

Horseheads Central School District

Parent/Student Q&A

During the 2020 Extended Student Dismissal

Closure & Return

How long are schools closed?

New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo has declared that all public and private schools in New York State will be closed during the situation. The current order has been extended, closing schools through May 15. If the Governor further extends the order, we will inform the community.

When will school resume?

Governor Cuomo has ordered schools to remain closed through May 15. It is our understanding that he will reassess the situation in two-week blocks of time. The state will determine when school will resume.

Why are schools closed?

Governor Cuomo has ordered schools closed in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which has caused a global pandemic. The virus is spread through close contact among people, and there are large groups of people in our schools every day. For the health and safety of our children and everyone in our community, schools are closed. However, please note that we will continue to provide educational programs to our students, and food service for students who need assistance. (For more information on our meal program, please see Support below.)

Are school, county, and/or state officials holding any regular meetings to discuss status of school closure and possible actions forward?

All districts in the state are under executive order to close until at least May 15. While we discuss this topic and others with neighboring districts, the plan for closure has not changed. If/when it does, by order of the governor, we will inform parents.

Is there a plan in place if this closure extends beyond May 15?

We have provided information to parents on the current phase of instruction. Parents with questions should contact their principal.

How will families be notified about additional information?

We will follow our standard procedures for notifying families. This includes, but is not limited to, the district website, phone calls, emails, text messages, postal mailing, social media, and local media.

Instruction

Where can I find materials/resources?

Teachers are communicating with parents on instruction in addition to materials sent home by teachers in grades PK-6 prior to our closing. There are also educational resources on our website: here: <http://bit.ly/HHCOVID19resources>. Please note: we also have hard copies of materials provided by schools for those who do not have a printer. Please contact your school principal to have these materials mailed to you.

While the review materials and other online resources are a huge help, what more will be done to make sure these students aren't falling further behind?

The district is currently in the new content (initial instruction) phase. We began this phase with a communication to parents April 10. [Click here](#) for this information.

There has been a lot of public speculation regarding this closure being extended/indefinite. Will the district conduct classes remotely in the event we are extended?

While remote classes have advantages, it is difficult to expect all students in a class be available at the same time, with any regularity. Internet access, connectivity, availability of devices, and multiple-student households have to be considered in the delivery of initial instruction. We are working to identify all situations and address the needs of all of our students and families.

What is the plan for when students return in regard to material? How quickly will they move through new material in order to catch up?

Our plan is to follow the governor and state education department's lead. That stated, we will make decisions based on these directives, as well as what we all believe is the best interest of our students and community.

How will the students be reintegrated into the classroom and what will the remainder of the academic year look like for them?

When we learn of our return date, we will make a plan for the reopening of schools. As for the academics, expectations will have to be altered depending how long we remain in extended dismissal.

What will happen once school IS back in session- will this year continue into a summer session to make up for lost time?

When the Governor closed schools, he also removed the 180-day school year requirement as long as schools used their remaining days off as instructional days, which we have done. At this time summer sessions would not be required with the removal of the 180-day requirement.

Is there a possibility students will need to repeat their current grade level if the closure continues?

We are required to follow state guidelines. A state-wide discussion and decision will need to be had on altering the expectations for this school year.

If schools close longer than previously announced, will students receive more work?

Yes. Teachers are working to provide instruction to students with the extension of our dismissal. Read more [here](#).

How will our learning in the coming year be affected?

Adjustments will need to be made in our educational plan to address this unique circumstance and depending on the duration, a plan to bring student back to their expected academic level if instructional time permits.

Will the curriculum in the coming year be adapted to our shortened learning, or is mandatory summer school on the table? I am worried that I will be unprepared for the finals and going into high school.

Adjustments will need to be made in our educational plan to address this unique circumstance. A plan to bring student back to their expected academic level if instructional time permits will be considered but at this time, however, a mandatory summer school is not being considered.

