



Sweet Springs R-VII Schools

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April 22, 2020

Sweet Springs Staff, Students, Parents, and Community:

On April 9th, Governor Parson ordered for Missouri Schools to be closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. That announcement brought many questions and unknowns regarding significant school traditions and events that accompany the end of the school year. This letter should address all of those questions and outline specifics of closing out this school year. There is A LOT of information in this document, so please take the time to read through it thoroughly!

Academic Information

All Missouri School Districts are required to still provide educational learning activities and opportunities through the last day of the 2019-2020 academic school year approved by the local Board of Education. For Sweet Springs R-7, that date is Friday, May 15th. Our teachers are working on getting the last three weeks of activities together for your students. Availability of these documents is found in the next section. Fourth Quarter will also end Friday, May 15th and the end of year report cards will be emailed/mailed home by the end of the following week.

Final Pick-up/Drop-off Date (Packets & Personal Belongings)

Friday, May 1, from 1 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Pick-up: The final packet of hard copies of educational learning activities can be made available for pick-up on Friday, May 1, from 1 p.m. - 7 p.m. Weblinks or copies of the activities will also be made available on the district's facebook page on Friday, May 1st. If your student needs hard copies of these materials, please call the appropriate grade level building on Wednesday, April 29th, or Thursday, April 30th, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. to request these items. The elementary office number is 660-335-6348 and the junior high/high school office number is 660-335-6341. Also, teachers have been cleaning out desks and lockers that contained supplies, student personal belongings, student athlete banners that are in the gym, etc. These items have been placed in a bag for you to pick-up during this time, as well.

Drop off: If your student has any library books, textbooks, uniforms, etc. please return them on this final pick-up day!

As with the previous pick-ups, please utilize the car rider drop off line in front of the school to pick-up and drop-off any of the above mentioned items. **Please remain in your vehicles! School personnel will come to you to deliver your packets and belongings to you, as well as take the items you are returning!**

Summer School

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has not determined the future of summer school for this year, but is not anticipating summer school to occur in June. Because of this, there will be no summer school at Sweet Springs R-7. There is, however, still a possibility the district will offer credit recovery for high school students for those who may need it, though there is no guarantee. Should this be the case, those students who would need to look into the credit recovery option will be notified by Mrs. Weber, our district counselor.

PreSchool/Kindergarten Registration

PreSchool: PreSchool Enrollment Packets will be available for pick-up on Friday, May 1, from 1 p.m. - 7 p.m. Please follow the pick-up procedure set forth above by following the car drop off line to the elementary front doors. *Please remain in your vehicle and school personnel will bring the packet to you.*

Kindergarten: Kindergarten registration is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 5, from 1 p.m. - 6 p.m. Students will need to provide a copy of their birth certificate, a copy of their immunization record, and proof of residency (for example: utility bill) on the date of registration.

Food Service:

Meal Delivery: Meals will continue to be delivered through the last day of school, May 15th. Meals are being delivered on Mondays and Thursdays for the remainder of the school year, with three meals (breakfast and lunch for Mon., Tues., Wed.) being delivered on Mondays and two meals (breakfast and lunch for Thurs. and Fri.) being delivered on Thursdays.

Account Balances: If your student has a credit on their breakfast/lunch account balance, that amount will be rolled over to their account for the 2020-2021 school year. If your student has a breakfast/lunch debt, that information will be sent out with end of the year grade cards.

Milk Vouchers: American Family Insurance will be handing out free gallon milk vouchers in the parking lot of The Market on Saturday, May 2, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. They will be giving one voucher for each PreK - 12th grade student in each family. So, if your family has five students in school, you will be given five vouchers for free milk. You will have 30 days to use this voucher. Thank you American Family Insurance for doing this for our students!

Home & School Fundraiser Pick-up:

If your student sold items for the Home & School Fundraiser, these items may be picked up in the far east corner entrance/exit (by the superintendent's office and softball field) on Friday, May 1 from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. ONLY! After you pick up and drop off items at the elementary doors, you can drive to the far east exit, give your student's name and the items will be placed in your vehicle. *Please remain in your vehicles during this process.* For delivery of your items, it is recommended you contact the buyer and drop the items off on their doorstep. Please avoid contact and remain at least 6 feet apart to abide by CDC guidelines to keep yourself and the buyer safe and healthy.

