



# Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001  
www.isbe.net

**Darren Reisberg**  
*Chair of the Board*

**Dr. Carmen I. Ayala**  
*State Superintendent of Education*

## **Mandatory Suspension of In-Person Instruction Guidance for Illinois Schools and School Districts**

**Last updated: May 8, 2020**

### **Executive Orders:**

- [Executive Order 2020-33](#) (April 30, 2020) extends suspension of in-person instruction through end of 2019-20 academic year.
- [Executive Order 2020-31](#) (April 24, 2020) waives specific licensure requirements and graduation and coursework requirements.
- [Executive Order 2020-15](#) (March 27, 2020) suspends all state assessments, creates Remote Learning Days and Remote Learning Planning Days, addresses Early Childhood Block Grant funds, and permits virtual submission of school construction bids.
- [Executive Order 2020-10](#) (March 20, 2020) with exceptions, requires all individuals currently living within the State of Illinois to stay at home or at their place of residence. Among other changes, extends mandated statewide suspension of in-person instruction through April 7, 2020.
- [Executive Order 2020-07](#) (March 16, 2020) includes Open Meetings Act flexibility.
- [Executive Order 2020-06](#) (March 15, 2020) exempts schools operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice, State Board of Education or Department of Human Services from EO 2020-05.
- [Executive Order 2020-05](#) (March 13, 2020) requires all public and non-public schools to close beginning on Tuesday, March 17 through Monday, March 30. EO 2020-05 also provides flexibility in e-learning plans.

### **Emergency Rules:**

- [Part 25](#) (April 27, 2020) takes various measures for those seeking an educator license for the duration of the mandated in-person instruction and the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations, including extending the validity of a Professional Educator License that expires on June 30, 2020, short-term approval for school support personnel and paraprofessionals, and the waiver of student teaching for applicants who have completed all other preparation program requirement for a Professional Educator License.
- [Part 1](#) (April 27, 2020) waives certain graduation requirements for students who are in twelfth grade during the mandated in-person instruction pursuant to Executive Order 2020-05 and for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations.
- [Part 120](#) (March 30, 2020) requires all transportation costs incurred between March 17, 2020, and through the end of the 2019-2020, that are beyond transporting students to be allowable and reimbursed by the formula under Section 29-5 of the School Code.

- [Emergency Amendment](#) (April 9, 2020) ensures that contracts related to the provision of transportation or a transportation provider under a written agreement, regardless of any service that may be provided, are allowable and reimbursed.
- [Part 5](#) (March 27, 2020) allows the State Superintendent to declare a requirement to use Remote Learning Days for a district, multiple districts, a region, or the entire State. During the Remote Learning Days, schools must conduct instruction remotely.
- [Part 235](#) (March 27, 2020) allows currently funded early childhood block grant programs that voluntarily choose to provide care for children of essential workers to use funds in excess of what is necessary for the program to provide at-home materials for children in the program and to purchase supplies and equipment while caring for children of essential workers.
- [Part 226](#) (March 25, 2020) allows all approved special education private facilities to continue to invoice school districts and requires school districts to continue to pay the per diem approved by the Illinois Purchased Care Review Board under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code.
  - [Emergency Amendment](#) (April 9, 2020) provides that school districts will be reimbursed for special education private facility tuition expenditures per the statutory formula under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code, and also notes that school districts will be reimbursed for special education room and board expenditures under Part B of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

## ASSESSMENTS/ACCOUNTABILITY

### 1. How will the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction impact administration of Spring 2020 State-mandated assessments and accountability? (Updated 5/4/2020)

ISBE submitted a statewide waiver application to U.S. Department of Education (ED) to waive all federally required assessments, summative designations, and reporting on accountability metrics on the Illinois Report Card for the 2019-20 school year. ED has issued a formal approval of the ISBE waiver request.

The waiver:

- Waives all federally required assessments in the 2019-20 school year;
- Waives the requirement to provide summative designations and identify schools for targeted and comprehensive support in the 2019-20 school year; and
- Waives the requirement to report on accountability indicators on the 2019-20 school year Report Card.

View the waiver application online at [www.isbe.net/Documents/Assessment-Accountability-Waiver-Illinois.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Assessment-Accountability-Waiver-Illinois.pdf).

Executive Order 2020-15 suspends state assessments for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation. **With this order, state assessments, including the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10, SAT, DLM-AA, the Illinois Science Assessment, and Constitution exam are all suspended for Spring 2020. Executive Order**

**2020-31 and emergency rules waive the SAT, physical fitness assessment, and examination of patriotism and principles of representative government graduation requirements.**

We know that the free SAT provided by the state is the only opportunity many students get to take a college entrance exam. ISBE is working with the College Board on developing options to allow current 11th grade students to take the SAT in the fall.

**2. Are physical fitness assessments required during the suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Executive Order 2020-31 and emergency rules waived the physical fitness assessment for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Declaration.

**3. Will Invest in Kids scholarship recipients be required to take state assessments this Spring? (Updated 3/23/2020)**

State law requires Invest in Kids scholarship recipients to be assessed “in the same manner” as public-school students. As State assessments have been suspended, Invest in Kids scholarship recipients will not need to complete State assessments during the Spring 2020 testing window. ISBE is seeking relief from the evaluative study mandated by the Invest in Kids Act that is based on these assessments.

**4. Will the College Board still administer Advanced Placement (AP) Exams? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

For the 2019-20 exam administration only, students can take a 45-minute online exam at home. Educator-led development committees are currently selecting the exam questions that will be administered. Students will be able to take these streamlined exams on any device they have access to— computer, tablet, or smartphone.

College Board will conduct standard-setting processes to set appropriately rigorous cut scores for AP scores of 3, 4, and 5.

AP curricula are locally developed, and College Board defers to local decisions on how best to help students complete coursework. To be fair to all students, some of whom have lost more instructional time than others, the exam will only include topics and skills most AP teachers and students have already covered in class by early March.

College Board recognizes that the digital divide could prevent some low-income and rural students from participating. Working with partners, College Board will invest so that these students have the tools and connectivity they need to review AP content online and take the exam.

The exam questions are designed in ways that prevent cheating; College Board is using a range of digital security tools and techniques, including plagiarism detection software, to protect the integrity of the exams.

**5. Are there resources available for virtual learning for Advanced Placement courses? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

All AP students and teachers will be able to draw on the free online resources that were provided to every AP classroom this fall. Additional resources will be made easily accessible to AP students and teachers through mobile phones and other devices.

Beginning on March 25, students and teachers could begin attending free, optional live AP review courses, delivered by AP teachers from across the country. Courses will be recorded and available on-demand. These mobile-friendly classes are designed to be used alongside work schools may continue to assign.

**6. What should districts do with unused Illinois Assessment of Readiness test materials? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Please be advised that all secure test material will need to be returned to Pearson. Below are directions as to how the test material should be returned to Pearson.

Students who completed all units of the content area test (online or paper format) will have their test scored, and the scores will be reported to the home district and school. If you have any students who completed the content area assessment and used a large-print test booklet or braille test document, the responses will need to be transcribed to a standard answer document for scoring purposes.

When school personnel are instructed to return safely to their school buildings/districts, please make the necessary arrangements to return IAR test materials to Pearson. Please see page 48 in the Coordinator Manual for a listing of secure test material that will need to be returned to Pearson.

Please note that in PAN, under Published Reports, you will find the “Missing Barcode Report” which is a listing of all secure test material that will need to be returned to Pearson.

An illustration is as follows:

- In Box 1 of the Test Coordinator Kit, please remove the UPS labels, the Pearson colored labels, and the IAR Shipping Carrier Return Instructions;
- If a district/school has not opened any Pearson material boxes, place the UPS non-scorable and Purple non-scorable return labels on boxes and call UPS (800-823-7459) for a pick up;
- If a district/school sorted test material but did not begin testing, please place all test material back into the Pearson boxes, place the non-scorable UPS and Purple labels from the Test Coordinator Kit in Box 1, and call UPS (800-823-7459) for a pick up; and
- If students started testing, you will need to sort the test material by scorable and non-

scorable documents, place any completed or partially completed tests in the scorable box, use the testing Header Sheets that are included in the Test Coordinator Kit from Box 1, and fill out and place between each grade/subject.

