

Dear CPS Families:

After careful consideration and discussions with our local and state partners, Columbia Public Schools school buildings will close to students and in-person classes beginning Wednesday, March 18. At the moment of closing, all athletics and activities will be suspended. At this time, we plan to reopen on Monday, April 13. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust our plans as necessary.

We will re-evaluate this decision as new information becomes available. We recognize the hardship this places on our families, and we thank you for your support and patience as we work through this process.

What does this mean for CPS and the community?

Academics

The district is implementing alternative methods of instruction. Elementary (PK-4) will have packets of work and regular communications from their teachers. Fifth graders and secondary students will be able to submit assignments to their teacher through Schoology. English Learners and students receiving special education services will be provided access to learning, or in the event IEP goals cannot be met adequately through alternative methods of instructions, we will provide compensatory services. IEP teams will be working to make the best decisions for our exceptional learners.

Nutrition

We will have options available to feed children in need during our closure. The district is currently finalizing plans with the USDA and working on distribution methods. More information will be available soon.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

At the moment of closing, all athletics and activities will be suspended.

Employee Work Hours

Wednesday, March 18, Thursday, March 19, and Friday, March 20 will be teacher-directed work days with school building access for employees. Teachers may come to work to complete preparations for what will be an alternative method of instruction model. We will be under district closure protocols from March 23rd through April 12th, those dates cover spring break and the two weeks after spring break. What that means is that school buildings will only be accessible to personnel essential to the operation of the school district.

Communication

In the days to come, we expect our students, staff, parents, and community members may have questions. We have set up a website and will be updating it daily, it will also include information on alternative methods of instruction as well other resources. You can access the site here: www.cpsk12.org/COVID19.

We will continue reviewing the most recent information provided by lead health agencies and state and local authorities as we monitor this evolving situation. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time. We will work through this together.

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