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## Important School Closure Update from the Superintendent of Schools

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March 27, 2020

Dear Irvington School Community,

Today, I am finding optimism in the progress that is being made in combating the spread of the coronavirus and the care that is being provided to those who are ill. Our thoughts remain with those working towards wellness and sincere gratitude is sent to those providing care, as well as the essential workers in our region. I also want to acknowledge the impressive work and inspiring dedication of our faculty and staff. Our teachers have been working tirelessly to plan for and deliver new learning experiences for all of our students. They, like many of you, have been balancing their personal and professional lives as they too are working from home and supporting their own families while still maintaining their unwavering commitment to the education of their students. Please join me in thanking the Irvington faculty and staff for all they are doing each day.

We all miss being in school and the adjustment to distance learning has been a challenge for all of us. With each day, it will become more comfortable for both the District and students, as learning will continue to be more engaging. I deeply appreciate everyone's patience during this challenging time - teachers, students and parents alike - and I am confident that our talented, passionate educators will continue to provide great learning experiences.

Earlier this week, I wrote of our Bulldog spirit, and I know it is alive in our community. While we are all practicing social-distancing - and I hope you are - I want to invite everyone to share examples of your Irvington UFSD pride with school appropriate videos or photos. Consider taking images of something that is undoubtedly Irvington, videos of Irvington cheers or evidence of learning at home and email it to me at [IrvingtonSpirit@IrvingtonSchools.org](mailto:IrvingtonSpirit@IrvingtonSchools.org). Once received, I will post much of what is sent on the District's new Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/irvingtonufsd/>. I believe that this will be another great way for us to feel closer during these difficult times.

At 12:00 pm on Monday, March 30th, I invite you to join me during your lunch break for a quick Facebook Live session. This will be the first of a series of opportunities for me to engage with the school community on a more personal level since the school closure was initiated. So please checkout the District Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/IrvingtonUFSD/>, and join me for a virtual luncheon on Monday at 12:00 pm.

Below please find a few important updates:

### **School closures:**

Just a short time ago, Governor Cuomo announced that schools will remain closed for another two weeks and, as of now, will reopen on April 15th. Therefore, the Irvington schools will continue to support distance learning throughout the closure. However, please note that the scheduled Spring Break, April 6th-13th, will be an instruction-free period with no distance learning, as it is a contractual

break for District employees. Teaching and learning will resume following Spring Break on Tuesday, April 14th. Please note the following calendar details:

Today - April 3rd: Continued distance learning

April 6th -13th: Spring Break - No instruction

April 14th: Distance learning resumes

April 15th: *Possible reopening of schools*

**New York State Testing:**

New York State has announced the suspension of the standardized testing of grades 3-8 for this school year. However, they have not yet made a determination regarding the Regents Exams. We will notify you once a decision is made regarding these tests.

**Communication with School Staff:**

As mentioned above, our faculty and staff are working diligently to support student learning while tending to their own families. However, they are all committed to maintaining contact with their students and students' families. During the course of any given school day, staff members may be involved in teaching activities, participating in necessary school and district-level meetings, engaged in professional learning or possibly taking their own lunch break. If you have reached out to someone and they didn't immediately respond, please be patient and they will certainly get back to you in a timely manner.

During these difficult times, it is important that we all support each other while maintaining our own enthusiasm and optimism. Across the District, we look forward to finding opportunities to connect virtually and keep our Irvington spirit high. A part of maintaining our spirits is being sure that we are caring for ourselves. In this spirit, the District is proud to announce a partnership with community member Jennifer Monness to provide free meditation sessions for our entire school community. Next week, I will share information on how to access these on-demand video meditation opportunities.

I continue to be proud to work beside so many dedicated educators on behalf of your amazing children. As always, I extend my best wishes to you and your family.

Be well!

Kris

Dr. Kristopher Harrison  
Superintendent of Schools

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