

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**Governor Kim Reynolds ★ Lt. Governor Adam Gregg**

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**Iowa schools to extend closures through end of school year**

*Schools will continue voluntary and required continuous learning plans while school buildings are closed*

DES MOINES – Gov. Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Department of Education announced today that all school districts and nonpublic schools will be closed for the remainder of the school year and will continue to offer continuous learning to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This also includes the cancellation of spring sports activities.

“While I would like nothing more than to open up our schools and classrooms in May, we have to prioritize the health and safety of Iowans,” said Gov. Reynolds. “With our students at home, we must rely on continuous learning plans that are in place and prepare school districts for ‘Return to Learn’ in the fall. I greatly appreciate the work of Director Ann Lebo and all our school administrators, educators, and staff during this unprecedented time.”

The decision, which was announced today during Gov. Kim Reynolds’ press conference, is based on recommendations from the Iowa Department of Public Health to ensure the health and safety of Iowa students, teachers, school administrators and other school staff. [View that press conference here.](#)

“Iowa teachers should be commended for how quickly they have transitioned from the classroom to online and distance learning,” said Iowa Department of Education Director Ann Lebo. “Our schools have really stepped up to the plate and worked hard to develop and implement continuous learning solutions in only a matter of weeks. We appreciate everything schools and families are doing to support children’s well-being while continuing to support their academic progress while school buildings are closed.”

The governor and the Iowa Department of Education also announced that the state of Iowa will:

- Waive instructional time requirements for the remainder of the 2019-2020 regularly scheduled academic year for schools that continue to provide continuous learning through one of two approved options, voluntary educational enrichment opportunities, required educational services, or a combination of the two.
- Require schools to submit a Return to Learn Plan to the Iowa Department of Education by July 1 outlining ways they will address disruptions to learning as a result of COVID-19.

This could include summer school, enrichment activities or other opportunities to address the needs of learners.

- Waive the requirement that schools start no earlier than Aug. 23, allowing school districts and nonpublic schools to make local decisions about the length of their 2020-2021 academic year.

The governor had previously ordered schools to close through April 30. All of Iowa's 327 public school districts, as well as 179 nonpublic schools, currently offer continuous learning through one of the approved continuous learning options outlined above. Continuous learning encompasses a variety of approaches used to extend learning beyond brick and mortar buildings — online learning, e-learning, distance learning, including paper packets, and virtual learning.

School buildings will remain closed through the end of the school year except for approved meals site locations participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program and those providing temporary emergency childcare.

An announcement on summer sports activities and when other school-sponsored activities can resume will be made by June 1.

For more information, visit the Iowa Department of Education's [COVID-19 Guidance and Information web page](#).

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