



Educational Services Building
25345 Taft Road, Novi, Michigan 48374
(248) 449-1204 • Fax (248) 449-1219

To our Novi Community School District families and Community,

Thank you. With your support, the Novi Community School District is figuring out ways to support our students - your children. It has not been easy and we are still working through issues every day but we I appreciate your positive attitude.

I would like to provide a couple of updates.

Teaching and Learning

I would like to thank the teachers for their work on preparing learning opportunities for our students. Today, Wednesday, March 18, lessons were posted for students on SeeSaw and Schoology. Parents can log in and find these lessons.

Questions have been asked on why we are not providing new learning experiences and are focusing on supporting previous learning and reinforcing content that has already been taught.

It is important to remember that online learning requires that we think through a wide variety of issues.

Questions we must ask as we pursue online learning:

- Do all students have access to appropriate learning devices?
- Do all students have access to the internet?
- Can the district successfully support the needs of all learners, including students with Individualized Educational Programs (IEP), students with a 504 plan, English learners (EL), and other students who may need accommodations?
- Will the experience be substantially the same for every student?

Because we cannot answer a strong yes to all these questions, we are pursuing a strategy that does not pretend to be a substitute in-class, teacher-led experience for our students. We are providing enrichment and support for all students, not a full online experience that substitutes for the classroom experience.

If this closure lasts longer than we currently anticipate, we might change our approach. We are continuing to look at options but for now I would encourage you as parents to access the SeeSaw and Schoology information that is being provided every Wednesday.

Students who are passionate, empowered, and prepared for their world and their future.

Dr. Steve M. Matthews, Superintendent of Schools • steven.matthews@novik12.org
<https://www.novi.k12.mi.us/>



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School days - forgiven or added to the calendar?

Yesterday, I asked you to contact our State Representative and State Senator about what the calendar will look like for the rest of the year. In my message yesterday I indicated that the State Legislature was "unwilling to agree that these days should be forgiven." Representative Kathy Crawford pushed back and indicated that my information was incorrect.

I would like to apologize to Representative Crawford. My language was incorrect.

What I should have said is that the State Legislature has not given guidance and as a result our district, along with every other district in the state, cannot adequately communicate to parents what will happen for the rest of the school year.

What are the choices?

There are two options.

Option One: Days are forgiven and we do not have to make them up. In this option days are treated as the equivalent of snow days and are forgiven. Students would not have to make up days in this scenario.

Option two: Days are not forgiven and we have to make them up. This would mean extending the calendar. Our last school day is June 12. If we have to make up the days we would start on June 15.

The legislature has to pass legislation to get to the Governor on which option it is going to be. The legislature has taken no action. Yesterday, March 17, the State Legislature recessed until March 25 and took no action on this issue.

As a result I cannot provide guidance to you. To me, this feels unacceptable.

As a result I will not be able to communicate about our school calendar until at least March 25.

The school day question needs to be answered so we can plan accordingly. Recessing until March 25 does not provide any clarity and extends uncertainty in a time when we are looking for certainty.

I again would urge you to contact our State Representative and State Senator and request that this issue be settled as soon as possible.

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Here is their contact information:

Representative Kathy Crawford

Contact

PHONE: 517-373-0827

EMAIL: KathyCrawford@house.mi.gov

Senator Jim Runestad

Contact

PHONE: 517- 373-1758

EMAIL: SenJRunestad@senate.michigan.gov

There is a rationale for forgiving the school days that are missed and there is a rationale for extending the school year. What we need is clarity so that everyone - the school district and families - can plan. That is why we need you to contact our State Legislators so that we can get clarity on what the calendar will look like.

Finally

Thank you for all that you are doing to support your children and to support our district. We will continue to provide support and learning opportunities for our students.

If you have questions or concerns please contact me: steven.matthews@novik12.org.

Until next time.

Dr. Steve Matthews

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve M. Matthews".

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Steve M. Matthews, Ed.D.

Superintendent

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