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## **GUIDANCE ON “STAY AT HOME” DIRECTIVE & ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Today, Thursday, March 26, Governor Bullock announced a statewide “Stay at Home” directive to assist in mitigating the further spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. This directive requires all Montanans to stay at home or place of residence to the greatest extent possible and directs all non-essential business and operations to cease.

The directive follows the guidance of the [Department of Homeland Security in defining essential services](#). For the purposes of K-12 education. The directive considers K-12 education an essential service. The directive says the following:

Educational institutions. Educational institutions—including public and private pre-K-12 schools, colleges, and universities—for purposes of facilitating remote learning, performing critical research, or performing other essential functions consistent with prior Directives on school closures and the continued provision of certain services, provided that social distancing of six-feet per person is maintained to the greatest extent possible. This Directive is consistent with and does not amend or supersede the March 24, 2020.

The Montana Public Education Center (MT-PEC) recommends schools to continue to do what they have planned, including all services outlined in district plans submitted to the Governor, while maintaining social distancing and taking all precautions necessary. The Governor’s Office has confirmed that today’s directive does not change the critical functions of both certified and classified in providing educational and other services to students and families.

MT-PEC stands ready to continue to support Montana’s public schools and commends the efforts of all teachers, administrators, staff and trustees to continue to serve students despite the challenges our communities currently face.