

19 E-learning update: Please read

Mar
2020



Dear District 58 Families,

We hope you are keeping healthy and adjusting as well as can be expected given current circumstances. Thank you for your flexibility and support as District 58 launched its emergency e-learning program this week. We wanted to share some helpful information regarding next steps, e-learning expectations,

future communications and more. This email is lengthy and is intended to replace several future communications; we appreciate your time in reading it thoroughly.

What will e-learning look like next week?

We plan to continue the [e-learning schedule](#) shared with families last week:

- **Monday, March 23** – No student attendance. Staff will meet virtually to create a weekly e-learning plan.
- **Tuesday, March 24-Wednesday, March 25** – E-learning days
- **Thursday, March 26-Friday, March 27** – No student or staff attendance

Will e-learning be offered during spring break?

Spring break (March 30-April 3) will continue as scheduled, and no formal e-learning activities will be provided. Many teachers have offered additional activities, websites and suggestions as opportunities for students beyond e-learning; these may be a wonderful way to keep children engaged during spring break should you desire to do so. Additionally, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) offers several free resources on its [#keeplearning resource page](#).

What are the expectations of my child during e-learning days?

We shared an [FAQ for families document](#) on Monday that contains quite a bit of information. We want to emphasize two key points in response to some questions we have received.

- Flexibility is a primary characteristic of this plan. We recognize that every child and every family's situation is unique during these weeks. We want to encourage you to do what is reasonable and manageable for your family as we work together to maintain continuity of learning for your child(ren).
- Teachers have planned activities for five full (5-hour) e-learning days over the course of these two weeks; you are welcome to use some of the activities on non-e-learning days (March 20, 23, 26-27) and spread the work out over additional days if this works better for your family. E-learning hours are shorter for preschool (2 hours) and Kindergarten (2.5 + additional time for OKEEP).

Can my child video conference with their teacher?

The District is currently blocking the video chat apps FaceTime and Google Meet. However, we have had several teachers testing the video conferencing application Zoom. The initial feedback on this use has been quite positive, so we anticipate additional teachers may try to utilize this technology as a way to interact with their

It should be noted that the District is not creating Zoom accounts for students. However, it is possible that students could create an account without permission and use Zoom to initiate video calls with other students. While this is not the intended use of this application, we felt we should make you aware that it is technically possible. This serves as a good reminder that student device usage should be closely monitored to ensure student safety.

Are students required to participate in e-learning activities? Are we required to submit attendance forms daily?

The Governor declared school days that take place from March 17-30 as “Act of God” days. By definition, e-learning and “Act of God” days are not required to be made up at the end of the year. While “Act of God” days do not require a school district to provide instruction, ISBE has encouraged the continuity of learning through whatever means possible. In District 58, we feel strongly that our students deserve access to educational opportunities and strongly encourage all students to participate in e-learning.

Likewise, we ask that parents and guardians continue to complete the daily attendance form during e-learning days. While not required by law, this form helps us understand which students are accessing learning materials. If a parent/guardian does not complete an attendance form, we will contact the family to see how District 58 can best support their student to ensure he or she can continue to learn throughout this school closure.

The amount of communication is becoming overwhelming – how can I keep up?

Between the e-learning plans and communication from teachers, principals and the district, we recognize that parents may be receiving dozens of emails daily. Here are the steps we are taking to help streamline communication to support families:

- Principals will not be sending weekly newsletters this week.
- Routine district communication will be suspended (E-flyers, etc.)
- Teachers will send a daily email on each e-learning day; we will work to ensure that any communication sent from teachers is critical to the day’s assignments.
- District communication will only occur if something significant has changed; the next formal district communication to families is currently scheduled for April 1, 2020.
- We remain available to all families via email and phone to answer your direct questions and will continue to do so.

Are schools or District 58 offices open?

District 58 schools are open today through 4 p.m. should you need to pick up any additional student materials or medication. Starting this Friday, March 20, District 58 schools and offices will be closed to the public through spring break. If you need to reach someone at the school, you can call the school office (voicemail will be monitored) or email the individual directly. Though the physical offices will be closed to visitors, district administration will remain available via phone and email. Teachers will also be readily available remotely during e-learning days.

Will District 58 continue providing free weekday lunches to children during spring break?

Yes. All children who reside within District 58’s boundaries have the option to receive a free bag lunch on weekdays for the duration of our closure, including spring break. This includes any child, ages 0-18, who resides within District 58 boundaries. [Learn more.](#)

Can District 58 parents/guardians volunteer to deliver meals?

District 58’s administrators and support staff are partnering with our food service and transportation providers

this to the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating anxiety and stress for me and/or my family. What resources can help?

We recognize that during this time of stress, you and your children may also be experiencing an increased level of anxiety and worry around COVID-19. To that end, we would like to provide you with [a list of resources](#) available to support talking to your child about COVID-19.

What happens next?

Obviously, information changes daily in this situation. As of now, schools will reopen on Monday, April 6. However, this could change depending on evolving guidance from health officials. District 58's administrative team is closely monitoring information from the State of Illinois and the DuPage County Health Department. Should there be a change in statewide guidance, the district will respond accordingly; again, we anticipate a formal communication on April 1 when we expect to either confirm a return to school on April 6 or confirm our next steps as a district.

After witnessing two days of e-learning we are incredibly proud of our teachers, parents, administrators and most importantly our students for their determination and perseverance. We thank you for your continued partnership in education; particularly in moments like these it is imperative that we work together to ensure that our children receive every support we can possibly provide. During difficult times the strength of a community truly shines; we know that we will get through this together and our students will continue to learn and grow.

Sincerely,

Downers Grove Grade School District 58