Assessments

Are the state assessments cancelled?

The New York State Education Department state has suspended the state assessments in grades 3-8 for the remainder of the school year. This includes the following:

- Grades 3-8 English Language Arts Test
- Grades 3-8 Mathematics Test
- Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science Test
- Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test
- English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in Grades K-12
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) for Students With Severe Cognitive Disabilities in Grades 3-8 and High School

What about Regents exams?

The Board of Regents has announced that June Regents exams are cancelled. We will share further information as we receive it.

Will final exams need to be changed to account for lost instructional time, especially if it is a one semester class?

Any future instructional plan will be designed to consider content assessed on local final examinations.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

How will report cards be distributed during the closure?

Report cards for the current marking period will be mailed and will cover progress students have made up to our date of dismissal (March 16). We mailed report cards in early April. Middle School and High School report card dates are later in April. As we get closer to those dates, we will determine a plan of action for these report card dates.

What about PreK/Kindergarten parent conferences? Will these be held?

We had scheduled spring conferences for parents/guardians and teachers of PreK and K students prior to the closure. It is important to us that we share information with parents on the progress their children at these levels have made this year. As of right now, we will be rescheduling these conferences for our return. If our student dismissal is extended by the governor, the district will develop an alternative plan for conferences and communicate that information to parents.

PreKindergarten Registration

PreK registrations that were scheduled during the closure happen have been postponed. When should they be expected? Will this affect enrollment for next year?

We plan to reschedule the PreK registration dates. We are working on a plan based on our return date to ensure that we get information from all parents who are interested in our PreK program. The option of having parents email or mail copies of documents is part of our planning. We will inform parents of the plan as we move through this dismissal and have more set information on our return.

Graduation Requirements

Will failing grades for seniors be forgiven and the senior able to graduate?

Students must have passing grades for the requirements of graduation to receive a diploma. This will not change due to the dismissal, but note that any adjustment of course content would be considered based on the length of our dismissal and directives from the state. If students are unsure of their standing, we ask them to contact their school counselor for specific diploma requirements and needs for graduation.

School Events, Sports, Extracurricular Activities

Are all events and activities also cancelled during this time?

Yes. All district events and activities are canceled while school is not in session. The only exception would be our Board of Education meetings, because even though schools are closed, we must continue the operation of the district.

What happens with the rest of the spring sports season?

The status of spring sports will depend upon our return to normal operation. At this time, we do not know for certain when that will be.

What does this closure mean for graduation?

At this time, we simply do not know. As we go further into the dismissal and get more information from the state, we will know more, and we will share information as soon as we have it.

What happens with the Senior and Junior Proms?

We have tentatively planned to hold a Senior/Junior Prom on May 30, the originally scheduled date for the Senior Prom. However, because we do not yet know what the plan is for the remainder of the school year, this date is only tentative.

Special Education

How will families be involved in meetings scheduled for students with special needs during this extended dismissal?

CSE/CPSE/504 Meetings: All CSE meetings scheduled from 3/16/20 to 6/26/20 are being arranged to continue in a timely manner. At this time, all meetings will be held via conference call. You will receive a letter and phone call to confirm meeting dates and times.

CPSE Services: Chemung County has cancelled all CPSE services until further notice.

IEP/504 Plan Recommendations: During a school closure, the District remains responsible for the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of students eligible for special education services with an individualized education program (IEP). Please note: If a closure/dismissal causes educational services for all students to pause, then the school/district is generally not required to provide services to the affected students eligible for special education services during that same period of time.

After the extended closure/dismissal, we will review how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services to students eligible for special education services. An IEP Team and, as appropriate to an individual student with a disability, the personnel responsible for ensuring FAPE to a student for the purposes of Section 504 would be required to make an individualized determination as to whether compensatory services are needed under applicable standards and requirements.

How will the District handle potential upcoming evaluations?

