



WHITESIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT 115

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Update – Grades/Student Property/Graduation

April 27, 2020

Dear Parents of Whiteside Students,

In March, the Governor issued a temporary closure for 2-weeks of school through March 31. As the pandemic has grown within the State of Illinois, the Governor has continued to extend the temporary closures. On April 17, he issued the final order to finish the school year remotely and last week extended the "Stay at Home Order" until May 31. In the wake of these decisions, our administrative team has been exploring different options that relate to many end of the year items that take place in the Whiteside School District. I wanted to share some decisions that have been made regarding final grades, clean out of student property, and end of the year events such as graduation.

Item 1: Final Grades

ISBE has encouraged and issued guidance that students should not be negatively impacted by the grades taken during the temporary school closure. Families in the Whiteside District were offered a variety of remote learning options and several have been using the remote packets as well as e-lessons. Teachers have been giving temporary grades associated with e-lessons until the administration knew the extent of the closure.

Due to the different options and the diversity of learning in our school district, the 4th quarter will consist of any grades taken from the week of March 9 -13 prior to the school closure and 4 assignments in Skyward titled remote learning packets. The 4 remote learning packet assignments will be associated with the work completed during the closure and will be based on a student's participation in e-lessons AND/OR the remote packet return. Students will have the opportunity to earn grades on the remote work from the range of A-C on our grading scale.

A student's final grade for each subject will be based on all four quarters as follows:

Skyward Grading Plan:

- Quarter 1 worth 30% of the final grade
- Quarter 2 worth 30% of the final grade
- Quarter 3 worth 30% of the final grade
- Quarter 4 worth 10% of the final grade

The 4th quarter has been limited due to the variables associated with remote learning and the loss of in-person instruction. Due to the closure, the majority of the final grade will be based on the first 3 quarters of the year with the 4th quarter designed to help students overall. I

Whiteside's mission is to help all learners reach their maximum potential so that they may become tomorrow's leaders.

understand that some students have gone above and beyond on all assignments, and I also realize we have families who have been limited due to the pandemic closure. Also, as with every year, the administrative team will have the final decision regarding promotion for our students.

Item 2: School Calendars and Timelines

With the April 17th school closure extension and now the extension of the stay at home order, I feel it is important to outline the end of the school year items for parents. First, with regard to the school calendar, our official proposed last day of school is May 26. This date is due to our snow days from earlier in the school year. ISBE has allowed schools to count the Act of God days from March along with any Remote Planning days as student attendance.

Here are the dates that parents should keep in mind in May:

- May 8 - Final remote packet pick up day for students
- May 19 - Last day of remote Instruction for students
- May 22- All Grades entered into Skyward
- May 26 - Final Remote Planning - No student work or attendance

During the next month, faculty and staff will be cleaning out and closing down our school rooms preparing for summer cleaning. We will be cleaning out student desks and lockers in the next few weeks. As teachers complete this task, they will be collecting district items such as textbooks and placing all student personal items in a labeled bag. Parents will be able to retrieve these items in May at a predetermined date. Please understand that this may change based on guidance issued by the ISBE or the Governor.

Item 3: 8th Grade Graduation

I feel everyone would be in agreement that in-person 8th-grade graduation would be the best option for students and families if available. However, with the stay at home extension, it appears this will not be possible. District 115 is considering one of the following options. We are exploring the idea of virtual graduation or drive-through graduation for students and families. The district would like to make a final decision on or before May 11 for this item. Please understand that this may change based on guidance issued by the ISBE or the Governor.

Respectfully,


Mark Heuring