The IFT, Illinois State Board of Education, Governor’s Office, and other state education stakeholders reached an agreement on critical issues related to COVID-19 in Illinois’ preK-12 schools. These guidelines ensure that each school district follows the same basic rules during this crisis, including paying educators and school employees during the closure, maintaining policies about leave days, and bargaining what work during the closure looks like. Read the full statement online at ift-aft.org/coronavirus.

Now more than ever, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), with our national and local unions, are at the forefront of advocacy and safety, of advocating for students, our members and all workers. Our work as a union is focused on eliminating any potentially harmful effects that the coronavirus/COVID-19 health crisis may have on our members’ work, families, students, and community.

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We’ve been working with our higher education locals to advocate for the complete closure of community colleges and university campuses. By eliminating student attendance and allowing both faculty and support employees to work remotely, we can best protect students and staff and help flatten the curve.

Our union is staying in close communication with local leaders statewide. We have hosted tele-town halls discussing how to best advocate for students and members at this unprecedented time, and we’re providing regular updates about COVID-19 and online resources.

Our locals have stepped up in creative and inspiring ways. Harlem Federation of Teachers (Local 540) is delivering books and donating food to students in need. Downstate communities are having meals prepared and delivered to students by staff members in the Belleville High School Federation of Teachers and Support Staff (Local 434), the East St. Louis Federation of Education Support Personnel (Local 382), and the Madison Federation of Teachers and Support Staff (Local 763). And groups like the Argo Council (Local 571) in the western suburbs of Chicago are sending messages on social media to support and inspire students and their families who may feel isolated. Visit all our inspirational stories at ift-aft.org/coronavirus.

In this time of uncertainty, we want you to know that the IFT is doing our part to support your work in your everyday lives. STAY SAFE AND STAY HEALTHY.
IFT members are using creativity, compassion, and (socially-distanced) collaboration to get through this crisis and be there for their students, colleagues, and communities while maintaining a sense of humor and humanity.

Visit ift-aft.org/coronavirus for more.

Share your story with us: how are your locals, councils, and chapters stepping up in your schools and community? Tag @iftaft on social media to let us know, or email info@ift-aft.org. Tell us how you’re #IFTSTRONG.
Teaching from home or homeschooling your own kids or grandkids? Trying to avoid cabin fever while working remotely?

Your union wants to help you get through this new day to day we’re all living, so we’ve compiled some great resources about COVID-19 and how to keep students and families engaged during these socially-distanced times.

Visit ift-aft.org/coronavirus for the latest information, including learning resources, COVID-19 safety practices, member news, and more.

On Monday, April 13, join us to show support for our public education colleagues by sharing an apple on your social media feeds. Share the image with words of encouragement and appreciation for all school staff who are going the extra mile to provide support for our students during this challenging time.

DOWNLOAD NOW AT: ift-aft.org/coronavirus