



## Indiana Schools Closed Until May 1

By Educator Barnes – March 19, 2020

Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb announced during a press conference at 1 p.m. today that Indiana schools will be closed until May 1.

Holcomb shared, "I wanted to add some certainty to some uncertain times and therefore directing all schools to be closed until May 1st. As we get nearer to May 1st we may have to close permanently, but we'll make that call down the road."

This is a shift from the previous school closure announcements. Since Monday, March 9, school districts across Indiana closed in response to the coronavirus pandemic. At that time, Governor Holcomb did not mandate a statewide school closure unlike governors from neighboring states. School district leaders made that decision. The shift to a statewide mandate makes clear this is a serious situation; these are uncharted waters.

Districts now must scramble to determine how to continue providing an education to Indiana students. In addition to the school cancellation, standardized testing has also been canceled for the 2019-2020 school year. During the press conference, Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Jennifer McCormick said, "I do want to commend the Governor for taking these bold steps. You're going to get criticism no matter what you do in situations like this." She also addressed students, "To the kids, this is my message to you. Be positive. Make good choices. Stay on your work that you have at home. It is extremely important that you are a good partner in this."

School districts still have a 20-day instructional waiver. McCormick stated that this number may have to be reconsidered.

The Governor brought certainty by letting families know that school would be closed for a longer period of time. What is uncertain is the long-term effects of school closures on students.