



## BOARD OF EDUCATION, School District 148, Cook County

*Our mission is to challenge and support all students to reach their highest level of performance.*

March 16, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for your extraordinary support over the past several days, as we have worked together to protect our community during the growing coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. To further safeguard Illinois from the spread of the virus, Governor JB Pritzker has declared mandatory school closures for all buildings, both public and private, serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students.

This mandatory closure takes effect Tuesday, March 17, 2020. Currently, we anticipate reopening on March 31, 2020.

Free breakfast and lunch will still be available to all School District 148 students between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Lincoln, Roosevelt and Washington Elementary Schools. Students need not to be present to receive a meal, therefore parent(s)/guardian(s) of District 148 students may pick up meals for their students.

We are committed to keeping students engaged in their learning during this statewide school closure. Prior to dismissal on Monday, March 16, 2020, all School District 148 students will receive homework packets to complete during this mandated statewide school closure.

To supplement these services, we encourage you to engage your children in other free, online educational activities. The Illinois State Board of Education has compiled a library of resources at [www.isbe.net/keeplearning](http://www.isbe.net/keeplearning).

Concern over this new virus can make children anxious. It is very important to remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If adults seem overly worried, children's anxiety may rise. Adults should reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy.

Children also need factual, age-appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk, so the focus of conversation should be concrete instructions about how to avoid infections and the spread of disease. Teaching children positive measures, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some

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control over their risk of infections can help reduce anxiety. Please talk with your children about precautions they can take to stay healthy, including:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is best, especially if they are visibly dirty. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is a suitable alternative. Consider showing your children one of these videos about proper handwashing technique: [www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are able to stay home. Avoid travel if you can.

The National Association of School Psychologists has additional guidelines about talking to children about COVID-19 at [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource).

We will continue to inform you as quickly as we can about any further changes to school services. I encourage you to stay informed by visiting School District 148's website at [www.district148.net](http://www.district148.net), as well as the District's various social media sites for updates. Updates on these various platforms will keep the community apprised of any information that may affect our schools. The District's robocall messenger service will be utilized as well.

We appreciate your partnership, and we will get through this together.

Be well,

Dr. Kevin J. Nohelty  
Superintendent of Schools

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