



Jefferson High School

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Dear Staff, Families, and Patrons

This afternoon, Governor Bullock held a press conference to discuss the phases of lifting current restrictions currently in place for the state of Montana. The plan outlines the steps to open the state and to remain open for good. He also addressed where decisions for schools will come from after the current school closure timeline expires.

Governor Bullock stated May 7th as the date for schools on how to move forward with the final decisions governed by local control, for Montana schools this decision will come from local school boards. In order to facilitate a decision, I will be seeking input from the Jefferson County Health Department, and surveying parents and staff to gather input to share with the Jefferson High School board.

There are many questions that will need to be answered before the decision making process occurs. The JHS community is fortunate to have a school board comprised of intelligent individuals who will work with administration to make a decision that is in the best interest of our staff, students, and community.

The challenges associated with opening schools will include following and maintaining the guidelines currently in place regarding social distancing protocols. The a short list of challenges includes students per classroom, meals distribution for lunch and snack, passing time in hallways, and bus seating to name a few. With the existence of vulnerable populations, will parents opt to keep students at home for their own safety or the safety of others they may have an association? Again, these are just a few of the scenarios that will need consideration before the final decision.

The past five weeks have not been easy as students transitioned in a short period to distance and online learning. There have been challenges and successes as well as sacrifices to keep the process moving. I am appreciative of the hard work of students, teachers, staff and parents as they navigate this learning process knowing the level of comfort has been difficult.

As stated earlier, surveys will be generated and posted to collect input for the decision making process. The JHS will hold a special school board meeting next week to discuss and possibly vote on how the remainder of the school year will unfold.

Again, thanks for your efforts and support throughout this entire process. Please feel free to contact the school administration with any questions, concerns, or comments. Take care of each other and stay safe.

Respectfully,
Tim Norbeck, Superintendent