



Subject: E-Learning plans; events; tours, practices, competitions; internships; cleaning, sanitizing and precautionary measures

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this note finds you and your family doing well. We have been monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak since it first surfaced in China. Since then, we have been actively monitoring developments and have been in constant contact with local, state, and national organizations to stay on top of the most current news. It is our intent as a District to continue to be proactive in working to ensure that the health and safety of students and our staff remains our top priority.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, testified in front of Congress on Wednesday of this week that the COVID-19 situation will get worse before it gets better. According to [news reports](#) of his testimony, "I can say we will see more cases, and things will get worse than they are right now. How much worse we'll get will depend on our ability to do two things: to contain the influx of people who are infected coming from the outside, and the ability to contain and mitigate within our own country."

As a result of the drastic increases in confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Illinois this week, and Dr. Fauci's testimony, I wanted to provide you an update on our District preparations in the event we would need to close school, along with sharing the immediate actions we are undertaking to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 within our local communities.

E-Learning Plans

We are working with our staff on e-learning plans that can be implemented if I need to make the decision, with input from state and local officials, to close any of our schools due to the COVID-19 outbreak. If all schools were to close, we would first exhaust the four emergency days built into our District calendar before enacting any e-learning days. Any school-related closings would be announced via subsequent communications.

We ask that students and staff begin to bring home any materials, on a daily basis, including but not limited to their iPad that they would need in order to complete assignments in the event that we had a school closure.

For families with no access to the internet at home, we ask that you contact your student's counselor or principal and we will make alternative arrangements.

Studies suggest that the spread of the virus could reach its peak in our area in mid-April. Out of an abundance of caution, and with the intent to limit any spread of COVID-19 in our

communities, District 214 will be taking the following actions beginning today, Thursday, March 12:

Events

We are currently reviewing large scale events in our schools, outside of the school day, that would have more than 250 people in attendance or have students and adults gathered in close proximity to each other. Most of those events will be postponed or canceled with a few exceptions. We may only allow immediate family members to attend specific concerts, plays or competitions or allow a maximum attendance of less than a facility's capacity. That information will be communicated in the coming days as we continue to monitor and receive updates from health care professionals. However, it is important to clearly state that the vast majority of afterschool events where more than 250 are expected to attend will be postponed or canceled from March 12 through April 30. We also will not be hosting any building-wide school assemblies from now through the end of April. It is imperative to note that any student who would like to opt out of an upcoming competition or event, based on concerns related to COVID-19, will not face any repercussions.

Domestic Field Trips, Tours, Practices & Competitions

All co-curricular activities will be cancelled from today, March 12, through the end of spring break. No practices or competitions will be allowed in order for students and staff to prepare in the event that we need to close schools and enact our e-learning program.

All field trips and tours are cancelled or postponed from March 12 through April 30. Each building will communicate with impacted staff, families, travel agencies and other partners to assist in seeking refunds or rescheduling the field trip or tour.

Non-conference and non-District hosted competitions occurring after spring break will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and we are seeking guidance from the Illinois High School Association as necessary. The only reason school would be canceled would be for our students and community members to self-quarantine to further reduce the likelihood of the spread of COVID-19, so practices and competitions would not be appropriate. It is important to once again note that competitions may be held this spring with certain limitations regarding who may attend as fans. We also are eliminating the sportsmanship handshake that is common at all levels of athletics and co-curricular activities.

Internships

Internships and work-based learning experiences will be cancelled or postponed from March 12 through April 30. Associated programs and opportunities, such as service projects where students are out in the community, also will be cancelled or postponed.

Cleaning, Sanitizing & Precautionary Measures

Our building and grounds teams continue to clean and sanitize high touch places in the buildings such as desks, handrails, doorknobs, computer keyboards, faucet handles, phones, etc. As an example, every door handle and faucet in the District is being sanitized at least once, if not more often, every day.

To help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses like COVID-19, please remind your student to consistently utilize the following preventative actions:

- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- See your doctor if you have a fever, cough, body aches and fatigue
- Stay home and limit contact with others if you are sick

In addition to these actions, social distancing measures such as keeping at least six feet away from another individual, can help slow the spread of respiratory illnesses. The [CDC](#) has advised that older individuals with underlying chronic medical conditions are at a higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 and they should be strongly discouraged from attending events with large numbers of attendees. We will review these actions and protocols at the end of April and will provide additional guidance at that time.

The following resources provide guidance related to the COVID-19 as well as mitigation strategies for home, school and the workplace:

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Illinois Department of Public Health](#)

Illinois has also established a COVID-19 hotline and email address. If you have specific questions about COVID-19, you can contact the Illinois COVID-19 hotline at 800-889-3931 or via email at dph.sick@illinois.gov

The District is actively monitoring the information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Illinois Department of Public Health, Cook County Health Department, the Illinois State Board of Education and local municipalities.

We will remain vigilant and continue to keep you informed. We thank you for your consideration of this correspondence. We know that the aforementioned actions may impact your family and, specifically, your student. However, it is our belief and hope that these actions prevent the spread of COVID-19 and allow all of our community to enjoy a safe and outstanding end of our school year. It is such an honor and privilege to serve as your superintendent of schools and I send this note to you with the deepest appreciation for your flexibility and patience during these trying and unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

David R. Schuler, Ph.D.

Superintendent