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Address to Principals – 14th March 2020 (Pi Day)

FIRST AND FOREMOST

- We work in very **challenging times** but we need to ensure safety and the functioning of the education system. The situation as in Croatia, even more difficult, is in the EU as a whole as well as all over the world. From Monday on, at least 18 EU member states will have closed their schools and other institutions in the area of education and upbringing.
- A transition to **the system of distance teaching and learning within only three weeks** that includes preparations around the clock is extremely challenging, requires motivated work, responsibility and discipline of everyone involved but we are in it together and besides assuming responsibility we are aware that we will solve many problems as we go.
- Yesterday the Government has made the decision that there will be no teaching in schools, higher education institutions, and kindergartens (day care centres) will not be open in the regular working hours (Government Decision: <https://vlada.gov.hr/sjednice/212telefonska-sjednica-vlade-republike-hrvatske/28985>). The employees need to be at their work place within the range and time frame determined by the headmaster who is responsible for the good functioning of the school also in these changed circumstances. Employees need to be placed in empty classrooms according to subjects they teach.
- Our aim is to establish a functional distance learning system for all pupils/students by **Wednesday**.
- **The Istrian County** will start already on **Monday** and the others will establish the system on the school level by Wednesday. However, all the pupils from Monday on will follow teaching via HRT 3 (Croatian Radio Television Program 3, primary school, grades 1-4) and Sports TV (all other pupils/students).
- All days from Monday on count as **teaching days** and are registered in the **e-class book**.
- With regard to the very **challenging scaling** of a distance learning system which is impossible to establish within a couple of weeks to work impeccably (it usually requires a couple of years), it is expected for all ways of teaching to have **a back-up option**.
- Additionally on online teaching systems: The systems are neither locally nor globally dimensioned for such a load, so they work slowly and at times with pauses. We kindly ask for your patience and understanding. We recommend that different schools choose different systems for teaching – above all for global services like Microsoft O365, MS Teams, MS Yammer or gSuite for Education, Google Classroom, Google Hangouts and similar. Local services such as Loomens, that tolerate much less charge,



are at your disposal. By them resources will be uploaded and schools will be instructed when it is advisable for the continuity of the service to switch to another service.

- Following all the aforementioned, all **communication** (virtual room for headmasters, virtual assembly hall for teachers and virtual classrooms) needs to have a back-up if it comes to technical difficulties with regard to the fact that there are more than half a million students and teachers teaching and learning online. Therefore, if it comes to ruptures of the system, all communication will go via e-mail, of the Ministry of Science and Education with the headmasters as well as the headmasters with the teachers and the headroom teachers with the students. *(Even this address of mine has this transcript that I have prepared in a rough version and in an understandable written form.)*
- **The students need to carry out the activities in virtual classrooms**, but it should not be insisted that they do it in real time (synchronously), but during the day because they have difficulties accessing the Internet or they share their device with their brothers and sisters. So any time in the course of the day is acceptable for the students to fulfil their tasks.
- Teachers need to **follow the activities of the students**, give them assignments, encourage them to work and gather them in virtual classrooms. It is necessary that students, as much as possible, get feedback on their work and progress (evaluation as learning, evaluation for learning). During the next two weeks, there is **no grading** (evaluation of learning outcomes).
- Warn your students of **appropriate forms of behaviour** in virtual environment, i.e. that similar rules of appropriate behaviour and interaction apply as in the classroom, meaning that for inappropriate behaviour students can bear consequences.

EQUIPMENT

- You have received instructions how to **distribute equipment** (tablets, laptops, SIM cards etc.) to students and teachers. In case anything is missing for students from low income families, let us know and we will deal with it.
- Regarding **devices**, send us requests according to priorities: students who have neither Internet access nor device at home are a priority; students who have Internet certainly possess in their household some kind of device so they can follow the teaching over a cell phone.
- We invite institutions for children with difficulties to suggest solutions for their students since they need individualized approach, and the Ministry of Science and Education will do everything to help them.
- From the middle of the week on, HRT 3 program will be translated into the sign language, and we will give our best to equip all video materials with subtitles.



