

Schools must work through spring break to receive waiver under executive order

School districts must continue to provide remote instruction and meals to students as well as childcare for essential workers every weekday through April 14 to receive waivers from the 180-day instructional requirement – even if they had been scheduled to be on spring break during that time.

Daniel Fuller, the governor's deputy secretary for education, described that state policy during a webinar conducted by NYSSBA on Saturday. He referenced Executive Order 202.11, which Gov. Andrew Cuomo issued on March 27. That order directed schools to remain closed for an additional two weeks – until April 15 – due to the coronavirus epidemic.

The order stated that no school district would lose state aid for providing fewer than the required 180 days of instruction as long as (1) it provided continuity of instruction, meal service and childcare called for by prior executive orders, and (2) it used any available snow days or vacation days.

Until Fuller's statement and subsequent confirmations, the order had caused uncertainty among many school officials as to whether employees and students will be required to work through scheduled spring vacations. The unambiguous answer from the governor's office is yes.

If parents have concerns about the amount of on-line work they are receiving or teacher expectations, I implore you to reach out to the specific teacher or the building principal. We know that this form of instruction will continue for a period of at least two weeks with a real possibility of continuing to the end of April.

The most important thing for all of us at this critical time is to keep safe and well. This highly contagious and deadly virus does not discriminate. I pray that in the very near future I am able to make an announcement regarding the opening of school and the return to our normal lives. God bless Mount Sinai.

With warmest regards,

Gordon Brosdal