

Villa Grove Community Unit School District #302

Questions and Answers Related to the State Mandated School Shutdown

Updated: April 2, 2020

Questions and Answers:

- 1. What are the timelines for return to school?** Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-10, at this time schools may reopen on April 30, 2020. Future decisions regarding statewide school closures will be made by the Governor's Office in consultation with public health officials.
- 2. Are the students allowed to enter the school during this time?** Students and families should stay home. Please call the school office (217-832-2261) or email your principal if there is anything you need from the school, and we will arrange a way for you to get the needed item, or for us to bring that to you. Mrs. Jones (sjones@vg302.org) or Mr. Beck (bbeck@vg302.org)
- 3. How will days be counted during the mandated closure?** All days that a school district is closed pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order will be counted "Act of God" days from March 17 through March 30. Starting March 31, we have been told all days moving forward will be considered Remote Learning Days. At this time, there will be NO additional days added onto the 19-20 school calendar as none of these days are being required to be made up.
- 4. Will student work being sent home affect the student's grades?** All assessments can only improve a student's grade or become an incomplete grade. A student's grade cannot go down during these Remote Learning Days, however they can be marked incomplete and will be required to be completed at a later date. New material will be presented by teachers so that students do not miss out on any more curriculum than they already have because of this situation. Students will be responsible for knowing this material when they return to the classroom.
- 5. What if I do not have access to the Internet-JH and HS students?** If you do not have access to the Internet, many providers are now offering free Internet services. The following link <https://www.isbe.net/keeplearning> (click on the tab "Free Internet Access Resources") provides details about free Internet resources via AT&T, Spectrum Free Broadband, Xfinity/Comcast, and Mediacom. If none of those options work for you, please contact the school and paper materials will be provided to you on a bi-weekly rotation.

6. How will this school closure impact administration of Spring 2020 State-mandated assessments? *The implementation of standardized State assessments for this year has been waived.*

7. What happens to current Juniors since they will not be taking the SAT in April per the US Department of Education waiving State assessments? *Because SAT is a college entrance exam, we would recommend current Juniors take the SAT over the summer at an off-site location, if the College Board is able to host SAT testing during that time. Timelines and regulations about the SAT will be determined by the US Department of Education and the College Board. The high school will follow the guidelines provided by those organizations. The same recommendation would be made for students that were optionally planning to take the ACT for college admission purposes. In addition to this, ISBE and the College Board are working together on trying to offer a free SAT test to all current Juniors in Illinois. However, that free testing option may not happen until the fall, and has not been finalized yet.*

8. Given the Stay at Home Order included in Executive Order 2020-10, can school personnel still distribute meals to students? *Yes. School districts are encouraged to continue distributing meals to any/all students.*

9. What will occur if my student has an upcoming annual IEP meeting or 504 Plan meeting? *These meetings will still need to occur within the annual timeframe. Our Special Education Department Chairperson, and/or IEP case managers, will be reaching out to parents to plan for remote meetings via video conferencing and/or phone. If your student has an upcoming annual 504 Plan meeting, the 504 Plan Manager will reach out to you to proceed in the same manner.*

10. What happens to students in 4th quarter Driver's Education and students currently driving behind the wheel? *Unfortunately, all BTW instruction has been suspended by ISBE, and classroom Driver's Education classroom hours could not count through March 30th. However, some hours may be able to count during the Remote Learning Days, which begins on March 31st. We are trying to get more definitive information from the State on the classroom portion of Driver's Education at this time. All of this puts our 4th quarter students, and those currently in BTW, in a very disappointing situation as it will delay them in receiving their drivers licenses. We will look at all options for offering Driver's Education as soon as we are allowed by the State. If summer school is an option for the district, we will look at this as a possible solution to offering Driver's Education to 4th quarter students.*

11. What happens in Dual Credit courses? *Mr. Sims has confirmed with Parkland that our students will continue with the dual credit courses that are being taught at VGHS through online instruction. Students in those classes will be assessed through Parkland College and may have two separate grades at the end of the semester. One grade for Parkland, and one grade for VGHS. Their grade at Parkland will be able to go up or down depending on how the student does within the course. **Students will be graded as a college student for the Parkland portion of their credit, which means their college grade can go down.** As noted previously, their VGHS grade will only be able to increase.*