Please note that Pearson will review the answer documents and score only those paper tests that have responses in all units. If you have any additional questions and/or concerns regarding the return of secure test material, please contact Pearson Customer Support at (833) 213-3879.

## 7. What should districts do with unused PSAT 8/9/10 and SAT materials? (Updated 4/8/2020)

### Test books:

- If you were scheduled to administer the March 25 SAT School Day, please continue to hold all test materials until it is safe to return to school by keeping the materials you received secure, as directed by the [SAT School Day Coordinator Manual](#) starting on page 37. When your district deems it is safe for schools to reopen, please open the test book boxes and locate the clear Ziplock bag which contains the loose UPS and red test book return labels. Apply one of each label to the outside of the test book boxes and reseal the boxes. Return test book boxes using your regularly scheduled UPS pickup. If UPS doesn't make a regular stop at your school, schedule a pickup at [ups.com](https://www.ups.com), or call 800-PICK-UPS (800-742-5877). Detailed instructions for scheduling a pickup on [ups.com](https://www.ups.com) can be found in the [SAT School Day UPS Online Self-Service Overview](#) (.pdf/474.95 KB). You will use the UPS tracking number on the labels you applied to the test book return boxes.
- If you were scheduled to administer the April SAT, PSAT 10, and/or PSAT 8/9, no test book shipments were released to schools, so no action is required.

### Answer sheets and pre-ID labels:

- Preadministration materials for the March 25 SAT School Day should be securely stored until you are able to return to school. When your district deems it is safe for schools to reopen, please securely destroy all answer sheets and pre-ID labels.
- If you were scheduled to administer the April SAT, PSAT 10, and/or PSAT 8/9, no preadministration shipments were released to schools, so no action is required.

### Other materials:

- For all other SAT, PSAT 10, and/or PSAT 8/9 materials at your school including manuals, please follow the guidance included in the “How to Handle Test Materials After Testing is Complete” chart in your Coordinator manuals.

If you have any questions regarding the return of secure material, please contact the College Board Customer Support at 844-688-9995 or write to [illinoisadministratorsupport@collegeboard.org](mailto:illinoisadministratorsupport@collegeboard.org).

**8. Will students currently enrolled but not graduating this Spring be required to take the constitution test in future years? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

The constitution test as required by 105 ILCS 5/27-3 is suspended for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation (Executive Order 2020-15). Once the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation ends, the requirement will be reinstated. Therefore, students who are not currently seniors will be required to take and pass a constitution assessment in order to graduate.

Districts can offer non-senior students an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the content required by 105 ILCS 5/27-3 through remote learning or provide students with an opportunity to take a constitution assessment when in-person instruction resumes. School districts have flexibility on the type of “examination” administered and may certify students based on satisfactory completion. For example, consider a teacher-created assessment, a project, or a presentation that requires the student to demonstrate understanding of the U.S. Constitution as part of the current course in which the student is enrolled. Completion of this type of assignment can qualify as “passing a satisfactory examination upon such subjects” and can meet the requirement in statute for graduation.

**BOARD MEETINGS/OPEN MEETINGS ACT**

**9. Have any Open Meetings Act (OMA) requirements been relaxed? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

Based upon Governor Pritzker’s Executive Order 2020-07 issued on March 16, during the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120, requiring or relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body are suspended. Specifically, the requirement in 5 ILCS 120/2.01 that "members of a public body must be physically present" is suspended; and (2) the conditions in 5 ILCS 120/7 limiting when remote participation is permitted are suspended. Public bodies are encouraged to postpone consideration of public business where possible. When a meeting is necessary, public bodies are encouraged to provide video, audio, and/or telephonic access to meetings to ensure members of the public may monitor the meeting, and to update their websites and social media feeds to keep the public fully apprised of any modifications to their meeting schedules or the format of their meetings due to COVID-19, as well their activities relating to COVID-19.

**10. Should districts consider canceling meetings? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

If a board does not have any pressing matters that require immediate vote, ISBE recommends that schools consider canceling or rescheduling meetings. This will likely not be a realistic option for many school boards, however, who will need to convene to ensure that both fiscal needs and teacher evaluation/retention requirements are met.

## SCHOOL CALENDARS

### **11. What are the timelines for return to school? (Updated 5/8/2020)**

The current guidance to schools is based on the Governor’s Executive Orders and the [Restore Illinois plan](#), which sets forth a Public Health Approach to Safely Reopen Our State. Per the guidelines, Illinois is currently Phase 2 (Flattening) statewide.

As Illinois continues to make headway against this virus and transitions to other phases in the Governor’s plan, ISBE will provide updated guidance on what is allowable for schools. While we do not know when the public health conditions for resuming in-person learning will be met, ISBE is in the process of developing recommendations for when the time comes to transition back to in-person instruction. That guidance will be released as soon as available.

### **12. What provisions of the public school calendar have been impacted by executive order of the Governor? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Per Executive Order 2020-15, effective March 27, 2020, “[d]uring the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the provisions of the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-19, specifying the school term and requiring certain approvals for changes to the school term, are suspended. Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed as relieving school districts of the requirement pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-19 to provide a minimum term of at least 185 days to insure 176 days of actual pupil attendance. Nothing in this Executive Order shall prohibit school employees from receiving compensation, on the basis of their regular contracts, for additional time worked as a result of an extension of the school term.” Furthermore, “the provisions of the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(a)-(j), providing the method for the calculation of daily pupil attendance, are suspended.”

### **13. What is the minimum number of pupil attendance days required for the 2019-20 school year? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

School districts must still have a final calendar of 176 days of pupil attendance. Please see below for a description of days that count toward this 176-day requirement.

### **14. What types of days count toward the required 176 pupil attendance days? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

The following types of days count toward the required 176 pupil attendance days for the 2019-20 school year: onsite pupil attendance days prior to March 17, 2020; Remote Learning Days; Remote Learning Planning Days; E-Learning Days; and up to two full day Parent Teacher Conferences. Though not counted as pupil attendance days, Act of God Days and Emergency Days used for COVID-19-related reasons during the 2019-20 school year are not required to be made up. Therefore, a school district’s calendar will be deemed to meet the

176 days of pupil attendance with the inclusion of up to two full day Parent-Teacher Conferences, Act of God Days and Emergency Days used for COVID-19 related issues.

**15. What is an Act of God Day? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

An Act of God Day is used for a condition beyond the control of the district that poses a hazardous threat to the health and safety of the students. Traditionally, Act of God Days may only be requested after the district has exhausted all of the Proposed Emergency Days built into the proposed calendar. However, given the statewide impact of COVID-19, all school district calendars are coded as Act of God Days for March 17 through March 30 regardless of the number of Proposed Emergency Days used. Though not pupil attendance days, Act of God Days are not required to be made up.

**16. What is a Remote Learning Day on the school calendar? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Per emergency rules at 23 Ill Admin. Code 5.10 (a), “when a Gubernatorial Disaster has been proclaimed or when any other exigent circumstance exists, as deemed by the State Superintendent, the State Superintendent may declare a requirement to use Remote Learning Days for a district, multiple districts, a region, or the entire State. During Remote Learning Days, schools must conduct instruction remotely. Once declared, Remote Learning Days will be implemented in any of grades pre-kindergarten through 12 as days of attendance, and shall be deemed pupil attendance days for calculation of the length of a school term under Section 10-19 of the School Code.”

**17. What are Remote Learning Planning Days? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Per 23 Ill Admin. Code 5.10 (c), Remote Learning Planning Days may be used “consecutively or in separate increments, to develop, review, or amend its Remote Learning Day Plan. Remote Learning Planning Days shall be deemed pupil attendance days for calculation of the length of a school term under Section 10-19 of the Code.”

