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GOVERNOR PARSON GIVES UPDATE ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, FEDERAL FUNDING TO HELP ADDRESS COVID-19 NEEDS

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APRIL 15, 2020

(https://governor.mo.gov/sites/gov/files/media/image/2018/09/news-default.jpg)

JEFFERSON CITY □ In today's COVID-19 briefing, Governor Mike Parson and Commissioner of Education Margie Vandeven gave an update on K-12 schools following last week's announcement that all Missouri public and charter school buildings will remain closed for the remainder of the academic year.

"We understand this news was difficult for students, families, and educators," **Governor Parson** said. "This was not an easy decision, but we believe it was the right decision to not only continue protecting the health and safety of Missouri students and teachers, but also to give educators time to transition into longer-term remote teaching and learning solutions."

"We know remote learning looks different in every district across the state, and I want to thank all of our educators, as well as our families at home, for stepping up and finding creative ways to continue educating our students during this difficult time," **Governor Parson** added.

On Monday, Missouri received confirmation from the U.S. Department of Education that it will receive $208 million under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help K-12 schools respond to COVID-19 related needs. These dollars will help Missouri schools address the digital divide that the state is currently experiencing as well as remote teaching and learning challenges and lost learning time.

These K-12 funds will be distributed through federal Title I allocations, which means the funding will be sent first to those schools working to meet the unique needs of those who have traditionally been most disadvantaged.

Additionally, Missouri received notification yesterday that the state will also receive $54.6 million from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief authorized under the CARES Act. These dollars allow Missouri to provide emergency support to K-12 schools, institutions of higher education, and other education entities significantly impacted by COVID-19.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) also applied for and received approval of a federal waiver authorized under the CARES Act that gives Missouri schools unprecedented flexibility in using the federal title dollars they already have to best meet the needs of students and educators during COVID-19.

DESE is continuing to explore, with stakeholder input, viable summer school options as well as what re-entering into our school buildings will look like.

Also during today's briefing, Governor Parson and Missouri Department of Conservation Director Sara Parker Pauley emphasized the benefits of spending time outdoors.

"I want to remind everyone that our 'Stay Home Missouri' Order does not mean you must stay inside your home and never come out. That is not healthy for anyone," **Governor Parson** said. "Spending time outdoors is good not only for our physical health, but also our mental health, and we encourage Missourians to get outside and enjoy the fresh air."

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) offers several options for Missourians to stay healthy while exercising social distancing. Conservation areas, nature center trails, and boat accesses remain open to the public. Signs are posted on these areas to ensure safe physical distancing, and MDC continues to monitor visitor usage at these areas.

MDC regional offices, Department headquarters in Jefferson City, staffed shooting ranges, nature centers, visitor centers, and educational centers around the state will continue to be closed to the public through April 30. MDC public events and programs around the state, including hunter education classes, nature center programs and events, shooting range programs and events, and landowner workshops, will also be cancelled until April 30.

MDC continues to work with its other public land agencies to share impacts from COVID-19, including any changes or closures. In collaboration with its sister agency, Missouri State Parks, MDC has also created a radio and video public service announcement emphasizing physical distancing precautions in the outdoors and is working with stations around the state to help share that message.

To view Governor Parson's remarks from today's briefing, please **click here (https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MOGOV/2020/04/15/file_attachments/1428250/4-15-2020%20BRIEFING.pdf)**. Pictures from the briefing are available on Governor Parson's **Flickr page (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.flickr.com_photos_govmikeparson_albums_72157713905898917&d=DwMFaQ&c=GSntNbUav5AC0JJIyPOufmfQT3u3zI7UKdoVzPd-7og&r=ep_vY_YZvQO4gTTTzhrHgwLWzZKFmXwbuV1ci7zYS-A&m=AvdJw5TL63IRddiNXZGI-u9TTzJyVpFyL56bUXWvKro&s=zOjH3SJsUndlE5EUH5TIdzdseQ7rqy5OA2L-9sebp4U&e=)**.

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