



Please read this important message from Gilbert Community Schools

4.17.2020

Gilbert Staff & Families:

Governor Reynolds Closes Schools for the Remainder of the Year

At her daily press conference today, Governor Reynolds announced that all schools in Iowa will be closed through the end of the school year. We know that this is a difficult decision to make and we are heartbroken knowing that we will not be able to return to school and see our students, but it is a decision that we fully support for the safety of our students, teachers, and staff.

With the additional closure, the Governor also announced the following:

- Instructional time requirements for schools would be waived through the end of school for those who are providing voluntary or required learning (we are voluntary)
- Spring sports are canceled
 - [Press Release](#) from IHSAA
- Summer sports are postponed for now with a decision on those seasons coming before June 1st
- School districts will be asked to submit a Return to Learn Plan to the Department of Education by July 1

Hearing the message that the closure will continue through the end of the school year, does not change our plan of action. We choose the voluntary plan for a reason. All families are affected differently by this national pandemic and those differences haven't changed. We believe it is in the best interest of all students to continue the course we have started. The path we are on is working and we plan to continue it.

- We will continue to provide new learning opportunities for all students
- We will continue to provide feedback to all students that participate
- We will continue to reach out to students that do not engage in new learning
- We will continue to offer grab-n-go meals
- We will continue to reach out to families

Why are we staying the path of voluntary vs. required learning?

We can not ensure that all students have equal access. Access is not just the internet.

Access involves:

- Enough bandwidth with multiple family members working from home at the same time.
- Families that are dealing with furloughs and/or layoffs.
- Families that are dealing with illness.
- Families that are struggling with the pandemic itself.

We stand behind our belief in all students and all families.

Grades

We will be using the guidance from the Iowa Dept. Of Education and will have this information out in the next week. We want to make sure we make a decision that is in the best interest of our students.

Graduation

We are thinking outside the box on this and weighing our different options. Look for information on this in the next week. Once again, we want to make sure we make a decision that is in the best interest of our students and families.

Picking up Personal Items

Building principals are developing a plan for families to pick up personal items from school. We are planning this for the week of April 27th. Look for more information on this next week.

Technology

Our internet is available to any community member.

- Accessible in the high school south parking lot
- Wireless Network: GCSD-Guest
- Password: learning
 - You can connect while in your car

Key Cooperative

We are working with Key Cooperative, the Gilbert COOP, to have another internet access available for community members. More information will be coming soon on this.

#LightUpIA

Our schools and our stadium are empty but our hearts are full for our kids. We are looking forward to the day that our students return. Tonight is #LightUpIA, our stadium lights will be on from 8:00 - 8:20 p.m. each minute represents a day we have not been in school together. This will continue each Friday night, adding more minutes to represent our missing days together.

Grab-N-Go

The [link](#) is live and will be active through the end of May (FYI-it turns off at 6:00 p.m. the evening before pick-up and resets again at noon). **Hot meals have been added, see menu on the Grab-N-Go section of our COVID-19 page.** This is updated weekly. If there are questions please feel free to reach out to the district office.

Community Needs Survey

Please take a few minutes to fill out the quick needs survey. Follow this [link](#). We are using this information to know how we can best support you. **If your situation changes or you have questions please fill it out again. It will continue to stay active through the closure. We check this daily.**

Gilbert Staff Vehicle Parade

We would like to thank all the staff that participated in this fun event. Amy Griffin, intermediate principal, and Bruce Betts, our transportation director, deserve a huge round of applause for the work they did to make the parades possible. It was incredible to see all the smiling faces and signs, this warmed everyone's hearts. We are all missing each other and these connections are vital in our own personal mental health.

In closing, please reach out if you are in need. Take care of yourself, take care of each other, and let others take care of you.

Every Family. Every Day!