**18. Will districts be able to utilize more than five remote learning planning days? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

No. Per emergency rules at 23 Ill Admin. Code 5.10 (c), districts may use a maximum of five remote learning planning days.

**19. May a district use all five of its Remote Learning Planning Days at the end of the school year? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Yes, provided that the Remote Learning Planning Days are being used to review or amend the district’s Remote Learning Day Plan or to plan for transitioning back to on-site

instruction.

**20. May a district alter its Spring Break on the calendar? For example, if a district’s spring break was scheduled during the statewide Act of God Days of March 17 through March 30, may the district reschedule its spring break? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Yes, school districts have maximum flexibility to modify spring break dates or to eliminate spring break from the calendar altogether.

**21. My district originally had spring break scheduled during statewide Act of God Days of March 17 through March 30. Since Act of God Days are not required to be made up, may the district decide to eliminate spring break from the calendar and, in essence, end the school year “early”? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

A district may choose not to have spring break as originally planned on the calendar. If the spring break dates were between March 17 and March 30, those days are not required to be made as Act of God Days are not required to be made up. This would allow for a district to end the school year earlier than had been planned. However, the district must ensure that it has held at least 176 pupil attendance days minus the number of other days that count toward the 176-day requirement as outlined above.

**22. How are emergency days being addressed during the current public health emergency? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Any emergency days used specifically due to COVID-19 issues will not be required to be made up by the end of the school year. A school district’s calendar will be deemed to meet the 176 days of pupil attendance with the inclusion of up to two full day Parent-Teacher Conferences, Act of God Days and Emergency Days used for COVID-19 related issues.

**23. How should districts code March 16 on their calendar? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

If a district held an E-Learning or in-person pupil attendance day on March 16, the day should be coded as a pupil attendance day. If a district decided to take an emergency day on March 16, it should be coded as such. Please note that an emergency day on March 16 due to COVID-19 does not need to be made up. Finally, ISBE offered districts the ability to use a teacher institute day on March 16. If it was the district’s choice to utilize this option, the day should be coded as such. However, please note that this day does not need to be made up.

**24. How are days on the school calendar coded for March 17 through March 30? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

March 17 through March 30 have been automatically coded as Act of God Days for all school districts in Illinois. Please note that Act of God Days are not pupil attendance days

but are not required to be made up.

**25. When will the final calendar be available for updating? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

ISBE has communicated that no calendar revisions need to be made at this time. Please keep accurate records, but do not worry about calendar coding at this time. ROEs/ISCs and school districts will address calendars collaboratively in June. Each ROE/ISC will support districts through a "workshop" format (in-person or virtual) in June to submit final calendars. By doing this collaboratively, we can ensure that calendars are done completely and accurately at a later date without any need for further revision. Please note that ISBE is currently modifying its Public School Calendar system to account for the different types of days noted in this guidance. When those updates have been complete, the field will be notified.

For additional support regarding the Public School Calendar System, please contact Jim Luckey at [jluckey@isbe.net](mailto:jluckey@isbe.net).

**26. Will schools be able to hold in-person summer programming following the conclusion of the academic year? (Updated 5/8/2020)**

At this time, summer school will be held remotely. Please see [ISBE's Summer School Guidance for Schools and Districts](#) for additional information regarding remote summer school courses.

**27. Will districts that have academic calendars that end in June or July be able to resume in-person instruction this summer? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

No. On April 17, 2020, the Governor announced schools and districts must suspend in-person instruction through the end of the academic year, regardless of when the academic year is scheduled to end.

## **EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND LICENSURE**

**28. What is being done for educator licensure candidates and candidates for subsequent endorsements who might not be able to complete required program components (i.e. student teaching, internship hours, edTPA, content tests, etc.) due to school and test center closures? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Executive Order 2020-31 and emergency rules provide the following:

- Waives testing requirements required for the evidence-based assessment of teacher effectiveness (currently, the edTPA), 105 ILCS 5/21B-30(f), and student teaching/internship requirements for candidates currently student teaching and completing internship;
- Waives the requirement to take the content knowledge test prior to beginning student teaching 105 ILCS 5/21B-30(d);

- Per part 25 of Illinois Administrative Code, provides the ability to be awarded short-term approvals if licensure content tests were unable to be completed.
- Per part 25 of Illinois Administrative Code, provides the ability to be awarded a short-term approvals if the paraprofessional competency test is not yet completed.
- Allows for alternative English proficiency verification for Visiting International Teachers required by Part 25 of the Illinois Administrative Code.

Additional information regarding student teaching, internship hours and other requirements scheduled for summer and fall will be forthcoming.

Please see the [Educator Licensure Changes FAQ](#) for details regarding licensure changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, ISBE and IBHE released [joint guidance for institutions of high education](#) regarding licensure requirement modifications.

Additional information regarding student teaching, internship hours and other requirements scheduled for summer and fall will be forthcoming.

## **29. Will ISBE amend renewal dates for educator licensure? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

There is no change to this requirement due to Executive Order 2020-31. Individuals whose licenses are due for renewal on June 30, 2020 should make every effort to renew their licenses by that date. ISBE already offers educators a two-month grace period for licensure renewal. Licenses, in order not to lapse, must be renewed by August 31, 2020. Individuals who are scheduled to renew their licenses by June 30, 2020 and who already completed required professional development should log into their ELIS accounts and renew their licenses as soon as possible. Note: the above timelines are not applicable to holders of substitute teaching licenses and licenses endorsed for paraprofessional. Educators still in need of professional development hours or administrator academies should work with their districts, Regional Office of Educations, or other approved providers to identify online professional development opportunities. Professional development activities completed online through out-of-state entities are acceptable for use toward renewal requirements if approved by one of the aforementioned entities.

Please see the [Educator Licensure Changes FAQ](#) for details regarding licensure renewals due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **30. How long are the licensure exemptions outlined in Executive Order 2020-31 and emergency rules in place? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Licensure exemptions are in place for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations. Note: The Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations are separate from the Governor's shelter-in-place order. Exemptions are not aligned to the shelter-in-place order.

### **31. Can classes leading to educator licensure be grades as pass/fail? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Illinois Administrative Rule 25.100 requires coursework used for licensure to be passed with a grade of “C-” or higher. If your institution defines “pass” as a “C-” or higher, licensure will not be impacted. If an institution’s “passing” grade is equivalent to lower than a C-, the institution should inform ISBE on the determination made by institution administration. ISBE will work with institutions to support those candidates who may be impacted.

### **32. How does the statewide mandated suspension of in-person instruction impact educator professional development? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

In light of recent mandated suspension of in-person instruction to prevent exposure to the COVID-19 virus and guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding group gatherings, the Illinois State Board of Education encourages all providers delivering professional development and/or administrator academies to consider alternative delivery formats while Illinois is under the governor-issued state of emergency. This guidance applies to all professional development and administrator academies, including those typically only offered in-person (e.g., AA #1801, AA #1865, AA #2001, and AA #3000/01/02).

Educators should work with their district, union, or Regional Office of Education to find online professional development opportunities. Activities taken online through out-of-state entities are acceptable for use toward PD if approved by one of the aforementioned entities.

There are also numerous online professional learning opportunities for licensure renewal within Illinois, such as courses through the [Illinois Resource Center](#) or the [Ed Leaders Network](#) (ELN) platform. All Illinois educators can use ELN to access a free library of online, on-demand professional development courses. Information to log on and access this service is available through your school administrator. Individuals and/or districts also can request access to ELN by emailing [support@edleadersnetwork.org](mailto:support@edleadersnetwork.org).

