

# Elko County School District



## Central Administrative Office

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March 27, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

First, let me begin by saying how much we miss all of our students! We are concerned for our students' health and well-being, as well as their families. We would like to thank everyone for your kindness, support and understanding during this demanding time. We'd also like to thank our local health professionals, truck drivers, grocery store employees, first responders and all others providing essential services!

Below I'll be providing an update on decisions that have been made thus far in regards to providing Distance Learning to the students of Elko County School District. I would like to send the message that we understand that everybody is under stress right now and school work should not add to that stress. None of us has experienced what we are going through at this point in time, and our intention is not to add anxiety to our students, our families or our staff members. Please know that your child's teachers miss them and are concerned about their well-being, and they can't wait to see each of those faces in their classrooms as soon as possible! I'll attempt to address these decisions in categories below:

## Student/Parent Contact

Staff members from all schools in Elko County School District have attempted to make contact with every student and/or parent in the District. If you have not been contacted yet, please contact your child's school; your contact information on file at the school may not be current or accurate. It is imperative that we have the ability to establish and maintain communication with students and parents. We also need to know as quickly as possible whether each student has access to the Internet and a device to use to facilitate Distance Learning. We will be making arrangements to provide Chromebook devices for students whose families do not own a device to access the Internet. Again, **please contact your child's school as soon as possible if you have not yet been contacted by a school staff member.** The Elko County School District website is [ecsdnv.net](http://ecsdnv.net), where you can find links to each of the school's websites.

Students/Parents will be contacted by a teacher at least weekly. This communication may be made through Google Classroom, Google Hangouts, Gmail, or by phone.

Teachers may be utilizing platforms such as Google Voice Account or \*67 to make phone calls. You will most likely receive phone calls from numbers you do not recognize. If you are not comfortable answering these calls, the teachers will leave a voicemail. Please listen to your voicemails, so you are able to maintain communication with your child's teacher(s).

Teachers will be accessible to pupils through the internet or by telephone during the school's regularly scheduled instructional hours.

## Timeline

While school closure dates have already proven to be a moving target (shifting from April 6 to April 16), we are rolling out distance learning through two phases:

**Phase 1: Through April 3:** Implementation of our distance learning support through online resources available on the ECSD website, virtual contact provided by individual teachers through Google Classroom or Canvas, along with the Home Learning Opportunity packets that teachers assembled and shared with students and families last week.

**April 6 - April 10:** Regularly scheduled Spring Break

**Phase 1 (cont): April 13 - April 16:** If schools continue on track to open on April 16, schools will continue with the distance learning opportunities being used prior to spring break.

**Phase 2: If school closures are extended beyond April 16:** At this time Governor Sisolak has made the directive that school will open no sooner than April 16th and only on the approval of the Chief Medical Officer of the State of Nevada after a review of the risk of transmission within the geographic area as defined by the Chief Medical Officer.

If the school closure extends beyond April 16th, Elko County School District instructional staff will continue to provide distance learning. This will be accomplished utilizing Google Classroom and Canvas platforms. All students in Elko County School District have a Google account which includes their Gmail and Google Classroom accounts, as well as other Google products which teachers may also choose to use to aid instruction. Many teachers have already set up their Google Classroom or Canvas courses, so your child may already have participated in this manner.

Home Learning Opportunity packets containing comparable activities will continue to be available to students without access to the virtual platforms.

## Student Learning/Assignments

**Time Spent on Distance Learning:** General guidance for distance learning suggests approximately 2.5 to 4.5 hours of student learning per day depending on the grade level. Younger students should spend less time than older students on distance learning. We will keep in mind that some families may have one computer for the entire family, so even students with internet access may have time and schedule limitations with distance learning, as they figure out how to share computer time.

**Content:** Teachers will utilize approved/adopted instructional materials as the basis for distance learning when possible. It is important to note that teachers will prioritize previously taught standards and content and not introduce new content, unless it is to extend learning.

**Feedback & Grading:** Teachers will provide feedback for all students; however, overall grades will be “hold harmless.” For example, **student grades can only improve from where grade percentages were when school closures were announced. Student grades, grade level advancement and graduation progress will not be negatively impacted by the school closure.**

## Special Education

Special Education teachers will continue to provide services in conjunction with general education teachers through consistent communication with students, providing accommodations for work, and monitoring completed work. Information may be provided with hard copies or through telephone conferences with students/parents, as well as coordinating with general teachers of courses in which students with an IEP are included.

## English Learners

English language learners (ELs) support will continue to take place. Consistent communication between EL specialists, classroom teachers and our EL students will be paramount to continue their literacy and language development.

## Additional Information

We will enact Phase 2 if there is an extension of school closures beyond April 16. We are currently working on additional guidance and resources to support the above areas as well as addressing other questions that arise. Please continue to monitor email and our district website for updated information.

I'd like to summarize by repeating that we absolutely understand the stress and anxiety being experienced throughout our community, our country and the world right now. Please understand that when we have your children back in our classrooms we will provide instruction to meet our students' needs. We know that there are limitations to Distance Learning and when school resumes we will not simply pick up as if classroom instruction were uninterrupted during these school closures.

I will continue to update you as often as possible. We miss your kids and can't wait to have them in our classrooms again!

Respectfully,



Todd Pehrson, Superintendent.