12. What will happen with Prom? *At this point the status of all events after April 30th is unknown. We don't want to cancel any events for our students until we are forced to.*

13. What will happen with High School graduation? *At this point the status of all events after April 30th is unknown. We will make all attempts to host graduation, and will wait until the last possible time to be forced into any adjustments to the graduation ceremony. We understand and appreciate how important this is to both our senior graduates, and their families.*

14. What will happen with Honors Night? *We will be brainstorming methods to still recognize students for Honors Night. Some of these awards, such as scholarships, etc. are timely and may need to be shared with students sooner rather than later (Spring opposed to Summer).*

15. How does this school closure affect AP classes? *For the 2019-20 AP exam administration only, students can take a 45-minute online exam at home. Educator-led development committees are currently selecting the exam questions that will be administered. Students will be able to take these streamlined exams on any device they have access to - computer, tablet, or smartphone. The College Board will conduct standard-setting processes to set appropriately rigorous cut scores for AP scores of 3, 4, and 5. AP curricula are locally developed, and the College Board defers to local decisions on how best to help students complete coursework. To be fair to all students, some of whom have lost more instructional time than others, the exam will only include topics and skills most AP teachers and students have already covered in class by early March. The College Board recognizes that the digital divide could prevent some low-income and rural students from participating. Working with partners, the College Board will make sure that these students have the tools and connectivity they need to review AP content online and take the exam. The exam questions are designed in ways that prevent cheating; the College Board is using a range of digital security tools and techniques, including plagiarism detection software, to protect the integrity of the exams.*

Are there resources available for virtual learning for Advanced Placement courses? *All AP students and teachers will be able to draw on the free online resources that were provided to every AP classroom last Fall. Additional resources will be made easily accessible to AP students and teachers through mobile phones and other devices. Beginning on Wednesday, March 25, students and teachers can attend free, optional live AP review courses, delivered by AP teachers from across the country. Courses will also be recorded and available on-demand. These mobile-friendly classes are designed to be used alongside work schools may continue to assign.*

This link will provide you with upcoming details from AP central -

<https://apcentral-preview.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/coronavirus-update>

16. How will second semester grades be calculated? *Please see Additional page for Junior High and High School Students*

17. Will we hold semester exams? *At this time, the teachers and administration do not feel that semester exams are a viable way of assessing students' growth throughout the semester, so no semester exams will be administered during the Spring semester 2020.*

18. What is the difference between E-Learning, Home-based Learning, and Remote Learning? *The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) used the term E-Learning at the beginning of the statewide school shutdown as this fits into current legislation. We (VGHS) decided to use Home-based Learning as our terminology as we felt that true "E-Learning" as defined in legislation would not be able to be done by every student. As of this past Friday, ISBE has listened to Superintendents across the State expressing that schools cannot do true "E-Learning" as it is currently defined, and many schools don't have enough technology for their students to do this anyway. Therefore, they are now using the term "Remote Learning" as opposed to "E-Learning." ISBE sent out guidance to school districts over the weekend and provided districts the opportunity to utilize five Remote Learning Planning days, if needed. We will not need to use those days due to the work that was done with our teachers, and by our teachers, during the week of March 23 - March 27. Consequently, we will be starting up with formal Remote Teaching and Learning as planned on March 30th. The bottom line on all of this, regardless of the terminology changing, is that instruction and learning are taking place away from the traditional school setting through at least April 7th.*

19. Why is information changing so frequently? *Due to the fact that this is completely uncharted territory for everyone (Governor's Office, ISBE, Local School Districts, etc.), information is changing rapidly through no fault of anyone. This information flows downhill (Governor's Office to ISBE to Local School Districts to Parents/Students). Schools are wired up wanting information "now" so that we can inform our students and parents, and start planning for our students immediately. ISBE has tried to get that information/guidance to us as quickly as possible, but because this is new to everyone, sometimes that information/guidance changes within a day or two. We try to pass all the information along to our parents/students as quickly as possible so that you are not hearing wrong information from "other" sources. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility regarding this, and understand it is probably frustrating at times. Please keep in mind that at all times, our entire focus is on trying to make this the best educational situation possible for all of our students.*