

ISBE - Updated Guidance on Statewide School Closure  
March 18, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

ISBE has updated its comprehensive guidance for the mandatory statewide school closure, and it is available on our website at [www.isbe.net/Documents/Statewide-School-Closure-Guidance-3-18-20.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Statewide-School-Closure-Guidance-3-18-20.pdf). The updated guidance incorporates all of today's communications, including ISBE's [new guidance on special education issues](#) and our extension of the deadline to submit a proposal for the FY 2021 Early Childhood Block Grant.

The updated guidance includes new information about Advanced Placement Exams, dual credit programs, transportation reimbursements, extension of the deadline to submit the Title III Intent to Apply, and extension of the Secretary of State's deadline to renew driver's licenses, including school bus driver permits.

We are also happy to be able to tell you that the state's educator retirement systems — including Teachers' Retirement System (TRS), Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) and Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund (CTPF) — have confirmed that the March 17-30 Act of God Days count toward service time.

That's all good news. But the real bright spots in my days are the accounts I receive of your heroic efforts to serve students — especially the ones for whom this crisis is especially challenging.

An ISBE staff member shared with me today how inspired she is by the generous efforts of educators in areas with large populations of refugees, such as Moline-Coal Valley School District 40. She told me about students riding bicycles to schools to pick up their only meals of the day — students who don't have computers or books at home to help them keep learning. She told me about bilingual program staff helping students not only with food but also by quickly collecting and distributing books to read. And she shared how these educators are going beyond material items to share time, energy, and emotional support for students who feel scared and confused.

I join all my ISBE colleagues in expressing my respect and admiration for heroes like these. Thank you for going above and beyond to teach and to care for the students of Illinois.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carmen I. Ayala  
State Superintendent of Education  
Illinois State Board of Education