Idaho State Board of Education

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BOARD APPROVES STATEWIDE SCHOOL OPERATIONS GUIDANCE TO DEAL WITH CORONAVIRUS

The Idaho State Board of Education today directed all public school districts and charter schools to immediately implement a "soft closure" of all classroom facilities through Monday, April 20, 2020.

The Board ordered the soft closure when it approved the COVID-19 School Operation Guidance developed by Governor Brad Little's K-12 Emergency Council convened in recent days in response to the pandemic.

The guidance directs districts and charters to provide three essential services during the soft closure.

The essential services are:

- Provide food services to underserved populations and childcare for community members who provide critical services.
- Develop and implement plans for delivering remote or distance learning strategies (online, video or teleconference).
- Develop a plan for providing special education-related services.

The COVID-19 School Operations Guidance document is posted on the State Board website:
https://boardofed.idaho.gov/resources/covid-19-school-operations-guidance/

The Governor's K-12 Emergency Council is made up of State Board members, district and charter administrators and other stakeholders from throughout the state. The April 20 is strictly a target date and is subject to review.

In other actions, the Board also waived certain high school graduation requirements including ISAT testing, the senior project, and college entrance exam.

"Today's Board action is a first step towards alleviating some of the pressure our districts are experiencing," Board President Debbie Critchfield said. "Local administrators and boards are working around the clock to manage this crisis. They are dealing with a lot and we don't want them to worry about state rules. This guidance is intended to give them more time to focus on priority services outlined by the Board and the Governor's K-12 Emergency Council."

The Board is planning to conduct weekly special Board meetings during the soft closure and possibly beyond the April 20 date.

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