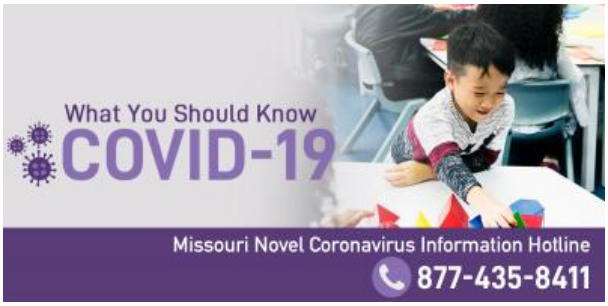
Search

GOVERNOR PARSON HIGHLIGHTS LEADERSHIP OF MISSOURI SCHOOLS AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

(mailto:?

'son%20Highlights%20Leadership%20of%20Missouri%20Schools%20and%20Higher%20Education%20Institutions%20During%20COVID-ck out this site https://governor.mo.gov/press-releases/archive/governor-parson-highlights-leadership-missouri-schools-and-higher-education)

MARCH 24, 2020



(https://governor.mo.gov/sites/gov/files/media/image/2020/03/DSS%202.jpg)

JEFFERSON CITY □ Recognizing that every school district is different, Governor Mike Parson enabled local school leaders to make the best decisions for their communities as Missouri continues to combat the spread of COVID-19. This approach allowed for local solutions and provided maximum flexibility for leaders to address the effects of closing a school district.

"I'm proud of the hard work and leadership our education leaders have demonstrated during this public health emergency," **Governor Parson** said. "Every school district has been impacted differently by COVID-19, and every community has responded in a way that meets their individual needs."

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), in consultation with the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), has several important updates and new guidance to share following last week's announcement of a statewide social distancing order:

- Per DHSS, schools shall not resume classes before Monday, April 6, unless extended by further order of DHSS. Schools that want to extend closure past April 6 have the option to do so.
- Schools are encouraged to continue to prepare and serve food as they have been doing during the closure.
- Schools may continue to provide childcare when/if possible.
- DESE urges school officials to ensure social distancing protocol is being utilized when staff members are reporting to work. Leaders should evaluate which duties being performed are critical (making copies of educational materials to mail/deliver to students, providing childcare, etc.), and then explore how those tasks could be performed remotely or virtually.

Following Governor Parson's Executive Order 20-04 easing regulatory burdens during this state of emergency, DESE has removed barriers and provided the flexibility necessary for local school leaders to stay focused on the health and safety of their students, staff members, and communities.

- Missouri is cancelling statewide-required assessments for the remainder of this school year.
  - Some graduating seniors eligible for the A+ Scholarship may still need to take an assessment. DESE will be working on these additional details. DESE applied for and received an expedited testing waiver from the U.S. Department of Education on March 20.
- Schools will not be required to make up the days/hours lost due to COVID-19 this school year, and missed calendar hours will not affect the calculation of average daily attendance.
  - Districts and charters should make attendance decisions based on the safety and well-being of their students and staff without concern that the low attendance numbers will negatively influence payment.
- Missouri's foundation formula – DESE's school funding mechanism – is designed to absorb a one-year attendance irregularity for schools that are paid on the first or second preceding year's Average Daily Attendance (ADA).
  - Basic formula payments will not be interrupted if student attendance is lower this school year. Next year's basic formula payments can be based on the highest of a district's first or second preceding year's ADA.
- DESE has waived the requirements for any remaining student teaching and internship activities that would have taken place in schools.
  - Great teachers matter for Missouri, and these future educators have worked hard over the last four years preparing for this important career. DESE will ensure that these new educators get the certificates they have earned.
- DESE Food & Nutrition team members worked quickly to secure the necessary USDA waivers to enable local schools to feed their students during COVID-19 closures as so many students rely on school meals each day.
  - Those waivers give schools the ability to prepare and serve meals at their sites even though they are closed and to conduct meal service in different ways, such as grab-and-go style meals or sack lunches delivered throughout the community.

Missouri's higher education institutions have also been severely impacted by COVID-19.

Many of the state's colleges and universities have taken action to help prevent the spread of the virus and are exploring how they can use their expertise, technology, and other resources to help during this time of crisis.

Although many campuses have closed down, faculty are still working to meet the COVID-19 challenge by delivering courses and resources in new ways, such as moving to online classes. Institutions have also created their own webpages with details and plans for the upcoming weeks and months.

Due to school closures in response to COVID-19, the Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development (DHEWD) has temporarily reduced or suspended certain A+ Scholarship eligibility requirements.

Communication to Missouri high schools and college financial aid officers was sent on March 19 outlining the temporary changes to the program for 2020 high school seniors and college students hoping to renew the scholarship for 2020-2021. The U.S. Department of Education has also issued guidance for college administrators, financial aid officers, students, parents, and faculty in the wake of school cancellations and postponements.

- High school seniors working toward A+ eligibility will have a reduced number of tutoring/mentoring hours from 50 to 25. A student with a cumulative 2.5 GPA at the end of either the Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 semester will be eligible. DHEWD is working with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop guidance for the Algebra I end-of-course exam requirement.
- College students utilizing the A+ Scholarship were previously required to maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA to be eligible for renewal. Due to classes at many institutions unexpectedly moving to online only options, a student must now meet only the school's satisfactory academic progress requirements, even if the school requires less than a 2.5 GPA. Post-secondary institutions have the option to apply the All Available Hours exception to the full-time enrollment requirement for students impacted by closures and/or alternative delivery methods.
- The changes to the department guidelines for A+ only apply to 2020 high school seniors and college students for the 2019-2020 academic year. Additional guidance may be issued if it becomes necessary in this rapidly evolving situation.

To view Governor Parson's remarks from today's press briefing, please **click here (https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/MOGOV/2020/03/24/file_attachments/1409846/3-24-2020%20PRESS%20BRIEFING.pdf)**. All pictures from today's press briefing are available on **Governor Parson's Flickr page (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.flickr.com_photos_govmikeparson_albums_72157713612489383&d=DwMFaQ&c=GSntNbUav5AC0JJIyPOufmfQT3u3zI7UKdoVzPd-7og&r=ep_vY_YZvQO4gTTTzhrHgwLWzZKFmXwbuV1ci7zYS-A&m=6-WYsdBrVr8jSxOwyfgFX1mWYImOp3YKB9LplWUci4Y&s=-fduwYIzPTe4MG_O9Th3LCC6fe6_Lyc7umECcKM3OhQ&e=)**.

CONTACT US

Office of Governor Michael L. Parson

P.O. Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Phone: (573) 751-3222
Fax: (573) 751-1495

Email Us (/contact-us)

State of Missouri (https://www.mo.gov/)
About Missouri (https://www.mo.gov/education/learn-about-missouri)
Visit Missouri (https://www.visitmo.com/)

POPULAR SERVICES

Find a DMV (https://dor.mo.gov/offloc/)
Personal Tax Forms (https://dor.mo.gov/forms/index.php?category=3)
Voter Registration/ ShowIt2Vote (https://www.sos.mo.gov/showit2vote)

GOVERNMENT

Lieutenant Governor (https://ltgov.mo.gov/)
Secretary of State (https://www.sos.mo.gov/)
Auditor (https://auditor.mo.gov/)
Treasurer (https://treasurer.mo.gov/)
Attorney General (http://ago.mo.gov/)
State Senate (https://www.senate.mo.gov/)
State House (https://house.mo.gov/)
Missouri Courts (https://www.courts.mo.gov/)