

Local schools closed immediately to prevent spread of COVID-9

March 15, 2020



After an emergency meeting Sunday, the school board voted unanimously to close all Del Norte Unified School District schools to prevent the spread of COVID-9, the novel coronavirus. The closure went into effect immediately, with schools closed to students Monday through April 10. Spring Break will remain in place April 13-17 and school will resume April 20.

In addition to closing all district operated preschools, the county superintendent authorized the closure of schools operated by the Del Norte County Office of Education. The closure does not include private schools or preschools run by the district or county.

Later Sunday, Uncharted Shores Academy followed the DNUSD's lead and cancelled all classes and after-school electives and put its students on home study.

The school district announced it will continue to provide its meals program for children through age 18 to receive free breakfast and lunch in a drive-through or take-and-go model. District officials also said it will work with providers to determine continuing support for students with individual educational programs (IEP), students with health-related services and students who receive mental health support.

For parents who work, district teachers will be working with their site administrators to create enrichment and educational opportunities for students during the work day. During the closure, attendance will not be taken, work will not be considered independent student, thus not required.

In addition, all school co- and extracurricular events have been cancelled.

"We understand that school closures have a profound effect on students and the community as a whole," Superintendent Jeff Harris wrote in a letter to the community. "Our goal is to ultimately help protect the

health of our students, families and communities, so that we can resume and normalize operations as soon as possible.”

On Friday afternoon, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the state of California would fund districts for a full year despite the closures.

While there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Del Norte County, three people are under investigation for suspected cases of COVID-19. Test results for five specimens are pending and five have returned negative for the coronavirus, according to the Del Norte County Public Health Branch.

There was no discussion about extending the school year.

The school board will reevaluate its closure decision at its regularly scheduled March 26 meeting.