April 30, 2020

Students, Parents and Community Members,

After reviewing the Governor's announcement of April 22, assessing the guidelines from the Flathead County/City Health Department, and working collaboratively with administrators and educators from across the state and within our district, last night I recommended Bigfork School continue virtual learning for the remainder of the 2019/2020 school year.  The Bigfork Board of Trustees voted to approve the recommendation.  To date, no school district in the State of Montana has voted to return to in-classroom instruction for the remainder of the year.

The Governor's announcement called for “considerations” related to addressing health concerns of students, staff and community members.  Although I do not believe we have a responsibility to conform to each consideration, I do believe the considerations were intended as a benchmark for readiness to resume normal school operations.  It is clear to me schools of our size, with a variety of course offerings, are incapable of attaining acceptable standards to ensure even a moderate level of safety assurance for full return of students and staff.  However, I do believe building principals are able to identify unique and rare situations where individual students needing 1:1 academic or social/emotional support can make practical arrangements to serve those students on-site.  Building principals will be scheduling these appointments beginning May 7, and will reach out to you as necessary.  Please understand we are only able to schedule on-site appointments for a very small percentage of our students.

 Sincerely,

Matthew Jensen

Superintendent