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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID - 19) UPDATE

June 8, 2020

Dear Evergreen families:

Please join me this Thursday, June 11 at 6:00 p.m. (via Zoom Webinar-directions on how to connect below) as I discuss options on how schools may reopen this fall for the start of the 2020-21 school year.

I will outline plans the district is considering, that will align with the Washington state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) guidance as well as public health recommendations, for student and staff learning options.

The district is currently asking for student, family, and staff input via an online survey to ascertain the need for transportation, parent, student and staff comfort for in-person learning, distance learning, or a hybrid of the two options as well as other considerations. If you haven't yet taken the survey, please do so by Friday, June 12 at 5:00 p.m.

(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jESUFyT_HuRcwhtqNCUZ6D7TRlee3IYSZ8nOQNHCwSg/edit). I will share some of the preliminary results during my presentation on Thursday.

We know a lot can change over the summer as the state and Clark County moves through the reopening phases. However, I want to provide families with a

preliminary idea of what the return to school options might look like for our September 1 start date.

Following the Webinar, additional questions and comments can be emailed to: community.relations@evergreenps.org. The questions will then be posted in an FAQ section of the district's web site - www.evergreenps.org.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

April 22, 2020

Dear Evergreen students and families:

Today, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal unveiled new guidelines for grading of all public school students in Washington. The new information primarily alters how grades will be given for high school courses. Here is an overview of how Evergreen will implement the new guidelines:

Kindergarten through 5th grade: School staff will provide continuous learning through the end of the school year and feedback to students and families about progress made on skills and learning standards.

Report cards will be available on June 19. This feedback will be used to help students transition into learning for the next school year.

Middle School: School staff will provide continuous learning through the end of the school year. Middle school students started a new trimester on March 9, and only completed five days of the new term before school buildings were closed, therefore, all EPS middle school students will receive a pass for all non high school credit bearing courses for this trimester. While your student will receive a pass, the expectation is that students continue to engage in their learning to avoid knowledge gaps and ensure a smooth transition in the fall. Our staff will continue to provide relevant feedback about student progress. Middle school courses offering high school credit will follow the high school guidelines below, using their final trimester two grade as the baseline.

High Schools : School staff will continue to provide continuous learning for each student. Students will be awarded letter grades in the A to C range, or receive an incomplete. High school classes will use the student's grade from the last grading period which concluded on March 6 as a baseline grade- a student's final semester grades may only increase during this time. If a student cannot engage in an equitable way due to their individual circumstances, an "incomplete" will be assigned at the end of the school year, with opportunities to convert that incomplete to a letter grade after the school year concludes with one of the following:

- Teachers working with students to demonstrate competency in the missed learning standards
- Credit recovery
- Competency credit / Earning credit in higher level courses
- Summer school

■ Other determined options

We know all of you are adjusting to the new virtual learning model, and our staff is working diligently to ensure we are providing relevant, accessible learning for all our students. We encourage you to continue monitoring your student's progress and stay in contact with school staff. Please refer to our [high school grading information page](#). We will continue to update you as we have new information.

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Mike Merlino, Superintendent

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Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

April 10, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community:

As we end the first week of our new virtual learning environment for instruction, I want to start by saying how appreciative I am of both our staff and our families. This is new territory we're covering and in the most difficult of circumstances. Teachers and all of our staff miss your children. Our students miss being at school. They miss their teachers, building staff, their bus drivers and their friends. I hope they've been able to access the resources provided to stay connected. I am amazed and impressed at how quickly and how collaboratively we've been able to respond with our new instructional model. We will continue to expand our School Virtual Learning website and provide answers to commonly asked questions.

School Virtual Learning Websites

Beginning next week, each school will be creating their own virtual learning website in order to streamline communications for students and families. This will provide one-stop shopping as families will be able to see the weekly learning plans for their class. All school websites will be linked to the EPS homepage as well as individual school sites.

Our schools will also be putting out a common weekly schedule that will help students and families know when they can count on virtual class meetings, when they can expect to receive feedback, and when teachers are maintaining office hours.

