

For Immediate Release: 3/16/2020

GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER CLOSING SCHOOLS
STATEWIDE FOR TWO WEEKS**

180-Day Instructional Requirement Temporarily Waived

***School Districts Required to Submit Plans to the State Including Addressing
Childcare and Meal Program Contingencies***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today signed an executive order directing all schools in New York to close by Wednesday, March 18 for two weeks ending April 1.

At that time, the state will reassess whether to extend the school closures further and continue to suspend the 180-day instructional requirement. Schools that exceed the closure period without state authorization will not be exempted from the 180-day rule.

This action will ensure consistency and uniformity across the state in instructional time for this extraordinary school year.

"The single most effective way to slow the spread of this virus is to reduce close contacts, and that includes in our schools," **Governor Cuomo said.** "I am directing the closure of all schools throughout the state for two weeks as we continue working aggressively to ramp up testing, isolate those who are sick and mitigate the impacts of this virus. Every district will be required to submit a plan to ensure children of healthcare workers and first responders have access to child care so these closures do not strain our hospitals and that children who depend on school meal programs continue getting the support they need."

School districts will be required to develop a plan for alternative instructional options, including distance learning; distribution and availability of meals; and daycare, with an emphasis on children of parents of first responders and healthcare workers. Those plans must be submitted to the State Education Department, who can amend or modify those plans in consultation with the State Department of Health and the Office of Children and Family Services at any time.

School districts in Westchester, Nassau, Suffolk and the City of New York must submit a plan from each respective municipality to the state for approval no later than midnight tonight.