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Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

April 8, 2020

( ) Action Required  
(X) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 031-20 EXECUTIVE SERVICES

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents  
School District Superintendents  
School Board Directors  
School District Business Officers  
Special Education Directors  
Food Service Directors  
School Principals

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Guidance for Long-term School Closures as of April 8, 2020

CONTACT: Michaela W. Miller, Ed.D., NBCT, Deputy Superintendent  
360-725-6343, [michaela.miller@k12.wa.us](mailto:michaela.miller@k12.wa.us)

## PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Washington state, Governor Jay Inslee announced on March 13 that all public and private K–12 school facilities will be closed and prohibited from providing traditional in-person instructional activities through April 24. On April 6, he extended his directive and closed schools through the remainder of the 2019–20 school year.

This bulletin includes updates for school districts on the following topics:

- Allowable building activities
- Continuous learning
- Meals and nutrition
- Special education
- Federal funding
- COVID-related accounting
- Reminders

## ALLOWABLE BUILDING ACTIVITIES

This section provides clarification on the Governor's April 6 directive to extend school closures through June 19.

On March 13, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) issued [the following guidance](#) in response to the Governor's March 13 proclamation requiring schools to close through April 24:

*During mandatory closures, school districts are prohibited from providing in-person educational, recreational, and other K–12 school programs using their school buildings and facilities. Districts will not be prevented from providing instruction through online learning models (so long as those can be provided equitably) or from using their facilities to provide childcare, professional development, staff meetings, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, direct services to individual students, or other activities deemed appropriate by the district administration. Any gatherings within school facilities should comply with applicable social distancing directives and health and safety recommendations. We will share future guidance from health officials.*

In the weeks since that initial proclamation, the Governor issued a Stay Home, Stay Healthy directive through May 4, as well as an extension of the school closure order through June 19. In his April 6 extension of the school closure order, the Governor provided additional language allowing certain other activities within school facilities if they are deemed necessary and essential.

### **Based on these events, OSPI is providing the following updated guidance regarding the use of school facilities:**

Per the Governor's directive, during mandatory closures, school districts are prohibited from providing in-person educational, recreational, and other K–12 school programs using their school buildings and facilities.

Districts will not be prevented from using their facilities to provide child care, for individual staff to remotely lead or develop content for professional learning or staff meetings, to hold Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, to provide direct services to individual students, or for other activities deemed essential and necessary by the district administration.

If districts determine that the use school facilities to provide educational services is essential and necessary under state or federal law, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. Consistent with the timeline of the Governor's Stay Home, Stay Healthy directive, no group meetings of staff, including for professional learning or staff meetings, should

occur. School districts should utilize online, phone, or other alternatives to address this need.

2. Facilities should only be used for providing direct services to individual students where there is no alternative for the service delivery and both the service is necessary and essential AND the use of the facility is both necessary and essential. This is expected to be an unusual occurrence.
3. Facilities are not to be used for providing direct services to groups of students.
4. Any gatherings within school facilities must comply with applicable social distancing directives and health guidelines. Districts must continue to monitor and implement guidance from state and local health officials.

## CONTINUOUS LEARNING

On April 6, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) published the [Continuous Learning 2020 publication](#). The publication provides school districts with detailed guidance, tools, and resources for meeting student, educator, and family needs while schools are closed from providing traditional in-person instruction.

The publication was developed in partnership with a stakeholder group of education leaders with representation from the Washington Education Association, Association of Washington School Principals, and Washington Association of School Administrators.

## MEALS AND NUTRITION

Recently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture approved multiple nationwide waivers under Section 2202 of H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Among other things, these waivers allow school districts to provide up to a weeks' worth of meals at one time and parents or guardians to pick up meals for their children (the requirement that the child had to be present has been waived).

More detailed guidance related to the waivers is available on [OSPI's COVID-19 Meals and Nutrition Guidance webpage](#).

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

As a companion and resource to the [Continuous Learning 2020 publication](#), OSPI's Special Education Services team has prepared guidance, [Supporting Inclusionary Practices During School Facility Closure](#), to support inclusionary practices for students with disabilities through continuous learning opportunities. In addition, two forms to support planning for the provision of special education and related services during school facility closure are now available:

- A system-level [Special Education Continuous Learning Implementation Guide](#)
- A student-level [Special Education Continuous Learning Plan](#)

This guidance is intended to provide short-term solutions that can be refined over time as we navigate these new waters together. OSPI remains committed to updating these resources as additional information, questions, and input become available. Districts, educators, families, and

other partners are welcome to submit feedback, suggestions, and questions about this special education guidance to OSPI through the [feedback survey](#).

## FEDERAL FUNDING

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Pub. L. No. 116-136 was signed into law on March 27, 2020. The CARES Act provides substantial relief to students and educators who have been profoundly affected by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). CARES Act funding for nationwide distribution to school districts was set at \$13.5 billion. At this time, we have not been awarded Washington's share of these funds.

OSPI is awaiting guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on implementation of the CARES Act. OSPI will continue our priority focus on sharing guidance and resources as soon as they become available.

OSPI has applied for a number of federal program and fiscal waivers. The Department of Education is required to respond to waiver requests within 30 days. More information on the waivers will be coming in subsequent bulletins.

## COVID-RELATED ACCOUNTING

The COVID-19 situation is considered a subsequent event for accounting purposes, which needs to be disclosed in the notes to the 2018–19 financial statements for school district audit reports that are being issued now. A subsequent event is a significant event that occurs after fiscal year end, but before the financial statements have been issued. The financial impacts may not be known at this time, but there are significant operational impacts and schools are operating in an environment that is vastly different than just a few months ago. [The note required to be added to the financial statement is available on the OSPI website](#).

In addition, OSPI has prepared [accounting guidelines to provide a framework through which districts can identify COVID-related expenditures](#). The guidelines also include a preview of the data reporting template for those expenditures. These expenditures will be reported through a supplemental reporting tool and will not be separately identified in each school district's financial statement (F-196) this fall.

As a reminder, at this time, there are no additional state funds to backfill COVID-related costs incurred by districts during the 2019–20 fiscal year.

## REMINDERS

School districts can be direct providers of child care for priority families, or they can partner with a community-based organization to provide care, or they can allow a community-based organization to use their facilities to provide care. More information is available in [previous child care guidance](#).

## INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding OSPI's continuous learning guidance, please contact Michaela Miller, Deputy Superintendent, at 360-725-6343 or [michaela.miller@k12.wa.us](mailto:michaela.miller@k12.wa.us).

For questions regarding food and nutrition services, please contact Leanne Eko, Director of Child Nutrition Services, at 360-725-0410 or [leanne.eko@k12.wa.us](mailto:leanne.eko@k12.wa.us).

For questions regarding special education, please contact Glenna Gallo, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, at 360-725-6075 or [glenna.gallo@k12.wa.us](mailto:glenna.gallo@k12.wa.us).

For questions regarding federal funding, please contact Gayle Pauley, Assistant Superintendent of Special Programs & Federal Accountability, at 360-725-6170 or [gayle.pauley@k12.wa.us](mailto:gayle.pauley@k12.wa.us).

For questions regarding COVID-related accounting, please contact T.J. Kelly, Chief Financial Officer, at 360-725-6301 or [thomas.kelly@k12.wa.us](mailto:thomas.kelly@k12.wa.us).

The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631. Previous guidance and additional information related to COVID-19 and school closures is available on the [COVID-19 page of the OSPI website](#). This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins page of the OSPI website](#).

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Deputy Superintendent

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Chief of Staff

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