



Pearl River School District

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Marco F. Pochintesta, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

April 1, 2020

Dear Pearl River Students and Families,

I write to share with you the difficult news that this year's spring break, which was to take place between April 9 and April 17 is canceled. I think that for many of us, students, families, and our staff alike, the break would have offered a welcome respite from the challenges of what has become the new normal.

The cancellation of the break comes as a result of Governor Cuomo's latest executive order and clarification that we received from the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) yesterday, all school districts are required to cancel spring break and continue virtual instruction. According to guidance issued by NYSED:

Districts must continue to provide remote instruction for students, meals for students, and child care for essential workers every weekday between April 1, 2020, and April 14, 2020, even if the district is scheduled to be on spring break during that time.

The executive order further requires districts to **exhaust unused snow days** as instructional days. Failure to comply with this Executive Order disqualifies districts from receiving a waiver for completing the required 180 instructional days. We have to comply with this Executive Order and we will.

I know that this news will be met with frustration, and disappointment. We are right to be particularly concerned for our children, as they have had to grapple with a steady stream of changes in their lives, and losses that range from participation in cherished activities, to the passing of loved ones for some families.

We are all going through a very trying time, the likes of which has few comparisons in our time or in the time of our grandparents. Like generations before us, and through times of crisis in our own experience, I hope that we can all continue to draw strength from those resources that are truly renewable, and ever-present through any hardship, family, and community.

We hope for good news as this crisis moves to a peak in our region, and we will look for a way to restore some time for a break when that becomes possible. While our faculty has done an excellent job with remote learning, we are all learning from the last two weeks and working to improve our efforts in remote teaching and learning. Please be assured of our commitment to doing our best for all of our students.

Sincerely,

