



EFFINGHAM UNIT DISTRICT 40

Mark E. Doan, Superintendent

March 16, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Dear Unit #40 Families,

In Effingham Unit #40, the health, safety and well-being of our students and staff are our top priorities. Throughout the developments regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we have been working with the Effingham County Health Department, other Effingham County Schools, Regional Superintendent's office, our local school board, the Illinois State Board of Education, our Governor, and the Illinois Department of Public Health to ensure coordination and support.

Effingham Unit #40 schools will be closed beginning Monday, March 16, 2020 through Monday, March 30th and returning on Tuesday, March 31st. As the situation evolves day to day, the reopening date could change. We will continue to keep you informed through our website <https://www.unit40.org/>.

Keeping students engaged in learning, especially in times of uncertainty, is of critical importance. On our website, <https://www.unit40.org/>, you will find familiar learning opportunities for your child. These are opportunities for review and practice to keep your child thinking about learning while also being mindful of excessive screen time. **These activities will not be counted for grades or used in any way to impact a student's academic standing in our school district.** In addition, when possible, each day should include outdoor time to burn off your child's extra energy and as an extension of their continued learning opportunities as suitable for your yard or a nearby park. This information will be posted on our district's website as well at <https://www.unit40.org/> and accessed [through this link](#).

Unit #40 is working through the ISBE process to ensure that our students that are eligible for free meals potentially in the form of lunch and a snack will continue to receive those services at multiple drive-through distribution sites during the closure period. The District's goal is to begin providing lunch on Tuesday, March 17th. Details are forthcoming.

During the school closure period, ALL school activities will be postponed or cancelled from March 16 through Monday, March 30. This includes practices, games, events, and competitions. When school is not in session (closed) there will be no school-related gatherings of any kind allowed. Further evaluation will be made regarding whether or not this needs to be extended in the next couple of weeks per our Governor's office.

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At this time the calendar, the end of the year calendar will be:

June 1 and 2: Semester Exams for EHS

June 3: School Improvement Day - last day for students with half day dismissal

June 4: Teacher Institute

While your child's academic wellness is a priority, their emotional-well being should be considered too. Below are some suggestions.

- Stick to a routine as structure and routine are especially helpful during unexpected circumstances.
- Reassure them that schools are closing in an effort to slow the spread of this virus into the wider community. The virus is still rare; the flu is much more common; and children are showing much milder symptoms.
- Remind them how they can take care of themselves by washing their hands for 20 seconds (or the length of two "Happy Birthday" songs) when they come in from outside, before they eat, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing, or using the bathroom.
- Take time to calm yourself prior to talking to your child, and verify you are sharing facts with them.

The plan is to return to school when it's safe to do so, thus having students maintain some resemblance of routine and educational opportunity is beneficial for students and teachers. When school resumes, the most important thing will be that students will continue to be engaged with the concepts and skills, and hopefully, you have helped foster a love of learning along the way.

As this is an unprecedented moment in our history, we ask for patience and understanding. Open lines of communication with local and state health officials will be maintained with additional information shared as we move forward. We will do our best to get information to you through our website at <http://www.unit40.org/>, our calling system, and other appropriate District social platforms. As always, the health and safety of our students and staff are the number one priority. Working together with our community can get through this unfortunate situation. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Mr. Mark Doan, Superintendent

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