



Michelle Dutrow
Superintendent
516 Allport Cutoff
Morrisdale PA, 16858
Phone - 814.345.5615 x 4000
Fax - 814.345.5220
www.westbranch.org

Michelle Dutrow, Superintendent

March 22, 2020

Dear Parents and Families:

Good Afternoon:

Today's communication finds the country seeing increased cases of COVID-19 as our own state government here in PA works to restrict movement and activity in an effort to slow the spread. We at West Branch certainly understand the hardship this presents for many within our community. As we move into Week #2 of our school closure, our major focus remains the well-being of our community's children.

Toward that effort, we are pleased to announce that starting tomorrow, we are ready to implement our partnership with the YMCA and bridge our breakfast/lunch program with their dinner/snack program. Blending the two programs together has created some minor schedule and logistical changes but we hope the changes will provide more food for all our children and better access to those families in our outlying areas. Following is our expanded plan effective tomorrow, Monday, March 23rd:

- Locations:
 - West Branch Area High School (Morrisdale)
 - Grassflat Fire Hall (Grassflat)
 - Pine Glen Fire Hall (Karthaus)
- Days of Operation: Monday and Thursday
- Time: 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
- Format: Drive-thru
- Meals Provided:
 - Monday - 3 Breakfasts / 3 Lunches / 3 Dinners / 3 Snacks
 - Thursday - 4 Breakfasts / 4 Lunches / 4 Dinners / 4 Snacks

Please email the Superintendent's Office at kwoodring@westbranch.org with the number of children (Ages 2-18) that reside in your home along with the location where you will pick up your meals. While we appreciate the email by 8:00 a.m. the day of the distribution, it is not a requirement and any family may come to pick up meals for their children.

As our plan has greatly expanded, we once again ask for your patience this week as we work through this new format and what we hope will be increased participation. Last Friday, we served 120 meals and we would like to see that number doubled this week. This food is available to all of our families and there are absolutely no income restrictions. We are providing this program through a state-approved application and will receive reimbursement as per the guidelines. We encourage any and all of our families to make use of this program. The duration of this pandemic is still unknown and we are aware families may have tough times ahead.

Looking to instruction, we continue to explore our options as to how we might provide continuity of education to our students at home. We know we have to find solutions to our issues: internet access for select households and laptop availability at the elementary level. While paper packets might be a viable option at the elementary, we currently do not have permission to bring in our staff for preparation. Please know we are working on this item and will share more information as it is available. In the meantime, in the absence of school assignments

from us, the most important activities to engage your children in at this time are reading (books they can read or books you read to them), writing (letters, words, sentences, or stories), problem solving (puzzles, challenges, building), music/art (listen to music and create) and physical exercise. Have your child keep a log of what they do. Take a photo of any projects to document their efforts. Whatever you do is a terrific contribution to your children's continued growth.

As hard as it seems, we must all continue to do our part. Keep the little ones busy and the older ones engaged. Stay home as much as possible, continue to practice social distancing when you need to go out, and stick to the basics - wash your hands often!

Take care!

Sincerely,

Michelle Dutrow

Michelle Dutrow
Superintendent of Schools