Senior Class of 2020:

Senior Trip Refund: In the letter dated on March 26, the district stated it was working on contacting California businesses and the airline company to see if and how much of the expenses could be recuperated. It also stated that the district was informed by these businesses it could take approximately 30 days to hear back from any of the companies to determine refund amounts, if any. This did not mean refunds would be given to seniors and parents that were planning to attend this trip by the end of those 30 days. There are still two companies we have not heard back from. Please know the district is doing everything we can to expedite this process. Once the district has received these refunds, checks will be cut to those seniors and parents who were attending the trip. Our hope is to have these checks to you by the end of May, if not sooner. If that needs to change, the district will notify those seniors and parents. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding with this as this matter rests in the hands of these businesses.

Graduation:

The decision regarding graduation has, by far, been the most difficult decision to make during this unprecedented time. As an alumna of Sweet Springs R-7, I understand the magnitude of tradition, graduation, and monumental occasions that come with your senior year at Sweet Springs R-7. After being involved in weekly conference calls with our county health department, in addition to listening to the daily briefings given by Governor Parson and President Trump regarding the way states are planning to phase in the opening up of the states, there are many

requirements that need to be met before states and counties move through such phases to revert back to “normal.” Our county isn’t close to being able to go back to “normal” right now, due to the continuous rising numbers of positive COVID-19 cases. As much as all of us want to have a graduation ceremony as we know it to be in our minds, it simply can’t happen while trying to abide by the current CDC guidelines.

Currently, no more than 10 individuals can be gathered in one area and they must remain at least six feet apart unless they are immediate family living in the same household. As the state opens back up, it is anticipated these guidelines will gradually increase. If you recall, we went from no more than 100 individuals gathered, to no more than 50 gathered, to no more than 10 gathered within a week. When totaling 34 students, to include their parents, we are already over 100 individuals. That doesn’t even include other family members and district personnel. In addition, the student and south parking area will be under construction for drainage and safety improvements from May-August. Also, there are a couple of seniors who cannot make a ceremony in June and a couple more added to those numbers should it be postponed to July. The reality of the matter is there is no guarantee we will be able to hold a graduation like we want it to be for this year, regardless of when it is scheduled.

In an effort to provide closure for our seniors, while trying to provide them with one date in their senior year that will NOT change AND to try to provide some sort of tradition and recognition for them, the district will continue with a modified form of graduation on the original scheduled graduation date of Friday, May 8th. Below is what the district has decided in regards to senior graduation:

1. Hold an individual graduation ceremony for each and every senior. Mrs. Weber will be in contact with each senior next week to schedule individual times. These will be scheduled in approximately 20-30 minute increments so that we can ensure all seniors are able to graduate on their actual graduation day, while trying to disinfect between ceremonies.
2. Graduates will come in cap and gown along with no more than six immediate family members to their individual ceremony.
3. The graduate’s name will be called and they will walk across the stage to receive their diploma and hear their accomplishments and scholarships of which they are recipients. Valedictorian and Salutatorian will still be allowed to give their speech. Mrs. Weber will visit with those individuals.
4. The school will contact a photographer and videographer to be at each individual graduation. This way graduation pictures can still be taken and the video can be pieced together into a full graduation video for each senior to have.
5. Before the end of July, if CDC guidelines allow, the district will have a celebration to honor our seniors, with their families, together as a class. If that is possible, each senior will be notified of that date by Mrs. Weber.

Although it is fully acknowledged this graduation may not be what anyone dreamed of, the Class of 2020 will be making history and has proven time and time again to be a class full of strength, optimism, and resiliency. I am confident this class will make the most of this situation and be successful in all of their future endeavors. I tip my hat to each senior for handling this difficult situation as well as they have; they are definitely a class act!

2020 will definitely be a year to remember, whether it be the good, bad, inconveniences, or new traditions. I will remember the way our district, students, families, and community worked together to make the best of the situation and to support one another. Thank you for your patience and cooperation during these very challenging couple of months.

Respectfully,

Lori Price, Superintendent
Sweet Springs R-VII Schools

