April 2, 2020

Dear Freshwater Families,

I would like to thank all of you for your patience and support as the District continues to navigate these uncharted waters in response to the presence of COVID-19 in our community. In yesterday’s press conference, Governor Gavin Newsom, with the backing of State Superintendent of Schools Tony Thurmond, shared the expectation that all school districts in California will continue to be engaged in distance learning for the remainder of this school year in an effort to further prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our administrative team has consulted with the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE), other local school districts, and Public Health Officer, Dr. Teresa Frankovich, who has advised all school districts in Humboldt County to follow the Governor’s recommendation and plan for continued closure of facilities through the end of this school year.

According to Dr. Frankovich, “The situation is changing quickly and there is increasing evidence as we look at impacted areas across the country, that aggressive social distancing can significantly help to slow transmission of this infection. Maintaining distance learning and keeping school facilities closed through the end of the school year, will allow schools and families to plan appropriately. Schools are critical in assisting Public Health in emphasizing the importance of shelter in place and social distancing. We are thankful for their proactive efforts. Schools and Public Health will continue to monitor the situation and should circumstances allow for an earlier return to school, we will make that decision together.”

Though our campus at Freshwater will remain physically closed, our students’ learning and teachers’ instruction is not ending. We are embracing this new challenge of providing distance learning opportunities to our families for the remainder of this school year. We understand that every family is under unique and challenging circumstances at this time, and we are all learning how to effectively take care of ourselves while continuing to serve our learning community to the best of our ability. This task is truly challenging with all of the added anxiety that is being caused by the global pandemic of COVID-19, but we are still here for our students and are learning more each day how to best connect and engage with each of them. We are partners in this effort and appreciate your understanding and support as we build our distance learning program together.

We do not have anymore planned pickup times for paper packets as we move to more digital communications. Please visit your child’s classroom website to get updates on the latest assignments and materials. If you have a problem with printing at home please email your child’s teacher and we can make arrangements for you. We are also continuing to provide meals for our families in need in addition to devices or “hot spots” if you are having problems accessing the Internet. If you have not already done so, please contact me if you would like more information on how to gain access to these services.

Last night the state released guidance on grading and accountability and your child’s teacher will keep you informed about any changes with classroom expectations or assignments as we move forward. We receive new information from the state each day and will do our best to adapt to this fluid situation. Our primary goal is for the safety and well being of our students, families, and staff, and our second is to have continued student participation in the distance learning opportunities that are being provided by their teachers.

Please continue to follow the Shelter in Place orders, practice social distancing, and continue to routinely hand wash and clean frequently used surfaces. Thank you for doing your part to help flatten the curve locally. Please know that we have your families in our thoughts at this most difficult time.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email with any questions or concerns. Stay safe and be well!

Warm Regards,

Si Talty, Superintendent