FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 15, 2020

Crawford, Erie and Warren County School Superintendents Issue Statement on School Closing due to COVID-19

The superintendents of the public school districts of Crawford, Erie and Warren counties are working together to keep students and school communities safe and healthy during the statewide school closure. They have released the following joint statement.

“The health, safety and well-being of our students and staff are our top priorities. With the recent developments regarding the COVID-19 virus and the closing of our schools, we would like to reinforce preventive safety measures that have previously been shared. We all must work together to minimize the spread of this virus.”

STATEWIDE

All K-12 public schools are closed including CTCs and intermediate units.

Childcare centers operating within any of the K-12, CTC or IU locations are also closed.

All universities in the PA State System of Higher Education are closed.

All other schools including private, parochial and institutions of higher education should be consulted for the most recent closure information.

Note: Schools are closed statewide during this period in order to promote social distancing and to prevent community spread of the virus. Frequent handwashing, avoid touching your face, properly covered sneezes and coughs, maintaining clean surfaces in all areas especially high traffic areas, avoiding crowds of people and staying home when sick will help the spread of this virus.

LOCALLY

School leaders from each of the schools in Erie, Crawford and Warren counties met over the weekend at the Northwestern Tri-county Intermediate Unit to discuss and unify school district responses to the governor’s closing of schools for a 10-working day period.

There has been plenty of guidance provided from the state, and thoughtful decisions are being made. While there are many consistencies in the school districts’ plans during the upcoming two-week period, please keep in mind that each district in PA is a locally controlled entity (with a locally elected school board). Within each of these entities in our tri-county regions, there is a wide range and variety of needs that are met by our districts. In each school office and building, “essential staff” will be required to report to work on a modified hybrid schedule. There may also be work that is required and assigned to take place at home as well. This includes (in most situations) the administration, the central office and front office staff in each building, the custodial and maintenance staff, payroll and finance office
staff, information technology teams, and others as deemed locally necessary including food service and food delivery staff.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has issued several guiding documents that have assisted in the decision-making process. Districts will not be penalized for the failure to meet the 180-day requirement (900/990 hours) during this two-week closure of schools. Even though classroom instruction has been interrupted, parents are encouraged to keep learning going by making time for reading, writing and the stimulation of each child’s mind. Stay up to date on local news, discuss local and statewide events and challenges that people are facing, and maintain a routine in the home that will make the return to school a simple transition.

Each school and district is taking their own individual approach to providing meals for students during this time. The federal government has permitted schools an option to distribute no-cost meals to students in a grab-and-go or a drive-thru approach. Parents are encouraged to visit their school’s website to learn more about how each individual district is handling the activities taking place during the closure as well as plans for the expected return to school on Monday, March 30.

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Mr. Jarrin Sperry, Conneaut School District  
Mrs. Sheri Yetzer, Corry School District  
Mr. Tom Washington, Crawford Central School District  
Mr. Brian Polito, Erie School District  
Dr. Erik Kincade, Fairview School District  
Mr. Richard B. Emerick, Fort LeBoeuf School District  
Mr. Richard Scaletta, General McLane School District  
Mrs. Donna Miller, Girard School District  
Mrs. Kelly Hess, Harbor Creek School District  
Mr. Shane S. Murray, Iroquois High School  
Dr. Michele S. Hartzell, North East School District  
Mrs. Darcie Moseley/Mr. Aaron O’Toole, Millcreek Township School District  
Mr. John Hansen, Northwestern School District  
Dr. Tim Glasspool, PENNCREST School District  
Mr. Mathew Bennett, Union City School District  
Mr. Ken Berlin, Wattsburg Area School District  
Dr. Dean Maynard, Executive Director, IU5  
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Mr. Bradley Whitman, Assistant Executive Director, IU5