## **END OF SCHOOL YEAR PROCEDURES**

### **33. Can districts hold in-person graduation ceremonies? (Updated 5/4/20)**

Decisions around whether or not to host safe and socially distanced graduation ceremonies will remain at the discretion of local school boards and superintendents. Districts and schools may choose to postpone graduation ceremonies, although it is not known when large-scale in-person events will be able to be safely held. Alternatively, districts and schools can choose to honor graduating students in a way that prioritizes the health and safety of participants and complies with state and local social distancing orders and guidelines. Understanding the milestone that graduation ceremonies represent in the lives of our students and families, the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health developed guidance for public school districts, public and nonpublic schools to consider when

navigating these concerns at the local level. [View IDPH/ISBE Graduation Ceremony Guidance.](#)

### **34. Can students enter the building to gather personal belongings? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

Yes. Schools should consult with their attorneys, the county health department and Illinois Department of Public Health in ensuring that individuals safely enter the building to gather personal belongings.

Parents, guardians, and/or students may be permitted to enter buildings to clean out lockers or desks and to gather personal belongings. Please be mindful of student privacy concerns and students' rights that may apply. Please also consult with your legal counsel before allowing anyone other than the student or their parent/guardian to access a student's belongings. Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control social distancing guidelines must be practiced. Schools and districts should initially communicate with families to determine the need to collect any personal belongings. As much as possible, schools should find ways to minimize entry to buildings. The recommended guidelines below should be employed if it is necessary for students to enter the building to retrieve personal belongings.

- A. Schools and districts should consider creating schedules for students to enter buildings for the gathering of their personal belongings and the cleaning out lockers and/or desks. A limited number of individuals should be allowed in the building at one time. Schools and districts should consider creating timeslots per hour per building based on multiple criteria i.e., number of students, building layout, and internal resources available to oversee the process, etc.
- B. Students and staff should wear face coverings while in the building.
- C. Unless a student requires one-on-one assistance, guests who arrive to assist students should be required to remain in their vehicle until the student brings their items outside to be loaded into their vehicle. If one-on-one assistance is necessary, only one guest may accompany students into the building. Parents or guardians may also gather personal belongings on behalf of students.
- D. After the "pick-up" day, keys or district-owned padlocks should remain on lockers and not be handled for at least four days.
- E. Wipes and sanitizer should be made available in school buildings for staff and students. Hand sanitizer should be made available at entrance/exits and other high traffic areas.
- F. If carts are provided by the school, staff should sanitize the carts between uses.
- G. Schools should consider custodial support that may be needed to address litter produced during this process and to sanitize the school following access by parents, guardians and students.
- H. Students and staff may not enter the building if they are ill.

**35. Can educators enter the building to gather personal belongings and pack up classrooms? (Updated 4/29/2020)**

Yes. Schools should consult with their attorneys, the county health department and Illinois Department of Public Health in ensuring that individuals safely enter the building to gather personal belongings. Educators can enter buildings to clean out lockers or desks and gather personal belongings. Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control social distancing guidelines must be practiced. Schools and districts should initially communicate with staff to determine the need to collect any personal belongings and pack up classrooms. As much as possible, schools should find ways to minimize entry to buildings. The recommended guidelines below should be employed if it is necessary for staff to enter the building to retrieve personal belongings and pack up classrooms.

- A. Schools and districts should consider creating schedules for educators to enter buildings for the gathering of their personal belongings and cleaning out classrooms. A limited number of staff should be allowed in the building at one time. Schools and districts should consider creating timeslots per hour per building based on multiple criteria i.e., number of staff, building layout, and internal resources available to oversee the process, etc.
- B. Staff should wear face coverings while in the building. Face coverings may include masks, bandanas, or any other object that covers the nose and mouth.
- C. Guests who arrive to assist educators should be required to remain in their vehicle until the educator brings their items outside to be loaded in their vehicle.
- D. After “pick-up” days, keys must be placed in an envelope by the educator and should not be handled for at least four days.
- I. Wipes and sanitizer should be made available in school buildings for staff. Hand sanitizer should be made available at entrance/exits and other high traffic areas.
- E. If carts are provided by the school, staff should sanitize the carts between uses.
- F. Schools should consider custodial support that may be needed to address litter produced during this process and to sanitize the school following access by staff.
- G. Students and staff may not enter the building if they are ill.

**36. Can maintenance staff and custodians enter the building to clean? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

Yes. Personnel who are providing janitorial services are performing essential functions and are exempt from the stay at home mandate. Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control social distancing guidelines must be practiced.

**GRANTS & FUNDING**

**37. How can districts utilize CARES Act funding? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

ISBE is currently completing its State application for funds. Additional information will be forthcoming. Funding can support:

- Activities authorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Individual with

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), and McKinney-Vento Act.

- Needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English Learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth. Funds can also be used for outreach and service delivery.
- Meals to eligible students, technology for online learning between all students and classroom teachers (including hardware, software, and connectivity), guidance for meeting the requirements under the IDEA and other educational services (e.g., educators providing services through digital or online platforms, counseling services, and guidance services consistent with federal, state, and local requirements), mental health services and supports, and summer learning and supplemental after-school programs, including classroom instruction or online learning.

Please find more information about the CARES Act at [www.isbe.net/Documents/CARES-Act-District-Info-3-31-20.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/CARES-Act-District-Info-3-31-20.pdf). Submit questions about the CARES Act to [IllinoisCARES@isbe.net](mailto:IllinoisCARES@isbe.net).

**38. During the remote learning period, does reduction in force at school districts affect the district's ability to receive CARES Act funding? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

For the 2019-20 school year, an LEA, state, institution of higher education, or other entity that receives funds under “Education Stabilization Fund” (CARES Act) shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus (Sec.18006).

School districts may continue to proceed with reductions in force for the 2020-21 school year.

**39. When will FY 2021 CTE/Perkins allocations be announced? When will additional monies be released for FY 2020? When will the FY 2021 CTE/Perkins grant applications open? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

Allocations, timelines, and other relevant information will be posted on the ISBE CTE website and shared via email with EFE directors after they have been finalized.

**40. Will the April 1, 2020, Perkins V Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, Local Needs Assessment, and Program Data Review deadline be extended? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

Revised submission dates for the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) will be determined at the end of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation period.

**41. Will the deadline for Title III Intent to Apply forms be extended? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

We are extending the deadline to submit Title III Intent to Apply forms to April 27, 2020. This extension will not affect when districts receive their funding in September if they have

submitted their Intent to Apply and then subsequently submit their full application by the respective deadlines.

**42. There are upcoming deadlines requiring meaningful consultation between public and nonpublic schools (e.g. Title III Intent to Apply). We are unable to make contact due to school closures mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. How should we proceed? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

ISBE strongly recommends nonpublic school administrators provide their administrator contact information to public schools. This will facilitate coordination with regards to grants and services. Meaningful consultation may be completed via phone or webinar. Forms may be printed and signed by the nonpublic school and then returned via email to the public school for submission in applications.

**43. Will there be flexibility regarding the use of state grant funds? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

ISBE has extended all fiscal year 2020 state grants to June 30, 2021. At this time, federal grants are not included in this directive, as federal funding is not delayed, and unexpended grant funds are permitted to be carried forward into next year.

In all cases grant funds are required to support the specific student groups for which they are intended, and grantees must ensure that those funds are used to support those students in alignment with the intent of the grant program. Grantees must also maintain appropriate records and cost documentation for all costs charged to grants.

**44. Will school districts be granted an extension of financial, performance, and other reports for state grants? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

ISBE has extended all fiscal year 2020 state grants to June 30, 2021.

Statutory requirements, such as the submission of quarterly expenditure reports into next fiscal year, will continue. However, if any subsequent quarterly report equals your final 2020 budget, ISBE staff will consider the grant project final and remove any remaining expenditure reports.

ISBE will allow grantees to delay submission of performance reports (GPRS) for up to three months beyond their normal due date. However, there can be no extensions granted for expenditure and Annual Financial Reports.

**45. Can I utilize grant funds for unplanned purposes to support the specific needs of our students and school community? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Yes, grantees can utilize grant funds for unplanned purposes to support the specific needs of the students and school community. All activities must serve the population for which the grant is intended, meet all applicable allowability requirements, and be appropriately documented. Documentation must be maintained to support the decision to deviate from the

original plan, how the alternative actions were determined, and costs relate to the alternative actions. ISBE will provide further information on how to report and claim these deviations in the expenditure report in the near future.

