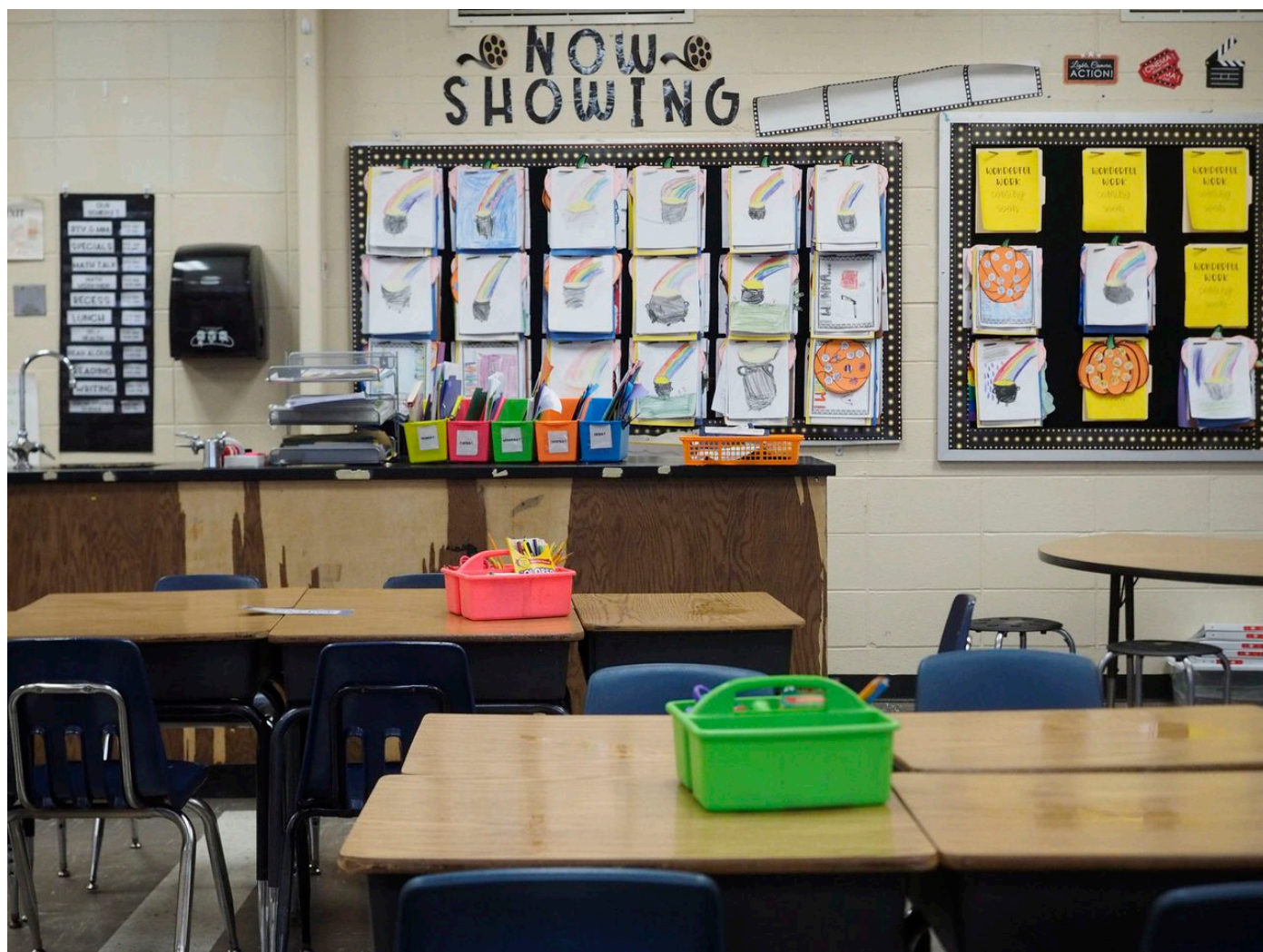


Should N.J. schools keep teaching through spring break?

By [Adam Clark | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

Updated 6:21 PM; Today 4:51 PM



An empty classroom in the Highland Park School District. Patti Sapone | NJ Advance Media

New York schools were already ordered [to keep teaching](#) through spring break. New Jersey students are settling into a groove with distance learning. And nobody has anywhere to go, even if there is a break from school.

All things considered, should New Jersey schools just keep teaching too?

The answer for most appears to be no, though a few districts are making changes.

"I am certainly not seeing it across the board," said Betsy Ginsburg, executive director of the Garden State Coalition of Schools, a group of about 100 districts. "I think many, many superintendents feel as if everyone needs a little bit of a break from being a parent/employee/school teacher."

All New Jersey schools have been closed since at least March 18, if not longer. Gov. Phil Murphy has said he expects social distancing measures will likely "[bleed meaningfully into May](#)" as the state fights [the coronavirus pandemic](#).

Schools have gone to virtual instruction or sent home worksheets, and teachers say they're ready to begin covering new material after an initial adjustment phase. But now many schools are scheduled for breaks either this week or next.

Woodbridge Township School District decided to shorten its break. The district polled parents and found that 76% of the 5,500 responses were in favor of working through some of the scheduled days off, Superintendent Robert Zega wrote in a note to families.

The district thought families might prefer to stick with the routine of school work rather than have time off with nowhere to go and nothing to do.

"It seemed like a waste to stop teaching at that point," Zega told NJ Advance Media.

Woodbridge students will be off April 13 and 14, but return to virtual classes the three following days, which were initially part of spring break. School

officials hope students' transition back to virtual learning will be easier with less time off, Zega said. The district will also be able to end the school year sooner, he said.

Nutley Public Schools will take its original five-day break and spread those days across several weeks, creating five four-day school weeks.

"We hope that by shortening the instructional weeks to four days, students and staff, as well as parents, will be able to have some time to breathe," the district said in a statement.

But many districts will give students their full break, opting for more time off now.

"Our district chose to honor spring break because it seems the kids and their families could use the mental health break from schoolwork," said Scott Taylor, superintendent of Highland Park School District.

Adam Clark may be reached at adam_clark@njadvancemedia.com. Follow him on twitter at [@realAdamClark](https://twitter.com/realAdamClark). [Find NJ.com on Facebook](#).

Have a tip? Tell us. [nj.com/tips](https://www.nj.com/tips)

Get the latest updates right in your inbox. [Subscribe to NJ.com's newsletters](#).