THE STATE OF GEORGIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR:

EXTENDED SCHOOL CLOSURES TO STOP SPREAD OF COVID-19

WHEREAS: On March 14, 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19 on the State of Georgia, I issued Executive Order 03.14.20.01, declaring a Public Health State of Emergency in Georgia; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia General Assembly concurred with Executive Order 03.14.20.01 by joint resolution on March 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS: Executive Order 03.16.20.01 closed public elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools in Georgia through March 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia Department of Public Health has determined that COVID-19 is spreading through communities; and

WHEREAS: The number of COVID-19 cases in Georgia continues to rise; and

WHEREAS: Further action is necessary to protect the health and safety of the population of Georgia, slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce the number of people who will become infected, and avoid unnecessary strain on Georgia's healthcare system; and

WHEREAS: During a state of emergency, Georgia law vests the Governor with powers and duties as may be deemed necessary to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population; and

WHEREAS: Code Section 38-3-51(d)(1) vests the Governor with the power to suspend any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business, or the orders, rules, or regulations of any state agency if strict compliance with any statute, order, rule, or regulation would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency or disaster; and

WHEREAS: In consultation with the Governor's Coronavirus Task Force and education, health, and emergency preparedness officials, I have determined that an extended closure of elementary, secondary, and post-secondary public schools is a necessary and appropriate action to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Georgia's residents and visitors to control the spread of COVID-19.

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO CODE SECTION 38-3-51, AND THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY

ORDERED: That school closures mandated by Executive Order 03.16.20.01 are hereby extended by the terms included in this Order.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That public elementary and secondary schools shall remain closed for in-person instruction through April 24, 2020 with limited exceptions for meal preparation and distribution, continuity of distant learning opportunities, and any other necessary functions as determined by the local school superintendent.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That public post-secondary schools shall remain closed for in-person instruction with limited exceptions for the rest of the semester.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That actions not addressed by this Order related to the health, safety, and welfare of the students, faculty, and staff of the University System of Georgia and Technical College System of Georgia may be determined by the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia and Commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia for their respective post-secondary education systems.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That this Order shall not prevent remote learning or online programs developed for students by the University System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, the Georgia Board of Education, or any local school district.

IT IS FURTHER

ORDERED: That the Georgia Department of Public Health and Georgia Department of Education implement measures for the health, nutrition, safety, and educational needs of students during this school closure period.

This 26th day of March 2020.

GOVERNOR