



DEER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL
101 First Avenue NE
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Deer River, MN 56636
Home of the Warriors

KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
504 5th St. SE
PO Box 307
Deer River, MN 56636
King Pride

May 5, 2021

Deer River Families:

The purpose of this message is to provide notification of a pending emergency school closure and potential modification of our instructional model and school calendar. **The school day will be canceled on Friday, May 7 for students in grades K-12.** After school activities may continue by adhering to their approved safety plans. Our emergency school closure plan was approved this past summer in anticipation of the impact of the pandemic. Fortunately, this will be only the second day of this school year where this step was necessary.

The Board of Education will be calling an emergency meeting to review an administrative recommendation for modifying our instructional model and/or calendar to ensure student safety. A secondary goal is to protect participation for as many students as possible in our traditional end of the year events. The meeting date and time had not been determined yet before the distribution of this notice. Our goal is to provide families with as much notice as possible to adjust their schedules.

This week, you will likely hear about decreasing COVID-19 case rates in the state and possibly a relaxing of restrictions. That is good news, however this **is not** the situation in Itasca County and within the Deer River School District boundaries. The case rate is surging and showing no indication of peaking. Today we were notified that the Itasca County rate remains high at 84 cases per 10,000 residents, while Deer River has surged from 85 to 131 and climbing. The Minnesota Department of Health's recommendation is for a case rate of less than 10 to keep all schools at full occupancy. On March 8, the state passed the responsibility for determining learning models to the individual school districts. Because there are indicators that COVID transmission may now be occurring between individuals at the school sites, we must act responsibly to protect our students and employees.

Our staff will spend the day Friday preparing to implement the school board approved modifications to the learning model and calendar. Notice of the updated plan will be provided to families as soon as possible. We apologize in advance for the disruption.

Sincerely,

Jeff Pesta