

April 15, 2020

Dear Georgetown-Ridge Farm School Community,

I am contacting you to keep you up-to-date on information that I am receiving from officials regarding the Coronavirus (COVID – 19). My plan is to communicate with you daily so you are aware of key facts and are informed on the Georgetown-Ridge Farm CUSD #4 response to provide support as needed. You can expect to receive these notifications via email daily after 6:00 p.m. Information is flowing daily from Governor Pritzker, Illinois State Board of Education, and the Illinois Department of Public Health to determine what is essential and helpful to everyone. *Below are the latest key facts from today. Many of the facts are the same as the last memo, but new information is highlighted and italicized.* Please feel free to contact me at jneal@gobuffaloes.org with your questions.

Governor Pritzker's Executive Orders: COVID - 19

Governor Pritzker extended these Executive Orders through April 30, 2020.

1. "Mandatory School Closure" - Governor Pritzker extended his executive order for mandatory school closures to extend through Tuesday, April 30, 2020.
2. "Shelter in Place" - Stay at Home Executive Order.

In response to the recent Vermilion County cases of the Coronavirus Disease and the rapid daily increase in cases state-wide, the Georgetown-Ridge Farm CUSD #4 school buildings will be closed until further notice. The GRF administration and essential personnel will be working remotely from home and can be reached via email. However, the Unit Office will be open during this time. If you need assistance, please phone the Unit Office at 217-662-8488.

Illinois Department of Public Health April 15, 2020 News Release

Public Health Officials Announce 1,346 New Cases of Coronavirus Disease
Vermilion County Public Health (VCPH) is reporting 9 cases in Vermilion County.

<file:///C:/Users/jneal/Downloads/04.15.20%20COVID-19%20Update.pdf>

Board Meetings and Governance

The next meeting is April 27, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. Governor Pritzker has banned groups larger than 10 people. I will keep you updated on any changes to the process our Board of Education will follow to hold public meetings.

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) News

ISBE has submitted and received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education to:

- Waive all federally required assessments in the 2019-20 school year;
- Waive the requirement to provide summative designations and identify schools for targeted and comprehensive support in the 2019-20 school year; and
- Waive the requirement to report on accountability indicators on the 2019-20 school year Report Card.

The Illinois State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Ayala, shared some additional good news. She reported, "I am happy to report that ISBE filed emergency rules today to allow all transportation expenditures that support the health and well-being of Illinois prek-12 students – such as costs related to the distribution of food and instructional materials and the use of buses to provide WiFi – to be reimbursed by ISBE's regular transportation reimbursement formula. These new rules, effective immediately, cover expenses incurred from March 17, 2020, through the end of the 2019-20 school year" (personal communication, 03-29-20). Read the full text of the rules at www.isbe.net/Documents/23-120RG-E.pdf.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) shared Remote Learning and the latest guidance documents are available on the ISBE website at www.isbe.net/covid19 Please contact your student(s) teacher and/or administration with any questions.

GRF Priorities for the Next Week:

1. ***Communicate the urgency that ALL GRF Staff, Students and Families should follow Governor Pritzker's Stay at Home Executive Order.*** I have been reviewing data on the projected peak in deaths due to the Coronavirus Disease in the State of Illinois. It is projected that the peak in Coronavirus Disease deaths in Illinois will occur this week providing social distancing is followed as outlined by Governor Pritzker. In response, the GRF CUSD #4 school buildings are closed and staff is working remotely from home. It is very important to stay home and to continue washing your hands, practicing good personal hygiene, and social distancing. Together, we can do our part to flatten the Coronavirus Disease curve.
<https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america/illinois>
2. ***Food Service Distribution Plan:*** The Georgetown-Ridge Farm School District Breakfast and Lunch Food Distribution will be held at the Georgetown-Ridge Farm High School on Wednesday, April 22nd from 1:00-3:30 p.m. Please enter via the circle drive and proceed to the first door of the gymnasium. It would be helpful if you would pop your trunk open for the GRF staff to load your food items. Please remain in the car.

GRF in the news! https://www.commercial-news.com/news/county-schools-provide-student-meals/article_96ba5246-7848-11ea-9a26-8f9d6d732253.html

3. ***E-Learning/Home Based Instruction.*** The administration has been assisting parents and students as needed. If you encounter any difficulties, contact your student(s) teacher or the building administration via email for assistance. We are here to help.

4. ***Supporting GRF Families:***

- ✚ *Has your family's financial circumstances changed since the onset of the Coronavirus Disease? If so, please click on the below link*

http://www.grf.k12.il.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_830386/File/Free-Reduced%20Lunch_SIS%20Update.pdf

- ✚ *Call4Calm Support Line- The Department of Human Services has launched a support line called Call4Calm that is reachable via text. Individuals who want to speak with a mental health professional can text the word "TALK" or "HABLAR" (for Spanish speakers) to 552-020. Within 24 hours, that individual will receive a call from a mental health professional employed by a local community health center. People can also text other terms, like "unemployment" or "food" or "shelter" to the same number to receive information on how to navigate and access supports and services. Call4Calm is free, and individuals who use it can remain anonymous.*
- ✚ *GRF Mental Health Staff- Mental health professionals are available to support students as needed. Please contact the Unit Office at 217-662-8488 or email Dr. Neal at jneal@gobuffaloes.org to access support for your child.*

5. To continue our cycle of communication in order to share clear, concise, and coherent messages with our staff, students, parents/guardians, and community. Superintendent Messages through email Monday through Friday after 6 p.m.

