

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 19, 2020**

**Indiana Department of Education Releases Further Details on Additional Actions Announced to Help Lessen COVID-19 Impact on Schools**

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) today released further details on additional actions announced by Governor Holcomb to help lessen the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indiana’s schools.

“From the beginning, we have said the time to act is now, and that action continues to be necessary as we navigate the fluid situation the COVID-19 pandemic has created,” said Dr. Jennifer McCormick, Superintendent of Public Instruction. “The most important charge of Indiana’s schools is to protect and keep students, staff, and families safe. The decisions made by our local administrators and educators are doing just that. However, there are educational implications, that if not addressed, will unnecessarily burden our schools. Therefore, the additional actions announced today will help lessen the impact and allow reprieve so our districts can continue focusing on serving Hoosier students and families.”

In working with Governor Holcomb, IDOE provided the following considerations for schools:

- **Mandated Statewide School Closure until May 1** – This mandated closure follows recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines to limit gatherings to less than 10, and may be extended through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Schools utilizing eLearning can continue to do so as determined by their local school administrators and school boards.
- **Twenty Day Waiver Extension** – As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to shift, the current 20-day waiver may not adequately address the needs of local districts. Therefore, IDOE will work with individual districts and schools to determine the total amount of instructional waiver days necessary.
- **Forgiveness from Accountability, Chronic Absenteeism, and Assessment Requirements** – Indiana will continue to pursue all federal waivers associated with the forgiveness of accountability, chronic absenteeism, and mandated assessment requirements for the 2019-2020 school year. Currently, IREAD-3, ILEARN, ISTEP+, I AM, WIDA Screener, and ISPROUT have been cancelled. Please note, ISPROUT and WIDA continue to be available for early childhood providers that are operational and districts utilizing eLearning.
- **Requirements for Grade 12 Seniors** – Understanding the acceptable concerns of Grade 12 seniors and their families, IDOE will continue working to develop a timely and practical solution.

- Food Service Waiver – Providing children access to wholesome and nutritional meals is a priority and an action our schools continue to take. While schools are finding creative solutions to meet the needs of their students, IDOE will vigorously pursue all available federal waivers to ensure zero interruption. To date, 94 percent of Indiana’s traditional public schools are providing or arranging meals.

For a copy of the COVID-19 Spring Testing Decision Letter sent home to parents, please visit: [www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/news/parent-covid-19-spring-testing-decision.pdf](http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/news/parent-covid-19-spring-testing-decision.pdf). To learn more about IDOE’s work with local districts and to access available resources, and information regarding remote learning, please visit: [www.doe.in.gov/safety/health/covid-19-resources-indiana-schools](http://www.doe.in.gov/safety/health/covid-19-resources-indiana-schools).

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**Media Contact:** Adam Baker, Press Secretary  
(317) 232-0550, [abaker@doe.in.gov](mailto:abaker@doe.in.gov)