Print Resources

In order to maintain continuous learning for students that are having difficulty assessing materials on-line, elementary and middle school grade-level packets have been produced and are currently being printed. Packets will be available during food pick-up, or other designated times, and may also be sent by mail. Please contact your school principal for more information,

Grading

Due to the emergency closure of schools by Governor Inslee, high school students and middle school students earning high school credits will have two options for how final grades will be posted. Additionally, the governor has stated that student grades will not be harmed as a result of the closure. Student grades may only increase during this time.

For high school semester two final grades, students may choose to receive a pass or no credit option or a traditional letter grade on their high school transcript. Students must notify their teachers by June 1st. Students not making their choice will receive the pass or no credit grade on their transcript. Pass or no credit grades do not impact cumulative GPAs. Students in dual credit courses may only earn college credit by selecting the letter grade. If you are maintaining NCAA eligibility, please check with the clearinghouse before choosing an option. Counselors and principals will also be supporting students in this decision as needed.

For middle school trimester three final grades, students will be receiving a pass or no credit grade. Middle school students taking high school level courses will be graded in the same manner as high school students.

Elementary school report cards will be completed by June 15th. Teachers will record marks for all applicable areas which apply under distance learning circumstances; some areas will not be able to be assessed and will be marked with an asterisk.

High School Credits

EPS has applied for the emergency waiver through the State Board of Education that gives principals the ability to waive credit-based graduation requirements if the student was previously

on track to graduate this school year. Counselors and administrators will work with individual students where this may apply.

Graduation

Graduation is a significant event that celebrates each student's journey. It is also a celebration for each student's family. We will be working with staff and students to plan a virtual ceremony in June, and we will also plan on having a traditional graduation ceremony at the earliest, safe date allowed by our state. EPS is committed to providing a graduation ceremony for all of our seniors.

Again, I want to personally thank our staff, our students, and our community. I am proud of the work that is happening in Evergreen, and we remain committed to serving our community.

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

April 6, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community,

Today, Governor Jay Inslee has made the decision to close all Washington schools for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year which is scheduled to end June 19. This physical closure of schools is an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep our community safe and healthy. During this closure extension, all school buildings in the district will remain closed.

We understand the continued closure of schools presents many challenges for our 25,000 students and families. It also raises many questions. The information outlined below is what we know now. We will continue to share further guidance as decisions are made and as information becomes available.

- **Distance Learning:** Distance learning will continue through the remainder of the school year. We have created an [online resource page to support distance learning](#). On Friday, April 3rd, Superintendent Merlino sent out [additional information on continuous learning](#). We will solicit feedback from all stakeholders as we continue to improve our continuous learning program.
- **Technology:** If your child needs a device please fill out this [form](#) and submit it.
- **Student Meals:** We will continue to provide meals to students that need them Monday-Friday at [27 locations as well as on selected bus routes](#).
- **Child Care:** The district will continue to provide [Camp Evergreen](#) child care for children of First Responders, health care workers and other essential employees.

- **High School Seniors:** High school seniors will continue to receive support from school counselors, administrators, and other staff on completing graduation requirements. We are closely following guidance from OSPI and the State Board of Education on flexibility with meeting the requirements.
- **Graduation:** We are exploring all options and will have more information in the near future.
- **School Buildings/Activities/Events:** All school buildings and facilities continue to be closed to the general public. This includes all sporting practices and matches, field trips, dances and activities are canceled.

More information can be found on the district website - www.evergreenps.org

This is a difficult time for all of us, but we will get through it together.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

April 3, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community:

Yesterday, Governor Inslee extended the state's stay-home order through May 4th. Starting Monday, April 6th, EPS teachers will be providing continued learning opportunities for their students remotely. The purpose is to provide opportunities for students to maintain and continue their learning by utilizing common resources.

EPS will continue adding to the home learning resources found on the [district website](#). This resource may be used along with the learning opportunities provided by teachers and other staff.

Many EPS teachers will be using Google Classroom and/or Seesaw to deliver the continued learning opportunities. These platforms are currently being used in our schools. Teachers and technology support staff are prepared to offer technical assistance and answer questions as we understand that students and families are at different points in their digital ability.