**46. Should school districts continue to pay individuals using grant funds? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Yes, if a district employee is funded in whole or in part with grant funds during the school year, the employee should be paid during this period of school interruption. ISBE will allow grantees to continue to charge salaries and benefits to currently active awards consistent with the recipient's policy of paying salaries from all funding sources Federal.

These employees should, to the extent practicable, work on project activities during the time the school is closed. Employees supported with grant funds who are intended to provide direct services to students may continue to work during the period of a COVID19 outbreak using alternative methods. Examples of appropriate alternative methods may include telephone, videophone, and e-mail.

Grantees must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation for all costs charged to grants.

**47. Will ISBE extend grant application deadlines? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

ISBE will consider flexibility in regard to the submission of completing applications in response to specific announcements, as well as unsolicited applications. ISBE will continue to monitor submission deadlines for specific grants and extend deadlines as needed.

**48. Will grantees be provided an extension of Single-Audit requirements? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

ISBE will extend due dates up to six months to recipients and sub-recipients that have not yet filed their single audits for FY 2019.

**49. Will ISBE grant an extension to the currently approved indirect cost rates? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

ISBE will allow grantees to continue to use the currently approved indirect cost rates (i.e., predetermined, fixed, or provisional rates) to recover their indirect costs on all awards. ISBE will approve grantee requests for an extension on the use of the current rates for one additional year without submission of an indirect cost proposal. Agencies may also approve grantee requests for an extension of the indirect cost rate proposal submission to finalize the current rates and establish future rates.

**50. If a school district incurs fees for canceling events and travel, can the district use grant funds to pay these incurred costs? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Grantees that incur costs related to the cancelation of events, travel, or other activities necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award may charge these costs to their award.

**51. Can districts proceed with maintenance grant projects? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

If the grant has been approved, the district can start the work provided that cash is available to the school district. Districts should consult with their local health department for guidance on how to proceed with maintenance activities to ensure the health and safety of individuals completing the work.

**52. Can federal grantees and subgrantees donate or loan personal protective equipment (PPE) and other medical supplies or equipment purchased with federal funds to health providers? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

Yes. View [guidance from the U.S. Department of Education](#) for additional details and requirements.

**53. What hours count for the Three Circles Grant? Will the 400-hours requirement be adjusted? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

We understand that the “school day” currently looks different from normal circumstances. Any hours logged for aged purposes outside of contractual obligations for your district are allowable for Three Circles.

Ultimately, it is up to district administrators to decide what hours are approvable (as long as they relate to agriculture education). ISBE recommends district administrators and teachers collaboratively identify those duties that will count as beyond the normal contract to prevent miscommunications and misunderstandings. Districts should be mindful of the three categories of approved activities outlined in Section 75.540(c) of the Illinois Administrative Code: work-based learning (SAE), career and technical student organization, and curricular/intra-curricular related activities. In reporting the hours and activities, the district should identify and describe any adjustments to or departure from an approved activity category due to the statewide school closures.

Per the Illinois School Code, an agriculture education teacher needs to log no less than 400 total hours to be in compliance with program requirements and ensure continued eligibility in subsequent years. We recognize that it may not be possible for agriculture education teachers to log 400 hours or more during fiscal year 2020 due to the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. Section 75.560(e)(3) of the Illinois Administrative Code provides ISBE with the authority to waive a district’s ineligibility due to insufficient hours due to extenuating circumstances. While districts should make a good faith effort to complete and report all approved hours, ISBE has the authority to determine funding in FY 2021 will not

be impacted based on insufficient hours logged in FY 2020. Please note that funding for FY 2022 will be contingent upon successful completion of the 400-hour requirement in FY 2021. If your district faces challenges in meeting the obligations of the Three Circles Grant due to the school closures, please email [ag\\_ed@isbe.net](mailto:ag_ed@isbe.net).

## HOMELESS STUDENTS

### **54. How can homeless students be supported during the mandated suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

The Lead Area Homeless liaisons and School District liaisons are required to work directly with families during this trying time to make sure that homeless children and youth have all of the materials needed to complete assignments, to provide access to meals, and to ensure the safety and stability of this vulnerable population. School District Liaisons work with Lead Area Liaisons to identify and locate specific services or connections with other agencies. The ISBE State Homeless Coordinator will continue to work closely with the liaisons to ensure that homeless children and youth, including unaccompanied youth, receive the same services as all other children. [View Lead Area Homeless Liaison contact information.](#)

## MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

### **55. What if a district has a question regarding multilingual education? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

On April 20, ISBE released [PreK-12 English Learner Provisional Identification and Placement Procedures During Remote Learning](#), which provides districts with step-by-step instructions for provisionally screening and placing English Learners via digital means when face-to-face screening is not possible, such as during the current COVID-19 emergency.

ISBE's Remote Learning Recommendations include information on instruction and grading for multilingual students. ISBE will be releasing additional recommendations soon.

## NUTRITION/MEALS/FOOD SERVICE

### **56. Given the extended stay at home order, can school personnel still distribute meals to students? (Updated 3/20/2020)**

Yes. School districts should continue to distribute meals to students.

### **57. Are districts required to provide meals to students during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

Districts must provide a free lunch to students eligible for free meals during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. While districts are not required to provide meals to all students during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction, it is strongly encouraged. Please make every effort to provide meals for all children who need them, in the way that

works best for your community, such as grab-and-go or delivery. For schools participating in National School Lunch or Summer Food Service Programs, meals offered to all children age 18 and below, or enrolled in school, are reimbursable.

As all students are eligible for meals, district meal service numbers may increase from what the district usually orders. Therefore, please adjust food orders to make sure there is ample food to meet the increased need. If faced with scenarios where there are fewer meals than the number of students requesting meal service, we ask that you please prioritize those students who are eligible for free/reduced lunch programs when distributing meals. In the event of localized shortages, schools should contact local food banks or neighboring districts for additional resources or the purchase of meals.

### *Districts that Are Currently Participating in the National School Lunch or Summer Food Service Programs*

Please note the following with respect to district participants in the National School Lunch or Summer Food Service Programs:

#### **Participation Requirements**

- Meals must meet the meal pattern requirements.
- Meals offered to all children age 18 and below, or enrolled in school, are reimbursable.
- There is no reimbursement for meals offered to adults, although school may offer such meals for purchase.
- Daily counts are required by meal service type. Please make sure that you are collecting this data on a daily basis.
- Schools should consult local Department of Public Health for questions related to food safety requirements.

#### **Implementation Guidance**

- Ensure all the students' nutritional needs are addressed. This includes students with allergies and other food restrictions. Make sure to mark the food appropriately.
- Create multiple geographically located food distribution centers where necessary. Students are not allowed to eat inside the school.
- Ensure that all necessary personnel are stationed to maximize student and staff safety and that all distribution sites are supervised.
- Explore distribution strategies that will avoid large gatherings of people and make social distancing possible.
- Students can receive two meals a day (one breakfast, one lunch, or one snack in any combination). Both meals can be distributed at once either via pick-up, drive-up or delivery.
- Allow ample and reasonable amount of time for meal pick-up for each meal service, recognizing that families may be experiencing challenges during this time.

- Use multiple modes of communication to inform students and families of available food service, including time, location, and method of distribution.
- Consider multiple methods of distribution, such as: drive up; walk up; satellite locations, such as libraries, churches, park districts, and youth centers; home delivery via bus routes; and other options.

**58. Are meals served during spring break eligible for reimbursement? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

The meals served during your planned spring break are reimbursable. Count these meals as you have in the past. If your point of service system or student information system does not count or upload the meals because you have to record the days as non-attendance, you may go into WINS and record these meals as reimbursable. Please contact our Nutrition Department at [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) and a staff member can help with the claiming process.

