

# Ralls County R-II School District

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*"Striving For Excellence"*

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**TARA LEWIS, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

**CLARK HOWELL, Ed.S.**  
Principal  
Mark Twain High School

**DELORES WOODHURST, Ed.D.**  
Principal  
Mark Twain Junior High

April 9, 2020

Ralls County R-II Families,

This afternoon Missouri Governor Parson ordered all public schools to close through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Ralls County R-II teachers will continue to provide remote learning opportunities to students through May 14, 2020, our final scheduled day of school.

Since we will not be returning as we had hoped, we will have a few things to take care and address, but right now, we want to take this time to reassure each of you that while none of us know from day to day how our world may change, we can definitely reassure you that our district will continue to support our students and families in the best way possible. We will continue to be a support service to all of our students. We are all new to this, and it isn't a situation that is unique to only schools. Thank you so much for the essential employees within our community. We are very appreciative of each of you and thank you for your service during this difficult time.

I know this announcement/order creates many questions. What about Senior Week and Commencement? What will that look like? I will guarantee sometime in the future there will be a graduation, but I don't have those details right now. Once we have details, we will communicate them. Seniors, we have not forgotten you. You are a special group, and we will strive to give you a celebration to remember. You can be assured your Commencement will be unique and something to talk about for years to come! What about 8th grade recognition? What about summer school? The list of questions could go on for pages including Prom, 5th Grade Tea and other traditional spring activities. There are so many questions that remain to be answered. I am hopeful we will receive guidance from DESE in the coming days/weeks regarding summer learning opportunities.

Please remember we have not experienced a closure of this nature before, so we ask that you show grace and be patient with us as we work to meet the needs of our students and families. We know that the solutions we come up with will not please everyone, but I can say with confidence that the Ralls County R-II team will put forth great effort to end our school year in the best manner possible!

In addition, a supplemental food service is available in Ralls County through a community donor program. The program is organized and run by volunteers, including several school employees working with the program. We live in a very generous community, and the committee is confident that as food needs arise, the community will do whatever they can to help meet the needs of our families. Our counselors and principals are available to talk with families to discuss how to apply for SNAP benefits and other benefits that are available as a result of this pandemic. We know these are services that some families have never had to access before, but we also understand that these are conditions that most families have not dealt with before, either. If you are in need of food, please contact your child's building principal and we will ensure your family is added to the list of those receiving food.

Take care and stay well. Please continue to follow the social distancing orders from our nation, state and county. We will be in touch!

Sincerely,  
Tara Lewis, Ed.D.  
Superintendent