[Frequently Asked \(tech\) Questions for Families During School Closures](#)

[EPS Tech Support Request](#)

[EPS Tech Support Request \(Russian\)](#)

[EPS Tech Support Request \(Spanish\)](#)

Distance and remote instruction will not look the same as classroom instruction and, in all transparency, providing education via distance learning is new territory for us all. We are committed to doing the very best that we can and to continuously improve our efforts as we continue to learn more throughout this closure.

Realizing this in no way replaces the classroom experience and connection between a student and a teacher, staff are working on different ways to engage students. Students may receive print materials, read books, or use digital resources to continue their learning. If you require accessible or print materials, please contact your child's teacher with your request. For additional questions, you may call Rachell McLaughlin at 360-604-4024 for elementary schools, Theresa Violett at 360-604-4035 for middle schools, and Bridget Beaudoin at 360-604-4037 for high schools.

While there is still much unknown at this point, we will continue to update our school community with the latest information and guidance from the Office Superintendent Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Board of Education. At this point, the 2019 / 2020 student learning calendar is as follows:

9/3/19 - 3/13/20: Traditional on ground learning assessment and grading practices.

3/16/20 - 3/27/20: Transition time with the announcement of state school closures; staff members exploring and learning more about virtual learning options; all students contacted by teachers no later than March 27.

3/30/20 - 4/3/20: Spring break

4/6/20 - 4/24/20: Staff members will begin delivering learning that is designed to continue student learning in all subject areas. Feedback from all stakeholders will be gathered in order to monitor and adjust our continuous learning plan as necessary. The primary focus will be on providing learning opportunities and meaningful feedback for students rather than grading. Teachers will provide feedback to students in a variety of ways such as email, conferences, progress reports and other options that will not negatively impact grades.

4/27/20 - 6/19/20: If we are able to return to school, teachers will help transition students back to classroom learning with opportunities for students to connect their pre-closure and closure learning, while meeting them at their respective levels. In order to assess student learning, staff members will blend all learning experiences to determine proficiency and/or grades.

If closures go beyond April 24: Staff members will provide continuous learning experiences, and, following OSPI guidance, will explore all options of student assessment and grading while providing students with multiple ways to demonstrate their proficiency through a virtual learning model.

High School: Teachers will generally focus on student assessment pre-closure and during closure in order to award credit. For classes that require a grade, such as dual credit courses, a

process is being developed, that recognizes these unprecedented times. EPS will develop a process for students to recover credit and learning opportunities if they were unable to access learning during the closure, following guidance from OSPI.

During this school closure, you and your student may be feeling stress and anxiety. You are not alone. You will find resources on our [social emotional learning page](#) to help talk to your child about these feelings and how to build strategies for managing emotions.

We are on this journey together. Our focus is to support learning and continue instruction for all students during these unprecedented and challenging times.

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

April 3, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community,

Last week I shared that Evergreen was suspending our meal delivery system as a response to Governor Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Safe order. I also shared that I had asked our leaders to develop a new plan that would allow us to continue bus delivery to provide as many student meals as possible while limiting the number of vehicles on the road. With that in mind, we are reducing the number of buses involved from the original delivery system from 235 to approximately 40.

The plan below provides information about the program, and outlines how our meal service will look starting Monday, April 6. The plan also includes a link to maps that share bus routes and meal sites:

All Evergreen PS students and community children 18 and younger can receive free grab-n-go breakfast and lunch during the COVID-19 school closure. Meals are served on what would otherwise be normal school days. Meal funding is made possible by the USDA Summer Food Service Program. Meals are not intended for adults. Children should be present and will receive one breakfast and one lunch combination each day. Parents are allowed to pick-up meals for their immediate household children if the children are unable to access the meals themselves directly.

[Bus drop off locations & meal sites](#)

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1M81eDs-CEuJK5Rq-8B3c-hfOzOnAQYJU&ll=45.64310432194391%2C-122.53120494999996&z=12>

Pick-up Sites: Meals are available at all 27 sites from 9:00am-10:00am., and for an additional hour - from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.- at Burton, Cascade, Covington, Crestline, Ellsworth,

Hearthwood, Heritage, Mill Plain and Silver Star. Use the map in the link above to find the serving time for the location nearest to you.

Bus Delivery: We are providing meal delivery via 24 bus routes with more than 80 stops across the district. Between 8:30am and 9:30am, buses will stop at each location for approximately 10 minutes to serve meals. The bus routes can be seen by using the map in the link above.

