

After meeting with the New York State Department of Health this morning, Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood and the superintendents of the 10 Herkimer BOCES component school districts unanimously decided to close schools and all extracurricular activities starting Monday, March 16, with schools re-opening on Tuesday April 14, to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus for our students, staff and communities. This is not a decision we take lightly, but we recognize we need to act decisively.

The closures affect Herkimer BOCES and its 10 component districts: Central Valley, Dolgeville, Frankfort-Schuyler, Herkimer, Little Falls, Mount Markham, Owen D. Young, Poland, Richfield Springs and West Canada Valley.

During this time, students and 10-month staff will not be required to report. If teachers would like to enter buildings to prepare review materials to mail home or pick up curriculum materials so they can prioritize curriculum for the remainder of the school year, they are welcome to do so.

All 12-month employees will continue to work during the closure, barring any further direction from the Department of Health. Any staff experiencing symptoms or placed in self-quarantine by the Department of Health, should not come to work.

This closure will result in the loss of 15 school days in addition to the scheduled spring break.

As Gov. Andrew Cuomo stated during his press conference today, school superintendents have the ability to decide to close their school districts, and the superintendents of our region have made that determination.

The New York State Education Department continues to work with the governor's office, the New York State Department of Health and the U.S. Department of Education to provide guidance to our schools around issues such as instructional time and test scheduling.

This situation is very fluid and could change as we continue to work with the Herkimer County Department of Health and New York State Department of Health.

The most current and accurate information about the coronavirus can be found at www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus.