

All Monroe County public schools have been closed indefinitely

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TODAY NETWORK

All Rochester-area public schools will be closed indefinitely due to the coronavirus, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello announced Saturday afternoon, a dramatic escalation of the community response to the pandemic.

They did so on the recommendation of Public Health Commissioner Michael Mendoza. The first to close was Greece, where an employee of Greece Arcadia Middle School contracted the second confirmed case of coronavirus in Monroe County.

They will be closed “until further notice,” Bello said, and reviewed on a week-to-week basis. That includes sports and other activities.

Individual districts can decide whether to ask faculty and staff to report to school. They will also independently announce plans for remote instruction, supplying food and other procedures.

There will be another update by midday Friday, March 20, he said.

The news took parents by surprise Saturday afternoon and sent many scrambling for alternate plans.

“Uh-oh,” Trina Wilson, a parent in the Rochester City School District, said when

“We’ll be reading books — lots of books,” he said, pointing a finger at her. “We’re not just going to let education go by the wayside.”

John Conner had less definite plans for his children in Gates Chili.

“I guess we’ll pretty much do nothing,” he said, walking out of the Dollar General on Chili Avenue. “Sit in the house and play Uno.”

Private schools, including those in the Diocese of Rochester, also announced they will be closed. Some, including Bishop Kearney and Aquinas Institute, said only that they will be closed Monday.

City spokesman Justin Roj said most recreation centers will remain open. The city of Rochester will make a separate announcement at a 10 a.m. press conference Sunday regarding food distribution and support for children and families.

Those steps will be of critical importance for the thousands of families across Monroe County who rely on schools for two meals a day — not to mention a place for children to go during the workday.

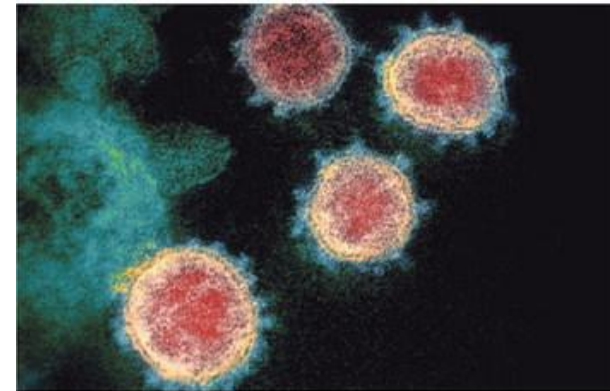
Linda Crittenden said she planned to call her cousin to see if she could watch her 11-year-old daughter this week.

“No, I’m not glad about it,” she said. “I understand the health reasons, but it’s an inconvenience.”

testing for grades 3-8 have been pushed back to March 30 to April 8 for English and April 24 to May 5 for math.

Steuben County

Steuben County has declared a state of emergency and is closing schools from March 18 through April 12. Districts in Steuben County are: Addison, Arkport, Avoca, Bath, Bradford, Campbell-Savona, Canisteo-Greenwood, Corning-Painted Post, Hammondsport, Hornell, Jasper-Troupsburg, Prattsburgh and Wayland-Cohocton.



This electron microscope image shows the novel coronavirus. COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ALLERGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND ROCKY MOUNTAIN LABORATORIES

informed of the closure. "I guess we'll just take it one day at a time. We're going to have to help one another, aren't we?"

Terry Strong's daughter goes to Abraham Lincoln School 22. She leaped to celebrate the news, before her father cut her short.

Spring break is April 6-10 in most local districts, three weeks away.

The state Education Department on Friday issued guidance on a number of questions related to coronavirus. It waived the requirement that districts provide a minimum of 180 days of instruction and said it would apply to be released from some federal accountability requirements if schools cannot administer tests as planned.

The windows for state