

## UPDATE ON GRADING – ATTENDANCE FOR UNIT #40

May 4, 2020

Dear EJHS and EHS Students and Parents:

As our current situation under the new Remote Learning Days concept continues to evolve, we continue to receive guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education on how to best carry out our educational duties. We would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of this guidance.

As you recall, the Governor ordered that the period from March 17 through March 30 be Act of God days. These days were considered non-attendance, non-instructional days. However, the Illinois State Board of Education recommended that all schools continue to provide some sort of learning experiences for students during this time. Under the Act of God days, student work was not collected or graded.

During that time, ISBE and the Governor went back to the drawing board to figure out a better way to serve students. What they came up with was the Remote Learning Days concept. By the Governor's order, the days beginning March 31 through the end of the mandated school closures will be Remote Learning Days. Unlike Act of God Days, Remote Learning Days are considered to be attendance days as well as instructional days.

Schools and teachers are mandated to provide a variety of engaging educational lessons to students and families to work on while at home. Schools adopted the Pass/Incomplete policy on assessing the work teachers provide and students complete and turn in. In essence, Remote Learning Days are school days. Participation by schools, teachers, and students is required.

With all of this in mind, I will share two of the more important pieces of information that accompany the new Remote Learning Day mandate.

Student Attendance

During this term of the mandated school closure, schools are not able to keep a traditional record of student attendance. Attendance will be taken based on the level of feedback teachers are getting from students/families. Teachers will be contacting students several different ways throughout this process, including emails, video conferencing, etc. Schools will be keeping documentation of correspondence and reporting to the offices those students who they are not hearing from and or receiving work. Follow up efforts are being made to ensure that students are getting teacher messages and information. It is the school's responsibility to help each student be successful during this Remote Learning period. Students have a responsibility to complete and return the work provided and to communicate with their teachers as well.

### Assessing Student Work

In accordance with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recommendations, EJHS and EHS will be using a Pass/Incomplete system for assessing student work. There is the expectation that students will attempt and turn in work during the Remote Learning period (through the end of the 2019-20 school year). In most cases, students who were doing fine before the mandated closure and who continue to complete and return work under Remote Learning should be fine and should pass their respective classes. Those EHS students earning college credit will be assessed using criteria developed by Lake Land College. Please see your instructor for more information.

However, Remote Learning Days are not a free pass to do nothing for the entire 4th quarter. There are cases in which parents/students should still be concerned with whether a student will be passed or promoted. In the case of a student not completing the work provided, thus receiving a high number of incompletes in the grade book during the Remote Learning period, that student will be expected to complete some sort of "remediation" prior to receiving credit for classes.

Any student who was failing prior to the March 17 mandated closure is considered to still be failing. The pass/incomplete opportunities offered under Remote Learning is a key factor in whether that student passes the quarter, semester, or year.

Students need to be active during this time and take advantage of every opportunity provided them. A student who was failing prior to the mandated closure and does little or no work under Remote Learning will have a high likelihood of failing. Unit #40 does not want this to occur so we are asking for your help in not letting this happen to your child.

As we move further along in the 2019-20 school year more information and guidance from ISBE will occur. EJHS/EHS pledge to help you and your student continue to be successful in their academic endeavors. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Doan  
Superintendent  
Effingham Unit #40