LET US REPEAT: ON TEACHING, DEADLINES AND PREPARATION

- On Monday, all primary school students and last grade secondary school students will have the possibility to follow the teaching on television.
- Lower primary school (grades 1-4) on HRT 3 School on the Third
- Upper primary school (grades 5-8) and last grade secondary school students on Sports TV
- Secondary school students (grades 1-3) will not follow the TV program, but will have materials online and in virtual classrooms.
- The Istrian County had two days more for the preparation, they have tested everything; so the Istrian County will be the first to establish functional online teaching on Monday.
- All the other schools have a deadline on Monday at 12:00 o'clock for establishing communication channels, on Monday headroom teachers need to test the virtual classrooms, on Tuesday subject teachers test their virtual classrooms, and from Wednesday on virtual classroom teaching begins for all schools.
- **The Ministry of Science and Education will deliver the basic schedule for the whole of Croatia** for all teachers who do not have their online lessons ready.
- If a teacher has his/her online lessons ready, his/her students do not have to follow the content delivered by the Ministry, but the subject teacher delivers the content and activities in the virtual classroom and this must be clearly pointed out on the school web site.
- We invite all teachers to record the content and to send us their successful 15 minutes video lessons to: kurikulum@mzo.hr since we will enable others to use them. We need over 300 video lessons per week.
- Thanks to colleagues Toni Milun and Dejan Nemčić who will provide their video materials. Thanks to the publishers who have allowed us free access to digital textbooks. Thanks to telecommunications providers and IT companies.
- We kindly ask teachers not to use the possibility of interactive videoconference in real time in order not to overload the system. We recommend to use previously recorded video lessons which are stored on one of the global services such as YouTube. Recordings prepared by the Ministry should be used by giving links to the students and not by downloading on the computer or transferring to other services since in this way distance learning systems are unnecessarily overloaded.
- The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education has started a web portal for virtual teaching. The portal can be accessed over the link: nastava.asoo.hr. From Monday, 16th March 2020 on, content in digital form for online teaching for vocational schools in all 13 vocational educational sectors will be published.



DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Primary school Grade 1-4	Istrian County	Republic of Croatia (without Istria)	Pupils who are at school
Pupils	Follow the School on the Third from Monday on.	Follow the School on the Third from Monday on.	At school, there will be no teaching, and they will follow the School on the Third if their grade is scheduled while they are at school, otherwise at home.
Teachers	Notify the parents beforehand (Sunday) when their grade is scheduled for broadcasting. Send the parents exercise material on a daily basis.	Notify the parents beforehand (Sunday) when their grade is scheduled for broadcasting. Send the parents exercise material from Wednesday on.	If the broadcasting schedule of the School on the Third coincides with their stay at school, make sure that the children watch, otherwise activities as during extended stay.
Parents	Follow teachers' instructions. All materials from the School on the Third will be accessible on demand and on YouTube.		Only the parents who do not have the possibility to leave their child under supervision at home leave their child at school (similar as during strike).



Primary school Grade 5-8	Istrian County	Republic of Croatia (without Istria)
Students	<p>On Monday, they go to the virtual classroom and follow the instructions of the homeroom teacher and the subject teachers.</p> <p>If there are difficulties, they can watch the teaching on Sports TV.</p>	<p>On Monday, they watch the teaching on Sports TV and they test the virtual classroom with their homeroom teacher.</p> <p>On Tuesday, they watch the teaching on Sports TV and test the virtual classroom with their homeroom teacher and their subject teachers, go to the virtual classroom and follow the instructions of the homeroom teacher and the subject teachers.</p>
Teachers	<p>In virtual classrooms, homeroom teachers give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>	<p>On Monday, homeroom teachers test the virtual classroom with students, on Tuesday subject teachers do the same.</p> <p>From Wednesday on, homeroom teachers in virtual classrooms give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>
Parents	<p>If a student was not active in the virtual classroom for the whole day he/she needs to justify his/her absence to the homeroom teacher.</p>	



