

March 13, 2020

Dear Parents,

On Thursday, March 12, during an afternoon press conference, Governor Brian Kemp addressed the state's growing concerns by allowing school districts to close for up to 14 days. After careful thought and consideration, Valdosta City Schools has determined to close our school district effective Monday, March 16 through at least Friday, March 27, 2020. Our school district remains hyper-focused on your health and safety and will continue monitoring and sharing information about the developing situation with COVID-19. Should there be a need to extend the closure we will communicate that message with our families.

Making the decision to close schools is never an easy one. However, given the uncertainty of the rapidly changing situation with COVID-19, we know this is the best plan of action for protecting our students, staff and faculty members. The school closures include all school building activities, extracurricular activities, athletics, and trips. During this time, absolutely no staff nor students should report to any office or school in the Valdosta City School System.

Many may question why our district was open today, Friday, March 13. Mainly, we understand that our families will need time to plan for childcare before our schools close on Monday. Additionally, we wanted to have an opportunity to share expectations with our faculty and staff concerning the school closure.

We understand that many will have on-going concerns about how these closures will impact their families; please know that we will not have answers to all of them. Our plans will evolve daily as we begin to deal with the impacts of COVID-19. However, our district will continue to answer as many questions as we can through our website, social media sites, and local media outlets. Employees of the districts are encouraged to reach out to their supervisors for any questions or updates.

We appreciate everyone's patience and support as our community works together to move past this pandemic health crisis. We are grateful for the constant guidance from Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and various other state and local agencies, departments and leaders.

We encourage all of our Wildcat families to continue following the recommended personal hygiene prevention methods. If you begin to feel sick or experience symptoms, contact your health care provider via phone immediately. All providers are asking for potential patients to call before going to the office. Our hope is that we are able to return to our regular school schedule in a short time.

Sincerely,



Dr. William "Todd" Cason
Superintendent