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*Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.*— Joshua J. Marine

March 31, 2020, 4:30pm

Dear North Shore School District 112 Parents, Staff, and Community Members:

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker announced today that remote learning in Illinois will be extended through April 30 in order to slow down the spread of COVID-19. We want to assure you that at North Shore School District 112, our teachers and staff are ready and willing to take on this new challenge and push forward with remote learning, engaging with students, and continuing with our food distribution program.

We recognize this has been an incredibly challenging time for the entire District 112 community. I want to thank you for your patience and understanding as we have dealt with this unprecedented public health situation.

**Our four priorities in this evolving pandemic crisis:**

**Priority one - feed our families and children**

**Priority two - account for the extended safety, health, and welfare of our 4500 students and staff**

**Priority three - communicate clearly**

**Priority four - e-Learning**

During the transition from onsite learning to e-learning, I continue to be impressed with the staff and their around the clock planning and problem-solving. They have exceeded the timelines and continue to demonstrate the thoughtfulness of this plan.

As you know, we've been fixing and rebuilding the District's teaching & learning & curriculum for the past few years. We were going to address e-Learning next year, and now it is our main effort and emphasis.

I closed the schools with no advance notice on March 12, to last indefinitely and with a possible reopening date of April 13. Given the Governor's latest change, the following will now take place:

- Possible tentative reopening date is May 1st.

- The two emergency days (March 13 and March 16) will be made up on April 10 and April 13 (originally “days off” in the Calendar).

As a reminder, the following has occurred:

- March 17-19 days were deemed Act of God Days by the Governor and those days will not be made up.
- Spring Break ran from 3/20-3/27, and yesterday was our first day of e-Learning Planning.

Moving forward:

- This week we will continue e-Learning Planning and next week will be the first phase of e-Learning with teacher direction.
- We will continue to evaluate the schedule, timelines, and engagement. Anticipate further changes as we learn more from experience.

Changes in working conditions, even during crises, need to be negotiated with our teacher's union and our support staff union. The unions have been fantastic to work with. We have had planning, meetings, and negotiations all through spring break, and our work is ongoing.

For those of you who responded to the survey that your children are missing devices or supplies in order to complete e-Learning, we will send out communications later this week.

We've completed 70% of the school year. This transition to prolonged e-Learning is due to an unusual global situation that no one was prepared for. We are conscious of the spread of COVID-19 in Highland Park and Highwood, and we need to remind everyone that this Pandemic is now affecting us all.

Please stay home and stay safe.

With regards,

Mike

Michael Lubelfeld Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools