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ONGOING RESPONSE TO SCHOOL BUILDING CLOSURES IN NEVADA

School Building Closures

- On March 15, 2020, Governor Sisolak announced that school buildings would be closed to students beginning March 16 and at least through April 6, 2020.
- On March 20, 2020, Governor Sisolak issued Emergency Directive 005, which:
 - Extended the school building closures through April 16, 2020;
 - Reiterated the essential nature of district and charter school administrators, licensed educators, and staff in providing vital services and distance education to Nevada's students;
 - Suspended State assessment requirements; and
 - Directed the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to put in place a process for districts and charter schools to request approval for an Emergency Program of Distance Education and, upon such approval, automatically enrolled students in an emergency program of distance education. Directive 005 also expanded the definition of distance education to include paper correspondence so schools could provide educational opportunities to students regardless of means, access to technology, or at-home support.
- On April 14, 2020, Governor Sisolak issued Emergency Directive 014, which:
 - Extended the school building closures through April 30, 2020;
 - Supported the authority of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to temporarily waive or suspend laws or regulations that would place an undue burden on students' ability to graduate from high school on-time;
 - Allowed the State Board of Education to approve amendments to districts' work-based learning plans. These amendments, to be considered at the State Board's April 30 meeting, will ensure students are able to earn the credit hours needed for a College and Career Ready Diploma despite the impact of COVID-19-related workplace closures; and
 - Directed Regional Professional Development Programs to work directly through the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Education to provide guidance and resources to teachers and other licensed personnel throughout the declaration of emergency.
- The April 21, 2020 announcement that school buildings will be closed for the duration of the 2019-20 school year does *not* change guidance that has been previously provided to districts and charter schools by the Nevada Department of Education regarding school building closures and Emergency Programs of Distance Education.

Emergency Programs of Distance Education

- All districts and charter schools applied for and received approval of Emergency Programs of Distance Education from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE).
- In light of the circumstances facing our schools and communities, the need to take swift action to maximize student engagement for Nevada’s children, and our shared responsibility to promote social distancing and limit public meetings, NDE worked with the Attorney General’s Office to develop a Request for an Emergency Program of Distance Education that included certain conditions and assurances.
- Districts and charter schools were *not* required to submit distance education plans; any questions regarding distance education plans should be directed to local school districts and charter schools.
- Emergency Programs of Distance Education commenced no later than March 23 or the next scheduled school day thereafter for districts/schools that were on a scheduled Spring Break at the time that the school building closures were initially announced.

District and School Determination re: Grades, Graduation, etc.

- NDE has been in constant contact with district and school leaders, educational partners, and stakeholders regarding the implementation of distance education and to provide necessary support to students and educators during the school building closures.
- Nevada has a long-standing tradition of local control and, as such, district and school leaders make decisions regarding the specific content of distance education, curriculum, grades, etc. This is the case during the COVID-19-related school building closures as well as under ordinary circumstances.
- Local control also applies to decisions regarding how best to handle graduation and other end-of-year milestones within the rules established by the Governor’s Emergency Directives and the guidance from local public health officials.
- Students and families can expect communication from their district and school leaders regarding plans for the remainder of the school year, such as graduation.
- Parents and families should contact their child’s school if they have questions or concerns related to school building closures and/or distance education. Local leaders are best positioned to provide up-to-date and accurate information and to address each child’s unique needs.

COVID-19-Related Guidance: Assessments and Accountability

- NDE worked with Governor Sisolak and the U.S. Department of Education to provide flexibility to districts and schools throughout the COVID-19-related school building closures.
- Through [waivers granted](#) by the U.S. Department of Education, federal accountability, assessment, school identification, and reporting requirements have been suspended. This includes reporting of chronic absenteeism.
- Through Emergency Directive 005, end of course exams were suspended.
- NDE provided districts and schools with [assessment and accountability guidance](#) following the federal waiver approval and the issuance of Directive 005.
- NDE worked with a group of district and school leaders to develop guidance to support the on-time graduation of the [Class of 2020](#). In addition, through the authority granted by Emergency Directive 014, NDE [issued guidance](#) waiving the civics assessment requirement for graduating seniors.