



## EVERGREEN PARK HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 231

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Mr. Thomas O'Malley  
Superintendent

Mr. William Sanderson  
Asst. Superintendent/Principal



Dear EPCHS Community,

Today, Governor Pritzker issued an executive order requiring residents to “stay at home” effective Saturday, March 21 at 5:00 pm, through the end of April 7. As part of the Governor’s order, he announced that school will remain closed, with a new tentative reopening date of April 8. We recognize that this development may raise questions about the impact on students, staff, and families. We anticipate further guidance and details from the Illinois State Board of Education next week. Parents, please encourage your students to continue focusing on their E-Learning. This opportunity will only enhance students’ grades.

During this stay at home order, essential school personnel will still report to work and to practice social distancing. Please contact us if we can be of assistance!

In addition, the governor has made it clear that, while he’s serious about using social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19, he wants residents to still be able to work, shop at grocery stores, put gas in their cars, take walks outside and get medication from the pharmacy. Rest assured, we are committed to doing our best to deliver continuity of education.

Please use this opportunity to focus on staying safe and helping to slow the spread of the virus. As always, thank you for your patience and support as we all work through the COVID-19 Pandemic. As you have seen, this situation is evolving rapidly. As events unfold, we will continue to communicate in a timely and transparent manner.

Included in this communication is a reflection from my daughter that I felt was worth sharing.

Sincerely,

Superintendent O'Malley

Bear Bryant once said, "Expect the unexpected." After the last few weeks, I have come to the conclusion that even those usually prepared for the unexpected, could not possibly have prepared for this. With no preparation, here we are, faced with the reality that we do not necessarily know what tomorrow brings. That being said, did we ever really know that in the first place? On any given day our lives can change in a matter of seconds. It is how we handle that change that makes us who we are. So I ask you now, how will you handle this new "unexpected"?

I guess my advice would be take advantage. Take advantage of the time away from it all. Give yourself a second to breath. Life may not be working out exactly as you planned it, but I promise in the end it will work out exactly as it is supposed to. You will finish your classes, you will graduate, you will get a job. At times like this, many things are out of our control. Now, I said many, but that does not mean everything. There are some things that you, and you alone, have total control over. Control your health. Get eight plus hours of sleep, because guess what! Right now you can! Get outside. We are social distancing, but that does not mean we cannot go for a walk, sit outside and get fresh air, or at least open some windows! Control your body. Self- isolation does not mean self-care stops. Shower regularly, do your laundry, eat healthy, brush your teeth.

When this is all over, I promise you'll be grateful you did. Control your mind. Focus on your school work, but when that becomes overwhelming, take a break. Read a new book, do a puzzle, or write a letter. Control your relationships. Facetime a friend that you miss, call and see how your grandparents are doing, and spend time with your family. In the end, the people we love are going to be the ones who help us get through this, and the same ones who celebrate with us when we do.

You are going to be okay. I know right now it may seem like the world is ending, but really, this might be the wake-up call the world has so desperately needed. No one can get through this craziness alone. We need one another to navigate through the unexpected, so we might as well choose to be as kind as we can in the process. Who knows, in a month or two we may look back on this and be grateful for this small break in this crazy journey we call life. But for now, all we can do is live each day to the best of our ability and do everything we can to help each other get through this. And remember, never stop expecting the unexpected.

~Molly O'Malley, RN