West US Highway 69
Emory, Texas 75440-0247

Jennifer Johnson, Superintendent
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Main Number 903/473-2222
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<http://www.rainsisd.org>

March 17, 2020

Dear Wildcat Family,

What an unbelievable few days we have had! In some ways it has been alarming, but in others it has been truly inspiring. I am so grateful for the amazing staff members, as well as community members, who have reached out to see how we can take care of our kids. I have received phone calls, texts, emails and personal visits from people across the community. It truly is a blessing to be a Wildcat!

Please know that what we are facing is unlike anything that we have faced before. There are many unknowns. We will probably make some mistakes along the way, but we will work diligently to make the best decisions possible. **I plan to make a decision about operations for the coming week by late Thursday, March 19th.**

We have been in constant communication with the Commissioner of Education, state health department, and county officials. It was reported to us today by the commissioner that 891 school districts in Texas have closed due to COVID-19. Decisions have been made with much thought, conversation, and considerations.

What is happening now?

- We have had multiple meetings with our administrative teams to make plans going forward.
- Rains ISD teachers are in the process of contacting all students and families to gather information pertaining to the needs of our students.
- We are currently offering FREE drive-thru breakfast and lunch to **all kids** (regardless of income) ages 0-18 Monday through Friday at our high school campus. Breakfast is from 8-9 am, and lunch is from 11 am-12 pm.

What do we know?

- Breakfast and lunch details may be adjusted according to guidance from the Texas Department of Agriculture.
- STAAR tests for all grades have been cancelled for this school year. This includes EOC and grades 3-8. According to the commissioner, students currently enrolled in EOC courses 8-12 will not be required to take those tests.
- Our teachers and staff will be providing instructional supports for students while at home in the event that school remains closed. Survey information from families will help us in determining the types of supports offered.
- The Commissioner of Education has committed to us that the state will continue to fund school operations, allowing us to meet needs and commitments to students, families, and staff.
- Because we are facing circumstances completely beyond our control, and Rains ISD employees are being forced to miss work days because of this closure, the RISD Board of Trustees has voted to continue paying staff throughout this closure.



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What can you do?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has outlined the need for all communities to implement a social distancing protocol. We want to reiterate a request to our broader community to take the following reasonable precautions to prevent the spread of the illness:

- Don't shake hands.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Limit movement within the community, especially avoiding crowded places and maintaining 3 to 6 ft of distance between people (at least an arm's length).
- If you are moving around in the community, don't congregate in large groups.
- For those who have traveled to areas with known COVID-19 cases – both inside and outside of the country – we ask that you self-quarantine and monitor for symptoms. Students who have traveled should plan to stay home for two weeks after arriving home. Please contact your campus to let them know, and this will be considered an excused absence.
- If you suspect you have symptoms of COVID-19, call your health care provider for medical advice.
- Keep your child at home if he/she feels ill, even if you think it is just a cold.
- Do not leave the house if you are ill, except to access medical care.

This is a quickly changing situation, and we will continue to monitor information, will assess conditions throughout the week, and will provide the next update by Thursday, March 19, via our website and email.

Thank you for your support and cooperation as we ensure that all members of the community in Rains ISD stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Johnson
Superintendent