



# **NEWPORT SCHOOLS CLOSING MONDAY FOR 2 WEEKS DUE TO COVID19 CONCERNS**

*Instruction will continue through online learning, homework*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWPORT - To better protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, visitors and the community, Newport Independent Schools will follow the recommendation of Gov. Andy Beshear and discontinue in-person classes for two weeks beginning Monday, March 16 due to concerns about the COVID19 virus.

For now, students should plan on returning to school Monday, March 30.

The schools' administration and members of the Newport Board of Education have been monitoring the COVID19 situation and are convinced closing the district's school buildings and cancelling all extracurricular activities including sports games and practices is the prudent approach given the potential public health threat of the virus.

The district is reaching out to parents and guardians through letters, phone calls from principals and social media to inform them about the decision.

"As a district, we recognize the inconvenience that this emergency order has created for our entire community," said Superintendent Kelly Middleton. "But the health and safety of our students is always a priority in any decisions we make. We will work through this challenge together as a school district and as a community."

The district will continue to provide breakfast and lunch to students through Grab & Go meals that will be available at each of the district's schools from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Power Packs of snacks and food will also be available.

Even though school buildings will be closed, the district will be operating under non-traditional instruction, or NTI, days for the next two weeks. NIT days will be considered school days through online learning, packets sent home from teachers and interactions with teachers. The expectation is that every student will complete assignments as if they were sitting in the classroom, Middleton said.

"Superintendent Kelly Middleton has kept our Board of Education 100 percent in the loop regarding anticipated changes needed to continue providing educational services and maintaining academic progress, while minimizing the risk of our students and their families contracting COVID19," said Newport Board of Education Member Julie Smith-Morrow. " I was glad to learn that in addition to having a clear, detailed plan for how our district will deliver non-traditional instruction, we will provide breakfast and lunch for students Monday through Friday, weekend Power Packs for participating students, and services for special needs students. "

School administrators and board of education members will continue to consult with state officials to determine if the time away from school will be extended and parents and guardians will be kept informed about the evolving situation.

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