

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J

www.vernonia.k12.or.us



April 9, 2020

RE: Governor Kate Brown closes school campuses through June 15, 2020, teaching and learning continues. New graduation requirement information.

Dear Families,

Today we learned our students will not return to school campuses this school year, according to an executive order from Gov. Kate Brown. The extended closure is an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep our community safe and healthy.

While campuses are closed, education continues. The Vernonia School District will continue to serve families and deliver meaningful experiences for students for the duration of our scheduled academic year.

We know many of our families are experiencing challenges and hardships during this unprecedented time. Every day seems to bring a new normal and those changes can be stressful for us all. Please remember that we are in this together, for as long as it takes. We care deeply about the well-being of EACH AND EVERY student and nothing changes that.

If you have need, please reach out and know that we are here to serve.

The Governor and the Oregon Department of Education also shared [a plan for graduation requirements](#). While we know there will be details to sort through, we wanted to let you know that seniors will still be able to graduate this June. This new guidance acknowledges the 12 years and 7 months of dedication and learning our students have accomplished. We cannot let the unprecedented closure diminish their efforts in the final two months of their K-12 careers. Our high school will continue to reach out to our seniors with more information.

The extended closure also means that proms, field trips, graduations, award ceremonies, and simple classroom activities will be experienced differently. We are working to reimagine these experiences and want all of our students to have the opportunity for connection, belonging and optimism. We plan to invite our student leaders to join in planning efforts and look forward to sharing details for these experiences in the near future.

All spring sports and extra-curricular activities are cancelled.

A final decision related to graduation ceremonies will be shared by the end of April.

We know, too, that this time is stressful not just for adults, but for students of all ages. Take a moment to visit the Mental Health Services portion of our webpage and review some of the many resources that are accessible anytime.

We want to thank everyone for the kindness you are showing to each other and to our community. Thank you to the families at home juggling work, school and life. Thank you to the staff members

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serving meals, and keeping our buildings clean and sanitized. Thank you to the teachers adapting to Distance Learning for All. Thank you to our students, who we are missing immensely.

We will need patience, resilience, kindness and strength as we move through these next few months. We will persevere through this crisis, as we support one another and grow stronger together.

This experience is testing all of us, but it also serves as a strong reminder that we are a resilient community and there is no place I would rather call home.

Thank you all. Together we can truly make a difference!

Sincerely,

Aaron Miller
Superintendent

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key components of the graduation guidance?

The guidance maintains Oregon's rigorous credit requirements while providing a clear path to graduation for seniors who were on-track to graduate prior to the statewide school closure. It ensures that schools focus their resources to first support students who need to complete additional credits to graduate and then prepare all graduates for their next steps in life.

Is this still a real Oregon Diploma?

Our students have successfully completed 12 years and 7 months of school. The last 2 months of school represents less than 2% of students' K-12 learning time. Our job is to make sure young people's future is not impacted during this pandemic. We're honoring the 12 years and seven months that students have put into this moment. Even with these minor modifications, Oregon's diploma remains one of the most rigorous in the nation.

Who was involved in the decision-making about graduation requirements?

The Oregon Department of Education partnered with educators, administrators, culturally specific community-based organizations, and the education community over the past few weeks. Our seniors deserve the very best pathway to their future and we're thankful that the Oregon Department of Education was thoughtful and planned for the possibility of this extended disruption.

See more graduation-related information from the [Oregon Department of Education](#).