I am very appreciative of the work that our leaders have done to create this plan for our community during the school closure. I'm also thankful for all of the staff supporting our meal preparation and distribution. Our staff make it possible for our program to succeed. At all times we ask that everyone observe social distancing practices. Our responsibility is to provide the maximum number of meals to our children in a safe manner.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

March 27, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community,

It has been two weeks since we received Governor Jay Inslee's statewide directive to close schools due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In those two weeks, Evergreen Public Schools staff have been working hard to ensure we are connecting with students and families in a number of important areas.

We are proud of our employees for stepping up during this time. Without them, we could not have accomplished what we have so far, as well as what awaits us, as we ramp up learning on April 6. We have been working hand-in-hand with our partners since March 13. Our classified employees, represented by Public School Employees (PSE); certificated staff, represented by the Evergreen Education Association (EEA); Chartwells, our food service provider; and ABM, who provides custodial and janitorial services, have been working extraordinarily hard.

On Tuesday, March 17, our Transportation Department and Food Service staff distributed meals across the district to ensure students were fed. As of today, we have provided 71,000 free meals to the children of our community. This is a large and needed effort, and we continue to work on ensuring it is easy for families to get the meals they need.

We opened Camp Evergreen this week: a free childcare service for First Responders and Healthcare Professionals. Our administrators, classified staff and certificated professionals have stepped up to provide a safe and caring environment for children – 14 hours a day - to make

sure their parents can work. Community partners including Jimmy Johns, Firehouse Subs, and Costco also stepped up to help with donations.

We couldn't have run our meals program and Camp Evergreen without the hard work of the ABM custodial staff. They were already hard at work cleaning schools before the closure, and continue to support these efforts during the past two weeks. Their efforts will continue to be important as we move forward.

Our entire Curriculum and Learning department, ELL, Special Services staff and teachers, have been reinventing our teaching and delivery model. Part of that reinvention includes an extremely large reliance on technology. So as instructional materials were identified, our IT department was behind the scenes to make sure the technology was ready. This included rolling out nearly 1,000 Chromebook to students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Our teachers are learning how to use Zoom, Skype and other creative methods for touching base with students and gearing up their virtual classrooms for the April 6 launch.

Two weeks ago, I couldn't have described what our school district would look like today. I did know our talented and dedicated staff was up to the challenge and would work hard to ensure our students needs were the focus. We look forward to launching our redesigned school experience on Monday, April 6 and appreciate the support of our community.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

March 25, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community,

As referenced in my letter sent yesterday, due to Governor Inslee's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order, I suspended our meal delivery system that was utilizing our school buses. I suspended the delivery system due to the high number of staff required to fulfill the delivery demands. We continue to serve meals at all elementary schools, Cascade and Covington Middle Schools, and Heritage High School. Over the next few days our leaders will be creating a new distribution system utilizing fewer vehicles, and staff to provide as many meals to reach as many children as possible. I believe we will create a system that feeds our community's children and keeps our staff safe. We will share an updated delivery schedule as soon as possible. I am very proud of the work done in such a short time to provide approximately 43,000 meals over a five day period with the previous system. Thank you for your continued support as we navigate our daily challenges.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

March 24, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community:

Last night, Washington Governor Jay Inslee announced “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. That means we are making changes and refining processes and procedures designed to keep our students, staff and families safe as we still deliver essential services.

First, we will continue to feed students and have already provided approximately 45,000 meals over the last week. The logistical effort that went into this was significant, and required many vehicles and staff members. As we learn more about the Governor’s order, to reduce the number of employees who have contact with the public, starting tomorrow on Wednesday, March 25 we will distribute meals at school sites only. **All elementary schools, plus Cascade and Covington Middle Schools and Heritage High School will have “grab and go” breakfasts and lunches. All schools will be open Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., and Burton, Cascade, Covington, Crestline, Ellsworth, Hearthwood, Heritage, Mill Plain and Silver Star will stay open until 11:00 a.m.** Over the next several days we will be analyzing our distribution model, and will work to increase the number of meals distributed with fewer vehicles and staff involved to ensure the safety of everyone. Meal service will not be available during Spring Break: March 30-April 3. A complete list of meal sites, as well as additional community food resources, is available [here](#).

