



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 55
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GDOE Cancels Classes for Remainder of the School Year

The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) tested 38 individuals for COVID-19 on Sunday, April 5, 2020 with conclusive results. Seventeen (17) tested positive through DPHSS and 21 tested negative for SARS-CoV-2. Additional results will be provided later this evening once today's test results are finalized.

To date, a total of 110 cases tested positive and two were clinically diagnosed with 23 recoveries and four deaths.

GDOE Cancels Classes

Guam Department of Education (GDOE) Superintendent Jon Fernandez has made the decision, effective immediately, to close all GDOE school facilities and cancel daily classes through the end of School Year (SY) 2019-2020. Board Policy 515 authorizes the superintendent to close schools in the event of an emergency that threatens the health and safety of students and staff members. Fernandez wrote a letter to Guam Education Board (GEB) members to inform them of his decision earlier today. Fernandez clarified that the Grab-N-Go meals would continue as well as distance learning support for students and families.

The decision to end classes follows Governor Lou Leon Guerrero's Executive Order (EO) 2020-09. EO 2020-09 extends the closure of government facilities and schools until May 5, 2020. The school year was originally calendared to end on May 28, 2020.

"Based on the latest projections by the COVID-19 task force, the current pandemic is not anticipated to peak for several weeks, necessitating the continued adherence to limitations on large social gatherings and to social distancing policies over this period of time," Fernandez said.

The superintendent also asked the GEB to suspend certain board policies during its special meeting on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at 3 p.m. The suspension of these policies will ensure that issues related grading, promotion and the graduation of students are addressed. The special GEB meeting will be held via Zoom and livestreamed on the GDOE Facebook page.

Teachers Remain on Duty; Distance Learning Options Continue

While all physical campuses will be closed, GDOE teachers will remain on duty and will continue to provide online resources and communicate with students through the last day of classes on May 22, 2020. Distance learning supports will also continue to be made available on the GDOE home learning page: <http://bit.ly/GDOEDistanceLearning>.

Graduation for High School Seniors

High school seniors wishing to confirm graduation status should contact their schools directly. Instructions on how to contact each high school will be provided on the GDOE distance learning page and announced on all GDOE social media platforms later this week. No decision has been made yet on whether to cancel graduation ceremonies, and a decision regarding graduation ceremonies will be announced at a later date.

Interscholastic Sports Association Cancels 4th Quarter Sports

In consultation with the Superintendent of Education, the GDOE Interscholastic Sports Association (ISA) Board of Control made the difficult decision to cancel 4th quarter sports for SY 2019-2020. All GDOE middle school sports will also be canceled for the remainder of the school year.

“The Board of Control waited for as long as possible before it had to make a decision. We drafted weekend tournaments and discussed a shortened summer league,” ISA League Director Al Garrido said. “Many ideas were considered on behalf of our students. We want them to know that our heart aches for them.”

“I know our seniors were waiting all year for this last chance to put on a uniform and represent their school,” said Fernandez. “I support the Board’s choice given the health and safety situation facing our island.”

The ISA Board of Control will hold a meeting later this month to discuss the closing out of 3rd quarter sports and the possibility of a summer league or an e-sports league.

“We want to give our students that glimmer of hope while also being realistic. Projections indicate that we need a combined effort and strong mindset to flatten this curve – GDOE will do its part,” Fernandez said. “At this point, it is imperative that we protect our community first. That is our highest priority.”

For more information about GDOE ISA, please contact Al Garrido at algarrido@gdoe.net

GDOE Grab-N-Go School Meals Expanded; Canceled on Friday, April 10

The GDOE Grab-N-Go School Meals Program is expanding in order to meet growing demand. Daily lunch meals are expected to increase from 12,000 daily to 15,000 daily by Tuesday of this week. Effectively immediately, all participants must wear a mask when on campus picking up meals.

Additionally, the Grab-N-Go meal program continues operations throughout spring break. However, distribution will **not** be operational this coming Friday, April 10, 2020 in observance of Good Friday. The school meals distribution will resume as scheduled on Monday, April 13, 2020.

For inquiries on COVID-19, local numbers can call 311 or contact the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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