Secondary school Grade 1-3	Istrian County	Republic of Croatia (without Istria)
Students	<p>On Monday, they go to the virtual classroom and follow the instructions of the homeroom teacher and the subject teachers.</p> <p>If there are difficulties, they can complete the tasks during the day.</p>	<p>On Monday, they need to watch recorded online materials according to the schedule, on which their homeroom teacher will notify them.</p> <p>On Tuesday, they also watch recorded materials and test virtual classrooms with subject teachers.</p> <p>From Wednesday on, they go to virtual classrooms and follow the instructions of their homeroom teacher and their subject teachers.</p> <p>If there are difficulties, they can complete the tasks during the day.</p>
Teachers	<p>In virtual classrooms, homeroom teachers give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>	<p>On Monday, homeroom teachers test the virtual classroom with students, on Tuesday subject teachers do the same.</p> <p>From Wednesday on, homeroom teachers in virtual classrooms give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>
Parents	<p>If a student was not active in the virtual classroom for the whole day he/she needs to justify his/her absence to the homeroom teacher.</p>	



Secondary school Grade 4 (final)	Istrian County	Republic of Croatia (without Istria)
Students	<p>On Monday, they go to the virtual classroom and follow the instructions of the homeroom teacher and the subject teachers.</p> <p>If there are difficulties, they can watch the teaching on Sports TV.</p>	<p>On Monday, they watch the teaching on Sports TV and they test the virtual classroom with their homeroom teacher.</p> <p>On Tuesday, they watch the teaching on Sports TV and test the virtual classroom with their homeroom teacher and their subject teachers, go to the virtual classroom and follow the instructions of the homeroom teacher and the subject teachers.</p>
Teachers	<p>In virtual classrooms, homeroom teachers give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>	<p>On Monday, homeroom teachers test the virtual classroom with students, on Tuesday subject teachers do the same.</p> <p>From Wednesday on, homeroom teachers in virtual classrooms give students the schedule and information, subject teachers give activities and tasks.</p>
Parents	<p>If a student was not active in the virtual classroom for the whole day he/she needs to justify his/her absence to the homeroom teacher.</p>	



Broadcasting schedule of the School on the Third (HRT 3)

Grade	Time
1 st grade primary school	8:00-10:00
2 nd grade primary school	10:00-12:30
3 rd grade primary school	13:00-16:00
4 th grade primary school	16:00-19:00

Broadcasting schedule of the Sports TV

Grade	Time	Subjects
5 th grade primary school	8:00-9:30	Maths, Croatian, Nature, English, German
6 th grade primary school	9:30-10:45	History, Maths, Nature, English, German
7 th grade primary school	10:45-11:50	Maths, Croatian Biology, Geograpy
8 th grade primary school	11:50-12:45	Croatian, Maths, Biology, English, German
4 th grade secondary school	12:45-14:00	Maths, Croatian, Geography, English, German

- On the **school web site** all information should be published with the corresponding schedule and links to the virtual classrooms. This means that the information sent by the Ministry should not only be forwarded but school specific information should be included.



- With the aim of the protection of children's health, from Monday, 16th March 2020, all activities related to the enrolment of children in the 1st grade of primary school are suspended.
- We will **open all materials** that we can (with respect to copyright) to the public, not only in Croatia but for all other countries as well (especially in the neighbourhood) that wish to use them. Let us show solidarity in this difficult situation.
- For all students having the obligation to attend practical training with an employer, it is postponed during the suspension of teaching.
- We kindly ask the headmasters to instruct the homeroom teachers of grades 1-4 primary school to send the following enquiry to the parents today or tomorrow: who of the parents does not have the possibility to leave their child under supervision at home, in other words, whose children can not stay at home on their own. When the data is gathered, the school founders should be notified.
- It will not be easy and it is not easy to anyone in the world but we will make it if everyone does his/her work responsibly and the best they can, but also if he/she can see clearly that he/she is "not an island" and that other people depend on him/her.