**59. Are districts required to complete a form to provide non-congregate feeding for students? (Updated 3/14/2020)**

ISBE has already obtained the USDA waiver to provide meals during school closures, including to children under 5. Districts will need to complete a one-page waiver that takes less than 10 minutes: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ISBE-66-98.pdf>. Please send to ISBE at [CNP@isbe.net](mailto:CNP@isbe.net) as soon as possible.

**60. Can schools and districts provide meals to students between the ages of 18 and 21 receiving special education services? (Updated 3/16/2020)**

Yes, provided the student receiving special education services is enrolled in the school district.

**61. What if a district is not able to procure products to meet the federally required meal pattern requirements? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Schools and community organizations operating USDA-funded Child Nutrition Programs at this time (Non-Congregate COVID-19 closure waiver) are required to follow the meal pattern of the program in which they are operating. If, however, there are extenuating circumstances that do not allow a specific requirement of the meal pattern to be met, the USDA has allowed state agencies an option to offer a waiver on a case-by-case basis. ISBE will offer this waiver option on a case-by-case basis via a simple [online form](#).

**62. Must children be present to pick up meals? May a parent/guardian pick up meals for their children to maintain social distancing? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Schools and community organizations operating USDA-funded Child Nutrition Programs at this time (Non-Congregate COVID-19 closure waiver) may, under current USDA flexibilities, distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their children. Districts need to develop and maintain a plan which enforces the message that meals distributed to parents or guardians of eligible children are for the children. In addition, the plan should

provide information on how the school district is making an attempt to not distribute duplicate meals to any child.

*Districts that Are Currently NOT Participating in the National School Lunch or Summer Food Service Programs*

**63. Must districts that do not participate in the federally funded School Lunch or Breakfast Programs provide meals to students? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Districts that do not participate in the federally funded National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs must still provide a free lunch to children who qualify for free meals during the mandated suspension of in-person instruction. However, a waiver is not required to provide such meals in a non-congregate setting. ISBE is working with community organizations such as the major food banks who are working with their networks to assist in areas where potential meals may be needed. Please see the section on Implementation Guidance above which also applies to districts that do not participate in the federally funded School Lunch or Breakfast Programs.

**64. Can a district that does not participate in the federally funded National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs be reimbursed for free meals served? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Provided the free meals meet the National School Lunch meal pattern requirements, a reimbursement of \$.04 per meal is available. Please contact the ISBE Nutrition Department at [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) in order to access this reimbursement.

**SCOPE OF MANDATORY SUSPENSION OF IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION**

**65. Are school buildings closed? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

No. Personnel who are preparing learning materials and meals are performing essential functions and may go to schools to complete this work. Additionally, parents may come to schools to pick up learning materials and/or meals. Schools may also serve as emergency child care sites. Social distancing should be practiced to ensure the safety of individuals in the school building.

**66. How should school officials proceed if they are notified of an illness in an essential staff member who has been at the school building? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Districts should consult with their local health department for guidance on how to proceed with essential operations to ensure the health and safety of all staff members and students/families. Districts do not need to notify ISBE if this occurs.

IDPH encourages any individual who is ill to contact their doctor directly.

**67. Will deadline extensions be granted for immunization, physical, dental, and vision exams and records? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

ISBE will provide official guidance regarding student and staff health requirements soon.

***ACTIVITIES***

**68. Can districts hold virtual events such as graduation and prom? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Yes, districts can hold virtual events; this is a local decision. ISBE supports districts in exploring ways to host virtual events, including prom and graduation.

**69. Should extracurricular activities still be taking place? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

No. Extracurricular activities, including athletic team practices or games, cannot take place in person during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction and/or the duration of the Governor's stay at home order. Future decisions regarding extracurricular activities will be made by the Governor in consultation with public health officials.

**70. Can students utilize school grounds (i.e. playgrounds, basketball courts) during the statewide mandated suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

School grounds may only be used for essential functions. In addition, some local health departments have closed all parks and playgrounds.

***CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION***

**71. Is federal guidance available regarding career and technical education programs and Perkins V? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education provided FAQs for CTE directors regarding program implementation and Perkins V services. The FAQs are available at [www.isbe.net/covid19](http://www.isbe.net/covid19) under the U.S. Department of Education Updates & Guidance section.

**72. How are Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) to handle contests? Can we do virtual contests? Can grant funds be used for virtual contests? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

ISBE recognizes the importance of continuity in annual Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) leadership development and competitive events in both the continued vitality of the organizations and in the personal development of our student leaders and members. In accordance with ISBE's remote learning recommendations, students are permitted to participate in virtual learning opportunities, including virtual or remote contests, provided that ALL students have an opportunity to participate and students are not penalized in any way should they not participate (e.g., ineligibility for future awards, recognition, officer candidacy, etc.). State or national CTSOs that choose to offer leadership development

and competitive events virtually can use state CTSO, Career and Technical Education Improvement (CTEI), and Perkins funds to support students' participation, if they choose to do so.

### ***DATA COLLECTIONS***

#### **73. Will districts be required to submit/verify SY 2020-21 data collections for the 2020 Report Card (e.g., EBF verification, Year End Collection, gifted and accelerated data)? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Yes, ISBE is only suspending non-essential data collections. We will keep districts updated as we implement processes for submitting and verifying this school year's data collections.

### ***EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CHILD CARE***

#### **74. How does the statewide mandatory suspension of in-person instruction impact prekindergarten programs? (Updated 3/23/2020)**

The mandatory suspension of in-person instruction extends to any early childhood program for children ages birth through five located in public schools or in private schools.

Please see the [joint guidance](#) issued by the Department of Human Services, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education, and the State Board of Education regarding child care centers, child care homes, and early education programs.

#### **75. Will ISBE penalize any community-based PFA/PI program financially for closing or having under-enrollment? (Updated 3/16/2020)**

Early education programs funded through ISBE are advised that their funding will not be affected by a decision to close their program in response to the public health emergency. Similarly, the Office of Head Start has issued guidance that Head Start and Early Head Start programs will not be penalized for closing during the public health emergency. The Chicago Department of Child and Family Services will also not reduce funding due to closures or low attendance during this period. And IDHS is developing a simplified waiver process for the 80% attendance requirement in the Child Care Assistance Program for being paid for all eligible days for all enrolled children (look for further guidance on this process in the coming days). For programs funded by any or all of these funding streams, programs are expected to continue to pay all staff per their regular work schedule during any closures due to the public health emergency.

**76. How does the mandated suspension of in-person instruction impact Early Childhood Block Grant Prevention Initiative programs? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Currently, the Illinois State Board of Education Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) Prevention Initiative programs in collaboration with MIECHV and DHS Healthy Families Programs are suspending in-person visits until further notice. However, it is also important to ensure the continuity of education and services to children and families. Thus, to the extent possible, staff should offer visits over the phone or FaceTime/Skype if the family has that capability and follow their model's recommendations related to conducting and documenting visits that take place virtually or on the phone.

Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-15, all public school districts and eligible entities that receive funding from ISBE to implement and administer a grant program for preschool education or an ECBG may provide child care services to the children of employees exempted from Executive Order 2020-10 who are aged 0 to 12 years old. The use of grant funds does not affect the ability of public school districts or eligible entities from continuing to serve students already identified and enrolled in a preschool education program or an ECBG program.

***NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS***

**77. Are nonpublic schools eligible for CARES Act funding? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

LEAs must provide equitable services to students and teachers in nonpublic schools. The LEA must conduct a timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials (Sec. 18005). ISBE will calculate the nonpublic proportionate equitable share based on the number of nonpublic low-income school children residing in the participating public-school attendance area.

**78. Are non-public schools mandated to suspend in-person instruction? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

Yes, both non-public and public prekindergarten through grade 12 schools must suspend in-person instruction from Tuesday, March 17 through the end of the 2019-20 academic year. This mandate applies to all Illinois public and nonpublic schools, including parochial and charter schools.