Contact the Georgetown-Ridge Farm CUSD #4 Administration

If you have questions, please email your building administrator. We are here for you.

Mrs. Ashley Vaughn, Principal, Pine Crest Elementary- avaughn@gobuffaloes.org

Mrs. Nicole Cox, Assistant Principal, Pine Crest Elementary ncox@gobuffaloes.org

Mr. John Tosh, Principal, Mary Miller Junior High School- jtosh@gobuffaloes.org

Mr. Josh Cavanaugh, Mary Miller Junior High School- jcavanaugh@gobuffaloes.org

Mr. Kevin Thomas, GRF High School- kthomas@gobuffaloes.org

Dr. Catherine Eads, GRF High School- ceads@gobuffaloes.org

Mrs. Lisa Cramer, District Curriculum Coordinator- lcramer@gobuffaloes.org

RESOURCES

Meals for Students:

Please note that the district has posted food pantries in Vermilion County on our website and GRF Facebook. Please refer to our website (www.grf.k12.il.us) or our Georgetown-Ridge Farm School District Facebook page for more information.

Georgetown Upcoming Food Distribution Events:

- ✚ *First Church of Christ in Georgetown- Thursday, April 16th from 4:00-6:00 p.m.*
- ✚ *Georgetown Ridge Farm School Lunch Distribution- Wednesday, April 22nd from 1:00-3:30 p.m.*

The “Meals for Kids” interactive map directs people to local sites where kids can get free meals. The map is available in both English and Spanish at www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids.

Food Finder and Nutrislice have both developed solutions to increase nationwide access to these critical free meals. Food Finder will display USDA’s Meals for Kids locations on their web and mobile app, while Nutrislice is offering their mobile ordering and meal locator solutions for free to hundreds of schools nationwide.

Education Resources:

WILLtv Education Facebook- [WILL Education](#)

- Visit our Learn-at-Home Resources, built for educators and families bit.ly/LearnAtHome2020
- There are *free internet access* opportunities from AT&T, Spectrum, and Comcast. ISBE has listed these opportunities at www.isbe.net/keeplearning.

(RFE)Resources for Educators: Showing parents how to help their children succeed

School Success Tip of the Day, Elementary and Secondary Editions

[Tip of the Day, Elementary Edition in Microsoft Word Format](#)

[Tip of the Day, Elementary Edition in Text Format](#)

[Tip of the Day, Secondary Edition in Microsoft Word Format](#)

[Tip of the Day, Secondary Edition in Text Format](#)

Illinois Department of Public Health Website & Social Distancing:

See the chart from the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) as a helpful tool in our thinking of the precautions we need to take in caring for one another. Please click on the link below.

[Social Distancing Chart](#)

[IDPH - Social Distancing "Break the Germ Cycle" video](#)

<http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

COVID-19 Resources:

- For general COVID-19 Information: Call 2-1-1
- IDPH COVID-19 Hotline: 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov
- General Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Community Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>
- Travel Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>
- Healthcare Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html>
- Specific Group Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/index.html>
- Keeping Your Home Safe: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/02/health/coronavirus-home-prevention-tip-sheet-trnd/index.html>
- IDPH: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/covid19-statistics>
- Home-Made Face Mask Instructions: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

2020 United States Census:

Dr. Carmen Ayala, Illinois State Superintendent of Education shared the following information, "Although many events are canceled or postponed in response to COVID-19, the 2020 Census is in full swing. I am so proud that Illinois has one of the best self-response rates in the nation! Completing the census safely online, by phone, or by mail means census takers do not have to come in person to your residence. However, 48 percent of Illinoisans still need to respond. So if you have not filled out your 2020 Census and encouraged your school community to participate as well, please do. The online survey takes only a few minutes. If you have any questions about the census, check out the podcast we produced, which can also help your students learn this important lesson in civics. Illinois' number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, Electoral College votes, and certain federal funding streams all depend on everyone getting counted" (personal communication, April 14, 2020).

We would like to encourage you to complete your 2020 Census online at www.my2020census.gov or by phone at 1-844-330-2020.

You must have your [Census ID](#), which was mailed to each household by the U.S. Census Bureau. If you prefer to complete a paper Census, they will be mailed out by mid-April to those who have not yet responded.

The 2020 Census aims to count every individual in the United States, and that includes children. The data collected impacts many aspects of your community, including programs and services that are critical for schools, students, and younger children, such as:

- Special education, Head Start, after-school programs and classroom technology.
- Food assistance, including free and reduced-price school lunches.
- Maternal and child health programs.

Please complete your 2020 Census and help make sure our school district continues to receive adequate federal funding. Remember that if you are filling out the census for your home, you should count everyone who is living there as of April 1, 2020. That includes anyone who is living and sleeping there most of the time — that could include grandchildren, nieces, nephews and the children of friends. Thank you for your support of our students.