



April 18, 2020

Dear K-8 District 95 Families and Staff,

It is with a heavy heart that I share with you Governor J.B. Pritzker's order that all Illinois schools remain closed for the remainder of this school year. This means we will continue with eLearning plans for the rest of the 2019-20 school year.

We know this information will be difficult for many of our students, parents, and staff to hear, and we share in your disappointment at not being able to return in person as learning communities. School is more than just a building where we learn and teach, it is a home away from home, a social gathering place, a place where ideas, collaboration, struggles, and learning take place. And yet, we must all understand that the continued closure of our schools has been put in place because it is the safest means of protecting all of us and our families.

As we begin to process this news, there are many considerations for the successful transition to extended eLearning, the end of the school year, and summer programming. District 95 is already hard at work creating plans to assist students, families, and staff who will undoubtedly have questions as a result of this latest school closure order. We have listed some additional information below, and we will continue to communicate with you as we have more guidance and formalized plans.

### **STUDENT BELONGINGS**

Our building principals will be communicating a specific plan for the safe retrieval of all student belongings left at school. Plans will include both a pick-up or delivery option. Principals will share more information once these plans are finalized.

### **eLEARNING**

We continue to strive to support all students and families to ensure a successful eLearning experience. If your child is struggling, or there are any concerns with their eLearning engagement, please reach out directly to the teacher. We are all committed to helping each of our students attain the skills necessary to be successful both currently and in preparation of next school year. Please know that we have a strong commitment to ensure your child's successful completion of their current grade level, so much so that we will be extending our support into the summer for those students in need of extra support or those students who receive an Incomplete in any subject area.

### **SUMMER LEARNING**

For grades K-8, both Summer Success and Summer Wonder will not be able to be offered face-to-face in June. However, we are currently working on alternate options for an instructional delivery that would occur mid-July through early August. By moving the dates later, we hope to offer some face-to-face

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learning opportunities; however, this is contingent upon further direction from the State. We would also likely offer some online classes and some blended opportunities (a combination of online and in person). More information will be communicated once we have further guidance.

## **FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS**

### FINAL EXAMS

With the remainder of the school year to be completed through eLearning, we have made the decision to cancel all comprehensive final exams for middle school students. Students will likely still participate in summative assessments or projects as evidence of student learning.

### PROMOTION CELEBRATIONS FOR 8TH GRADE

The middle school principals will communicate more about plans for celebrations that abide by social distancing measures for our 8th grade students to acknowledge and salute their promotion to high school.

## **EXPANDED ELEMENTARY TECHNOLOGY**

Beginning on Monday, April 20th, we will be expanding the elementary school eLearning platform to include instructional YouTube videos and student district emails accounts. Both of these services are a part of our secondary technology strategy and with our extended eLearning time we will be including them now as part of the elementary suite.

As we extend these new services, the district remains committed to the safety of our students online and will utilize a number of tools to monitor and restrict student usage to ensure a safe and secure experience for students. More information will be provided by your building teachers and/or principals soon.

## **SUPPORT FOR OUR FAMILIES**

### FOOD SUPPORT

Please [visit our website](#) for the most up-to-date information about resources available to ANY family needing assistance with food. Click on “Assistance with Food”.

### MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

These are challenging and unprecedented times, and with this latest announcement about school closures it is to be expected that many of us will experience some level of grief about not being able to return to a place and a routine that was so familiar to us in our daily lives. Please take care of yourselves and one another as best you can while still observing the stay at home and other public health suggestions. Additionally, please feel free to reach out to either our school social workers and psychologists or access the following mental health resource list should you need more support: [www.isbe.net/mentalhealth](http://www.isbe.net/mentalhealth).

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## **LAST CHANCE FOR TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOMINATIONS**

We have extended the deadline for submitting a Teachers Make a Difference Award Nomination. If you wish to submit a nomination, [please complete this form](#) by the end of Monday, April 20th, 2020.

Finally, at the end of our fourth week of eLearning, please enjoy some updated artwork by our very talented students in our [Virtual Starbucks Art Wall](#). Enjoy the weekend and please be sure to continue with the very important measures of staying home and socially distancing. We will get through this together!

Sincerely,

Dr. Kelley Gallt

Superintendent