**79. How will missed days impact nonpublic school recognition and registration for number of days requirement? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Registration and recognition status for nonpublic schools will not be impacted by the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction so long as remote instruction is provided beginning March 31 and continuing until such time as in-person instruction can resume.

**80. How does the other guidance in this document apply to nonpublic schools? (Updated 4/24/2020)**

Nonpublic schools must suspend in-person instruction and provide remote instruction to students through the end of the 2019-20 academic year. ISBE has drafted this guidance document primarily to address issues pertaining to public schools during the suspension of in-person instruction; however, nonpublic schools are encouraged to use this guidance as a model.

***RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES***

**81. Does the mandated suspension of in-person instruction impact residential settings? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

Executive Order 2020-05 requires prekindergarten through grade 12 schools suspend in-person instruction for educational purposes. Schools that include residential settings must halt education-related activities; however, the residential components of such facilities are not impacted at this time.

**82. Does the mandated suspension of in-person instruction apply to state operated schools? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

No. Executive Order 2020-06 exempts schools operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice, State Board of Education or Department of Human Services from EO 2020-05. This includes:

- School District #428 (Department of Juvenile Justice)
- Philip Rock Center and School
- Illinois School for the Deaf
- Illinois School for the Visually Impaired
- Illinois Center for Rehabilitation & Education – Roosevelt

***SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION***

**83. Can Districts begin construction activities during the suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

Yes. School districts may begin construction activities on any school building for the period of time that the building is closed for educational purposes as long as (a) students are not present in the building, and (b) any construction activity does not impede the availability of the building for other purposes, including food preparation and meal delivery and any child care services provided to the children of employees considered essential workers. Schools must understand that construction must be interrupted and discontinued in the event in-person instruction can begin again.

**84. How can schools fund construction projects that were not scheduled to begin until later in the year? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

School districts should work with their boards, insurers, the Capital Development Board or any other relevant entity to make funds available for projects that can begin earlier than originally scheduled.

**REMOTE LEARNING**

**85. How can schools plan for remote learning? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Each school or district may utilize five Remote Learning Planning Days, consecutively or in separate increments, to develop, review, or amend its Remote Learning Day Plan. Remote Learning Planning Days shall be deemed pupil attendance days for calculation of the length of a school term under Section 10-19 of the Code.

Generally speaking, school districts have full autonomy to provide continuous learning opportunities during the Remote Learning Days through whatever means possible, including through technology and free online resources. We encourage every school and district to explore and implement what works best for the school community. Please see the [Remote Learning Recommendations](#). These recommendations were developed by an advisory group, composed of teachers, administrators, students, and stakeholders.

Importantly, schools and districts should plan for Remote Learning Days in mutual agreement with any applicable collective bargaining entity and in consultation with local counsel.

The following Remote Learning Plans have been provided as examples with district approval. Please note Remote Learning Plans will look very different from district to district. We encourage maximum flexibility to be utilized when creating these plans.

- [Chicago Public Schools District 299 Remote Learning Plan](#)
- [Bloomington School District 87 Remote Learning Plan](#)
- [Butler School District 53 Remote Learning Plan](#)
- [Le Roy CUSD 2 Remote Learning Plan](#)

**86. Can Remote Learning Planning Days be used in half day increments? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

Yes, we encourage maximum flexibility to be utilized.

**87. Do Remote Learning Plans need to be submitted for approval by ROEs/ISCs or ISBE? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

No, plans **do not** need to be submitted for approval.

Remote Learning Plans must:

- Provide instruction to all students that, when applicable, reflects state standards
- Allow students to confer with educators
- Address needs of students with disabilities, English Learners, students experiencing homelessness, and other vulnerable students
- Include plans on how to transition back to on-site learning
- Include mutual agreement on work with collective bargaining units
- Be posted on website.

**88. How do Remote Learning Plans and E-Learning Plans differ? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

If a district already has an E-Learning Plan in place, they may adapt the plan to become a Remote Learning Plan by ensuring the above requirements are met.

Remote learning is learning that happens outside of the traditional classroom because the student and teacher are separated by distance and/or time. Remote learning can be real-time or flexibility-timed, and it may or may not involve technology.

**89. Can Remote Learning Plans be revised periodically to align with changing circumstances? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

Yes. Plans should be updated to ensure the needs of all students continue to be met throughout the suspension of in-person learning. If a plan is revised, post the revised plan to the district website.

**90. How should districts provide continuous learning opportunities during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

School districts have full autonomy to provide continuous learning opportunities during the Remote Learning Days through whatever means possible, including through technology and free online resources. We encourage every school and district to explore and implement what works best for the school community. Please see the [Remote Learning Recommendations](#). These recommendations were developed by an advisory group, composed of teachers, administrators, students, and stakeholders.

School districts that had e-learning plans in place can utilize those plans during Remote Learning Days.

**91. Should schools be taking student attendance on Remote Learning Days? (Updated 5/8/2020)**

We recognize the importance of student attendance to ensure students are engaged in learning. During these unprecedented times, we prioritize the connectedness and care for our students and one another as we maintain a continuity of learning.

Districts are able to create individual attendance policies. Please include a check-in or some method of tracking “attendance.” This information will help teachers gauge which students are not engaged and/or may need additional outreach or support to engage in learning. Staff should reach out to the family of any child that was in attendance prior to the suspension of in-person instruction who has not been reachable during this time. The State Board urges your districts to account for every student who is enrolled. For additional recommendations on attendance and engagement methods, please refer to [ISBE's Attendance Guidance](#). **Attendance should continue to be submitted to ISBE in the same manner as prior to Remote Learning – via the Student Information System.**

ISBE and DCFS developed [joint guidance for performing student wellness checks](#). If schools cannot ensure student attendance through supportive measures, it is recommended that school personnel follow the normal procedures of referring students to your school’s regional truancy officer as outlined in the Illinois School Code, Section 26-2a: “A ‘truant’ is defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause, as defined under this Section, from such attendance for more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days.”

**92. Are districts required to enroll new students during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

Yes, districts are required to enroll new students during Remote Learning Days. Districts should create procedures to ensure new student enrollments can be completed remotely as much as possible. Original documents should be sent in via US Mail or collected following the emergency declaration. In-person registration should only occur on an as-needed basis. Social distancing should be used to protect district staff and parents.

**93. How should student work be graded during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Student work completed during the suspension of in-person instruction must not negatively impact a student’s grades or otherwise impact a student’s academic standing. As we do not yet know the full extent of the closure and want to minimize any negative effects on students, schools may allow student work to count during the closure only to increase a student’s academic standing.

Our students may be experiencing varying mental and physical health challenges at this time and may have very different access to supports and technology at home. Our goal is that no student is negatively impacted by the closure and that no school district’s policies or procedures should widen the equity gap.

For additional information, please see the Remote Learning Recommendations regarding grading overall, as well as recommendations for grade bands and student groups.

**94. How do schools handle students who were failing before Remote Learning Days and do not complete additional work? Should they be held back or prevented from graduating until they make sufficient progress? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

When possible, allow students who were failing the opportunity to make up content (e.g., when on-site learning resumes, during summer, or the start of the 2020-21 school year).

**95. May students' dual credit programs continue during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Please reference the [joint guidance](#) on dual credit released on March 27 by ISBE, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

**96. Will coursework and graduation requirements be amended or waived? (Updated 5/4/2020)**

ISBE highly recommends that districts strategize and prepare for how it can meet the needs of graduating seniors, including ensuring transcripts are accessible and students have the continued ability to request recommendations from teachers and the district. We recommend that any [curricular mandates](#) that can be completed remotely should be completed remotely during Remote Learning Days.

Executive Order 2020-31 and emergency rules provide the following flexibilities for the class of 2020:

- Waives State's final accountability assessment (SAT), requirement to complete examination on patriotism and principles of representative government, physical education participation requirements, physical education assessment requirements, foreign language proficiency exam to receive credit from an ethnic school;
- Modifies the minimum years of course requirements in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and music/art/foreign language/vocational education for high school seniors;
- Waives the requirement for eighth grade students to demonstrate evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge of the history of the United States; and,
- Addresses vocational or technical education course substitutions.