Second, we are making Chromebooks available for check-out by Kindergarten through 5th grade students to assist in virtual learning. A survey to determine student need was sent to elementary families last week. Students in middle and high schools already have individual devices. We have [digital learning resources](#) available for all ages and add to them daily. In addition, our teachers are reaching out to students and families this week. Legacy Online and Credit Recovery will resume on March 27. General continuation of student learning begins April 6.

We continue to receive more information from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to help guide the Class of 2020 in graduation requirements, information about Advanced Placement (AP) classes and SAT testing. We have posted information and links as we receive [updates](#). Families with students with special needs have received [updates](#). Special Services staff will be reaching out with more individualized information shortly.

As we all take steps to follow the Governor's directive, we also want to remind our community that school buildings and facilities (including playgrounds and sports fields) are closed and not available for general public use.

Each day brings new challenges. We continue to work to deliver services that are most needed by our students while ensuring our staff members take necessary precautions to stay safe and healthy. We appreciate the support we continue to receive from our community.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

March 20, 2020

Dear Evergreen Community,

As we begin Day Four of the COVID-19 school shut down (Monday, March 16 was already a "no school" day on the Evergreen Public Schools calendar), we have implemented a number of resources and programs, and more are coming.

While we have provided [Instructional Resources](#) from our Curriculum and Instruction staff on the district [website](#), we know students and families are seeking more direction. Students will be contacted by their teachers on or before March 27.

Beginning on Monday, April 6, we will be implementing distance services/supports to help in the maintenance of student learning. While technology will be leveraged to support student learning, this is not a conversion to "online schools." We know this will not replace the quality and personalized learning that has been delivered in our classrooms, but it will provide instruction to help our students retain academic skills.

While students in grades 6-12 have been assigned Chromebooks, students in elementary schools do not have individual devices. Elementary families have or will soon receive a survey to complete, indicating if they need a device for home use. If they do, there will be follow-up directions on checking out a device.

We also know that we have student groups that require additional guidance and information:

- High School seniors now have specific information on our [website](#) under "[Class of 2020](#)."
- Credit recovery and Legacy Online will restart on March 27.
- Students receiving special education services have been sent an initial [letter](#) from the district's Special Service Department. More information will also be forthcoming as teachers reach out to students.

- For parents of students receiving English Language Learning support, resources have been provided on the district website ([Resources/RECURSOS DE APRENDIZAJE EN CASA/РЕСУРСЫ ДЛЯ ДОМАШНЕГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ](#)). More information will be forthcoming as teachers reach out to students.

As a reminder, all EPS buildings and grounds are now closed to the public. Staff are still working. If you need assistance, please contact the District switchboard at 360-604-4000.

Information is changing constantly in this situation. We are doing our best to communicate directly with you when there are big changes, and we are continually updating our [website](#).

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent

March 13, 2020

Dear parents and guardians,

To help our state and nation combat the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), Washington Governor Jay Inslee announced all schools in the state are closing through Friday, April 24. Evergreen Public Schools will close at the end of today, Friday, March 13 and plan to reopen on Monday, April 27.

This closure is a decision that did not come lightly,” Inslee said. “Health officials have said closing schools could create a significant cut in the peak number of infections.”.

Please review the following important information as it relates to the closure in Evergreen Public Schools:

- Effective immediately and throughout the closure, all school-sponsored activities are cancelled including athletics and morning/afternoon/evening school activities.
- EPS will make student meals available. The district will inform families by Monday about the distribution methods starting on Tuesday.
- We are working with our childcare providers to ensure they can remain open at our school sites.
- The first eight missed school days will be made up at the end of the school year. The make-up days will be: June 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. The district will apply for a state waiver for the remainder.
- We will continue to provide updates via a number of methods:
 - Email
 - Phone call
 - [Evergreen web site](#)

- Social media
- Info lines: 360-604-3637 (English) 360-604-4028 (Russian) 360-604-4029 (Spanish)

We know families will have many questions, so we will be using the above methods to answer and share Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we address this unprecedented public health situation. We are committed to the safety and well-being of our students, families, staff members, volunteers and community.

Sincerely,

Mike Merlino, Superintendent