

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 2, 2020



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Michigan's Non-public Schools to Continue Virtual Learning Following Governor's Announcement to Close School Buildings

Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced that the 2019-2020 academic year would be suspended for public and private schools effective April 2, 2020. The great majority of members of the Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools (MANS) began to successfully utilize virtual learning and counting it toward instructional time for their students following the governor's initial executive order to close schools which was subsequently extended through April 13, 2020. Many of these schools will continue to offer this instruction; maximizing the number of instructional days offered to students.

The Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools (MANS) represents more than 400 faith-based schools across the State of Michigan, including Catholic schools within the seven dioceses of Michigan, the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Schools, Michigan Region of Christian Schools International, and the Association of Christian Schools International.

MANS Board member and Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Lansing Tom Maloney stated, "Our educators have been stepping up to this unprecedented challenge. Administrators and teachers across our schools have been diligently adjusting instruction to provide quality distance learning for students from preschool through 12th grade. As always, Catholic education is a partnership between parents and Catholic schools. This is a new and very different way of living out that partnership, but our mission is the same -- to build both scholars and saints."

Grand Rapids Christian Schools Superintendent and MANS Board Chair Tom DeJonge added, "Our physical schools may be dormant right now, but our faculty and students are still actively teaching and learning. Our teachers are committed to providing strong instruction and are doing everything they can to limit disruptions. This is a commitment our staff, students and parents share. We are pleased to share that this effort will count toward instructional hours."

To conclude its announcement, MANS Executive Director Brian Broderick offered a note of appreciation to the Governor as she and her staff continue to navigate these extraordinary times: "As the instructional year for nonpublic schools will continue via distance learning, we offer our appreciation to the Governor for her leadership and efforts to keep Michigan residents safe and healthy. Her job has grown exponentially, and we know she cares deeply about Michigan's students. Similarly, MANS looks forward to a continued partnership with its public school colleagues during this difficult time."

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