Please see the [Graduation Requirement Changes FAQ](#) for additional information.

**97. How should high schools proceed with Transitional Math courses at this time? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

ISBE recommends that high schools work with their local community college partners to determine plans for how to implement remote learning in the transitional courses and whether or how transitional math course performance will be used to determine community college placement next year.

**98. How will students' GPA be impacted during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Student work completed during the mandated statewide school closure must not negatively impact a student's grades or otherwise impact a student's academic standing.

**99. How should districts address third/fourth quarters during the suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

There is no statewide standard for whether districts operate under semesters or trimesters. Districts will have to determine locally how to address the third trimester or third/fourth quarter.

**100. What is the impact on sequential subjects for students that are moving to Algebra II when they did not receive a full session of Algebra I or moving to English II without a full year of English I? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

ISBE is developing recommendations regarding remote learning transitions. These recommendations will include information regarding students transitioning into next school year.

**101. Can districts cancel final exams? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

The administration of final exams is a local decision.

**102. Can instruction for driver's education continue during Remote Learning Days? (Updated 5/6/2020)**

A portion of the classroom part of a driver education program may be completed through remote/distance learning, but the 6-hour behind the wheel portion of driver education programs must be suspended for the duration of the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. At this time, the permit test is not able to be taken online. ISBE is seeking legislative changes to allow the entire classroom portion to be conducted remotely; however, the agency is not planning to make additional changes that might compromise health or safety.

**103. Does the statewide mandatory suspension of in-person instruction apply to private driver's education schools? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

ISBE does not interpret the Executive Order 2020-05 as applying to private driver's education schools.

**104. Can students continue internships or other experiential learning opportunities during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Internships and experiential learning may be completed in line with public health recommendations, such as virtual participation.

**105. Some agriculture programs have laboratories and facilities that maintain living organisms (e.g., animals, plants, meats processing, beekeeping, food/product processing, etc.). How should these be handled? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

It is recommended that agriculture teachers and school administrators work together to develop a plan to maintain the care and management of living organisms and the facilities in which they are housed. Schools with live animals, plant nursery or greenhouse facilities should receive special consideration. Districts should consult with their local health department for guidance on how to proceed with essential operations to ensure the health and safety of all staff members and students/families.

**106. Can remote learning be used to deliver instruction for summer school courses? (Updated 5/8/20)**

Yes, districts may deliver instruction via remote learning for courses offered in summer school. Should districts choose to deliver instruction remotely, they must plan for each course to meet the 60-hour requirement and ensure that it is accessible to all students, including those who lack devices or connectivity. Districts can be flexible in determining how to best meet the 60-hour requirement in their own context by counting all learning activities that are required by the course toward the requirement. Learning activities could include but are not limited to: the teacher of record delivering instruction via recorded video or synchronous platform, remote small group work via breakout room or conference call, independent student work time and virtual/telephone teacher-student check-ins.

Please see [ISBE's Summer School Guidance for Schools and Districts](#) for additional information.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**107. What if a district has a question regarding special education? (Updated 5/8/2020)**

ISBE released an updated [Statewide School Closure Special Education FAQ](#) on May 8.

Additionally, on April 30, ISBE released specific resources for Remote Learning for students with [autism and spectrum disorder](#), students with [significant intellectual or multiple disabilities](#), students who are [blind or visually impaired](#), and students who are [deaf or hard of hearing or deafblind](#). These resources are all also available at [www.isbe.net/covid19](http://www.isbe.net/covid19) under Special Education.

## STAFFING

### **108. What if a district has questions regarding teacher staffing during the mandated statewide suspension of in-person instruction? (Updated 3/27/2020)**

Please reference the [joint guidance](#) on staffing released on March 27 by ISBE, IEA, IFT, IPA, and IASA.

### **109. How should districts proceed with educator evaluations? (Updated 4/8/2020)**

Please reference page 2 of the [joint guidance](#) on staffing released on March 27 by ISBE, IEA, IFT, IPA, and IASA.

### **110. Are personnel who are preparing and distributing learning materials and providing janitorial services considered “essential workers” and thus exempt from the stay at home mandate? (Updated 3/23/2020)**

Yes. Personnel who are preparing and distributing learning materials to students and personnel who are providing janitorial services are performing essential functions and are exempt from the stay at home mandate.

### **111. What guidance does ISBE have for how schools should be treating all employees and third-party contractors during the mandated school closure? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

At this time, there are no anticipated changes to the expectation that districts continue to pay everyone on the payroll and that employees continue to work – remotely, unless physical presence is absolutely necessary to support remote learning or ensure students have meals. Please see the revised [joint statement](#) from ISBE and the IEA, IFT, IASA, IPA regarding expectations of employees during Remote Learning Days.

ISBE and the Governor’s Office also urge all employers to continue paying third-party contract employees. State funding is continuing to flow uninterrupted, so paying all employees, including third-party contract employees, is possible.

### **112. Does the recommendation that school districts keep at least one administrator on site mean school districts are available to provide childcare? (Updated 3/16/2020)**

No. The purpose of ISBE’s recommendation that an administrator remain in the building is to ensure the safety of any students who happen to come to school and to ensure that an individual with executive decision-making capacity is available on site.

## TRANSPORTATION

### **113. Can school districts utilize transportation funding for delivering meals and instructional materials, and providing WiFi? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

ISBE filed emergency rules to allow for increased transportation expenditure allowances. All transportation expenditures that support the health and well-being of Illinois prek-12 students – such as costs related to the distribution of food and instructional materials and the use of buses to provide WiFi – will be reimbursed by ISBE’s regular transportation reimbursement formula. These new rules, effective immediately, cover expenses incurred from March 17, 2020, through the end of the 2019-20 academic year. Read the full text of the rules at [www.isbe.net/Documents/23-120RGE.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/23-120RGE.pdf).

### **114. If districts use buses to deliver meals, is that mileage reimbursable? What is a reimbursable transportation expenditure? (Updated 3/18/2020)**

The per-meal federal reimbursement rate for schools participating in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs includes transportation as an allowable expenditure. ISBE is also seeking flexibility to allow for transportation costs related to food delivery (or other services and materials for students’ health and wellbeing) during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction to be claimable for reimbursement from the State through ISBE’s regular Transportation Reimbursement.

### **115. Is ISBE reimbursing expenditures for school bus transportation during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction if school buses are not running regular routes? (Updated 4/1/2020)**

Contractual Payments for Transportation are eligible for State Transportation Reimbursement in accordance with the Part 120 Administrative Code Rules provided that the costs paid by a school district are within an executed contractual agreement. The amount of payments made by a school district during the mandatory closure dates of March 17-30 as well as the Remote Learning Days that begin March 31 are subject to negotiation by the school district and transportation contractor. If negotiated and within the written agreement, all the paid expenditures will be allowable for State Transportation Reimbursement in accordance with the formula prescribed in Section 29-5 of the School Code.

### **116. Is the Illinois Secretary of State offering an extension period for obtaining school bus permits? (Updated 4/15/2020)**

Due to the COVID19 virus and based on recommendations by health and safety experts, all Secretary of State Driver Services Facilities are closed to the public at this time. Essential Secretary of State staff are working. Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced April 10, that his office filed emergency rules extending expiration dates for driver’s licenses, identification (ID) cards, vehicle registrations and other transactions and document filings that were set to expire on or after March 17, 2020 are being extended for a period of 90 days after Driver Services Facilities reopen. This includes School Bus Permits. The previous

extension was for 30 days. We recognize that it may be difficult to complete the annual refresher training during this period, so a grace period of 90 days will be allowed for completion of this training after Driver Services Facilities reopen.

Further guidance on this issue can be found at the Illinois Secretary of State COVID19 frequently asked questions at <https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/special/covidfaq.pdf>.