If the evaluation of a student requires face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens. Evaluations and re-evaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed/dismissed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents. These same principals apply to similar activities conducted by appropriate personnel for a student with a disability who has plan developed under Section 504, or who is being evaluated under Section 504.

What will be the mode of communication for families of students with special needs?

The teachers and related service providers will continue to communicate on a weekly basis to ensure we have a strong home-school connection. This will allow families to continue to support the implementation of a student's individualized education program. This communication will take place in a number of ways such as e-mail, phone calls, or videos posted to classroom social media such as SeeSaw. Follow-up communication will continue on next steps if the school remains dismissed as well as next steps once the school reopens.

There are additional resources on our District website on how to talk to your children about COVID-19, as well as general information about how to support children in uncertain time.

Support

Are meals be provided for students during this closure?

Yes. The district is providing meals for district families who need assistance. Breakfasts and Lunches are available for those 18 years old or younger at no charge. Meals will be provided via drive up or walk up service for recipients to take home. Meal distribution will be weekdays as follow. Families who are unable to get to a meal site can call 739-5601, x4260 or x4295 to set up delivery for the following day. For Monday delivery, please contact us on Friday.

10:30-11:30am	Center Street School, 812 Center St, Horseheads
10:30-10:50am	Collingwood Mobile Home Park, 358 Chambers Rd, Horseheads
10:30-10:50am	Pine Valley Mobile Home Park, 3600 Watkins Rd, Pine Valley
10:30-11:00am	Ridge Road School, 112 Ridge Rd, Horseheads
11:00-11:30am	Millport Fire Department, 2016 Crescent St, Millport
11:00-11:20am	Thunderbird Greens Mobile Home Park, 391 Sing Sing Rd, Horseheads
11:15-11:35am	Erin Estates, 1356 Breesport Rd, Breesport

Chemung County is also offering meal boxes for families who need assistance. Families can participate in both the district and county programs. To register for a meal box, please call the county's hotline at (607) 873-1813, x1.

How can I get emotional support for my child?

Please e-mail the social worker for your child's building and they will connect with you via phone or e-mail. Staff contact information is listed on our district website. Click on the school your child attends, and then click on Staff Directory in the Quick Links menu. If you do not know who your school's social worker is, please contact your school principal or email us at hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.

How do I contact a social worker during our school dismissal?

E-mail the social worker for your child's building and they will connect with you via phone or e-mail. Staff contact information is listed on our district website. Go to the school page, and then click on Staff Directory.

Technology

Is the Parent/Student Portal be available during this time?

Yes, both parent and student portals will be available during the period of time that school is dismissed.

How do I access my Parent Portal account from a device?

You will need to have already gotten access to the SchoolTool Parent Portal prior to the closure. To access the Parent Portal using a desktop/laptop, open your internet browser and go to this link: <https://schooltool.horseheadsdistrict.com>.

To access the Parent Portal from a mobile device, first download the “SchoolTool Mobile” app from the Google Play or Apple store. Once the app has been installed on your mobile device, the URL for the mobile app is <https://schooltool.horseheadsdistrict.com/sthhweb>. Your user name is the email address the district has on file for you. Use the password you assigned to your account. If you cannot remember your password, email hcsdportalinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com. Please be sure to include your name and your child’s name.

What do I do if I can't get into my Parent Portal account?

Please email hcsdportalinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com with your name, your child’s name and the specific problem you’re having.

What do I do if I can't get into my personal fitness plan for PE?

Like any other academic issue you might encounter, contact your teacher for assistance.

COVID-19 Information

How can I learn more about COVID-19?

Here are some resources for more information on the COVID-19 virus and global pandemic:

Chemung County Health Department:

<http://www.chemungcountyhealth.org/> or (607) 737-2028

New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH):

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

NYSDOH COVID-19 Information Line: 1-888-364-3065

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

World Health Organization (WHO):

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

For general questions, or if you need assistance in finding someone to help, please email hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com.