



Melba School District #136

P.O. Box 185, 511 Broadway – Melba, Id. 83641- Phone 208-495-1141

March 26, 2020

Melba School District Parents and Guardians,

We are all experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and now with a state-wide stay-home order from Governor Little yesterday afternoon, we are all living through uncharted territory. The State Board of Education also ordered the closure of schools until April 20, which the Melba School District adopted at a special board meeting yesterday evening. The school district is working hard to create an education system that we will be able to push out starting Monday, March 30 in order to continue education with our students.

With that being said, we are going to need the help of parents and guardians. We will not have access to every home and each home will have a different configuration of computers, internet, and other devices that students will be trying to use. Please understand that the teachers have had two days of work time to put something together and it is actually quite amazing what they have put together. Our online forum, M.O.L.E. (Melba Online Learning Environment) has morphed into a very usable educational platform and teachers are working to keep that information current and education moving forward. We know that there are going to be issues that arise with everything from the ability to get online to older devices that will not play video. These issues won't change overnight and we will work to overcome each of these hurdles as they are presented. I ask that you work with us through these issues, we have two IT staff and they will have more than enough to do as we launch this new learning platform. We will address the issues and our hope is over the next week or so, we can help to resolve these issues and create a new normal.

The M.O.L.E is a new system and we know there are going to be multiple issues that arise. We will create a page on our website with FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) to help, we have the info@melbaschools.org for you to email questions, and for at least the next week, you may call either school or district with questions and information.

About the new learning platform:

- The online platform uses Office 365 and Teams
- Every student has an account which gives them access to the Microsoft Office Suite, parents do not have to purchase any software.

- Every student has an email and password. Please write the password down so the parent and student know it.
- Teachers have all made tutorials on how to use the teams, from logging in, to how to complete assignments.
- Students will need to check in and work on assignments daily. This does not mean that will be sitting in front of a computer all day. The assignments are set up so that the student can do them whenever the computer is available for them to work at home. There are assignments due daily and students will have to get on and work through them.
- Teachers will have live hours, but everything will be recorded and students can listen whenever they are able to get on. Students will also be able to ask questions through the system and if they are on with the teacher is live, they will be able to work live with the teacher, but this not a requirement. Everything will be recorded to view at anytime.
- Special Needs and IEP (Individual Learning Plans) are being addressed by our team and plans will be forthcoming as quickly as those plans can be modified to meet the changes we are now facing.
- Paper Packets will be available every Wednesday for students that do not have access to internet. I will explain the delivery method in a later paragraph. Please work with us on getting the online to work, packets are for those that do not have access to technology.
- Students have all worked in Office 365 and depending on what grade they are in, some are already very proficient in it. Our youngest students will be new to it and there is going to be a learning curve, we need your help to work with them on learning how to get on and work through the assignments.
- Finally, please communicate with us. We are building a completely new way to deliver education and are doing it over a very short implementation time. There are going to be issues, frustrations, and questions. We will address them to the best of our ability, we have almost 900 students in the district and a skeleton crew at the schools. We will do the best job we can and we will get this educational platform working.

The district will be offering breakfast and lunch to all students, five days a week. There will be no charge for this service. The state will fund us a partial amount and it is a service we believe is important to get out to as many students as we can. The process for getting these lunches out will be as follows:

- A yellow bus will run everyday starting at 10 and stop at each bus stop in our district. We will wait 8-10 minutes and deliver lunches and the next morning's breakfast at that time.
- For students in Melba, we will have a grab and go lunch set up in front of the Melba Elementary at the student drop-off area. You will be able to walk up or drive through and grab your meals from 11:30-12:00 Monday through Friday.


- Your student should receive a phone call either Friday or Saturday letting them know what time the bus will be at their stop and at what time you can stop by the elementary school. Bus drivers will be calling everyone on their routes and school staff will be calling those that live in town.
- Every Wednesday the district will deliver paper packets with the weeks assignments on the bus route with lunches. We will pick up the prior weeks packets at the same time. Again, please help us keep this to those that do not have technology and access.
- This will also give us opportunities to send out communication if need be. Depending on usage and the amount of time needed to stop at each spot, this process could change over the next couple weeks.

The district office will have a process set up to check out laptops for those that need them starting on Monday morning, March 30th. If you need a device, we will have some that we will be able to check out. We are sending them out in good working order and would ask that you help us keep them working and taken care of. We will post times and the process of check-out on the website and social media as that program gets completed by our IT staff.

I would like to thank our staff and community for continuing to work toward our educational goals and keep education moving forward even under difficult times. We will continue to work towards the best possible education we can provide within the parameters that have been set by the state and federal governments. We will continue to address your concerns and questions as we receive them.

Finally, please do your best to follow the state stay-at-home order and practice your social distancing. School premises have been closed to students by the State Board of Education and while we will have a skeleton crew here, we have had to close all the facilities. The state and federal governments are continuing to change direction and outcomes almost daily. With that, we are moving forward with the information we have today, knowing that it may all change tomorrow or next week. We will keep you as up to date as we can and will continue to work towards an educational system that has meaning and is educating students. We need your help as parents to make sure that your students have time to be online and working. Please let us know of any needs you have from academics, technology, or other basic needs and we will do our very best to help. Thank you again for all the community does for the school and let's continue to work towards a brighter future!

Sincerely,



Dr. Andrew Grover
Superintendent
Melba School District
208-495-1141