



*In the pursuit of excellence...*

# Caledonia Community Schools

Administrative Offices: 9753 Duncan Lake Ave., Caledonia, MI 49316  
Telephone (616) 891-8185 - Fax (616) 891-9253 - [www.calschools.org](http://www.calschools.org)

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents & Staff,

Over the past 16 hours information from various state, local and national agencies regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been rapidly evolving. This has been especially true in the State of Michigan now that 2 individuals on the east side of the state have tested positive for COVID-19. This was followed by Governor Whitmer declaring a state of emergency on Tuesday evening with the hopes of slowing the spread of the virus.

As shared in my previous communication, CCS will continue to monitor and take its direction concerning the Coronavirus from three primary sources: A.) the [Kent County Health Department](#), B.) the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#) (MDHHS), and C.) the [Michigan Department of Education](#). These entities receive guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

## **About the Virus:**

- 1.) COVID-19 symptoms range from mild cold-like illness to severe pneumonia. You should look out for symptoms such as fever, coughs and difficulty breathing. Similar to the flu, the people who are most likely to experience severe complications from COVID-19 are older individuals (60+) and those with medical conditions such as heart and lung disease or diabetes.
- 2.) While there are NO confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Kent county as of today, experts predict that the virus will spread and encourage taking precautions.

## **Preventative Measures:**

Currently, there is no vaccine available to prevent COVID-19 infection. As with any respiratory virus, students and school personnel can protect themselves and others by taking every day common-sense actions:

- 1.) Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- 2.) Use a paper towel, if available, to turn off the water after hand washing.
- 3.) Use hand sanitizer if the soap is not available.
- 4.) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- 5.) Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- 6.) Get a flu shot if you haven't already.
- 7.) We encourage all staff, students and parents who are experiencing any cold or flu-like systems to stay at home when sick and seek medical attention if necessary.
- 8.) Cover your cough or sneeze into your elbow or with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- 9.) Please make your building administrator aware if you or someone in your family is diagnosed or in direct contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 so that we can work closely with the health department for additional preventative measures to minimize the spread of the virus.

## **Keeping Our Students and Staff Healthy:**

Our campus custodial staff will continue to use disinfectant products and tools daily to help mitigate the spread of communicable illnesses on hard surfaces. Our cleaning regimen and products are highly effective against Coronavirus and influenza, however, since the virus can spread so easily we encourage

everyone to follow the preventative measures identified above. **Additionally, in order to allow our custodial staff the greatest opportunity to efficiently and effectively clean our school buildings and being consistent with recommendations from the county health department, we will implement a moratorium on all facility rentals until further notice.** Please contact the operations office for specific questions at 616-891-0225 or [osbornj@calschools.org](mailto:osbornj@calschools.org).

**Athletics:**

All high school and middle school athletic events will follow guidance by MHSAA as the governing body for athletics throughout the state. Please refer to the link for ongoing updates regarding athletics in general and specific athletic events.

[MHSAA COVID-19 Updates](#)

**Extra-Curricular, Co-Curricular and School Sponsored Public Events:**

**Consistent with guidance provided from the Kent County Health Department, our district is placing a moratorium on all student and school-related events and activities including concerts, field trips, co-curricular competitions, etc. until further notice.**

We encourage parents to visit the district website for the most up to date information. **Today's elementary conferences will be conducted via a phone call initiated by your teacher during the scheduled conference appointment. A decision regarding secondary conferences will be communicated at a later date.**

**Emotional and Behavioral Support:**

Clearly the concerns around COVID-19 are increasing and fluid. It's important that adults respond in a measured and rational fashion so that we don't cause unnecessary anxiety and fear for our children. Please be open to hearing concerns from your child and reassure them that by consistently using precautions we can have an impact on reducing the spread of this virus. In no circumstance is it appropriate for staff, students, or visitors to the school to make derisive comments or to "joke" about those who are impacted by any virus. Again, we are monitoring all of our resources very closely. Should the situation change in our district or area, we will be consulting with the Kent County Health Department on appropriate next steps. We will also update our website with additional information as it evolves. **Expect to receive another letter from the Kent County Health Department later today regarding a unified approach from all educational organizations within our county.**

Thanks so much for joining us in helping to keep Caledonia Community Schools healthy in all ways.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dedrick Martin  
Superintendent  
Caledonia Community Schools

## KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

700 Fuller, N.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503  
PHONE 616/632-7228 - FAX 616/632-7085



Adam London, PhD, R.S., D.A.A.S.  
Administrative Health Officer

Nirali Bora, M.D.  
Medical Director

### HEALTH UPDATE March 10, 2020

### Update for Kent County Schools on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

March 11, 2020

Partner in Health:

As partners in protecting the health and safety of our children and families, below you will find a brief situational update as well as current recommendations for school administrators and decision makers based on guidance from the Kent County Health Department (KCHD). Please understand that this is a rapidly evolving situation and KCHD will continue to communicate with you as information changes.

#### WHAT IS KNOWN

- The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified and causes a respiratory illness ranging from a mild cold-like illness to severe pneumonia.
- More than 80% of people diagnosed with COVID-19 in China had mild disease.
- Similar to influenza, the people who are most likely to have severe disease and complications from COVID-19 are older individuals (>60 years old) and those with other medical conditions like heart and lung disease or diabetes.
- There is no vaccine or treatment currently available for COVID-19.
- Currently, there are 2 presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in Michigan. At this time cases are in Wayne and Oakland Counties.
- Currently, there is **NO** confirmed community spread of COVID-19 in Kent County, but experts predict there will eventually be community spread.

#### HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS

- COVID-19 is believed to spread primarily the same way the common cold or flu spreads—through respiratory droplets that are produced when someone coughs or sneezes.
- People who are most at risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 are those who have been in close contact (within about 6 feet) with someone who has the disease.
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- Some spread of the virus might be possible before a person has symptoms, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

#### WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO NOW, PRIOR TO LOCAL COMMUNITY SPREAD

- Implement your annual seasonal influenza plan.
- o Students and staff who are ill, especially with fever and/or acute respiratory symptoms (not allergies or chronic conditions), should stay home.
- o Review sick policies for staff; ensure staff can stay home when ill.
- Ensure prescribed cleaning is happening at school facilities (routine disinfectants are appropriate).
- o Enhance cleaning of high touch surfaces like door knobs, toilet handles, and sink handles.
- o Ensure that hand sanitizer, soap/paper towels and tissues are widely available in school facilities.
- o Remind students to cover their coughs/sneezes with a tissue or their elbow.
- Plan for when community spread occurs (non-pharmaceutical interventions or NPIs).

- o Ensure parents/guardians have a plan to designate a caregiver who is under the age of 60 for a sick child(ren) if parents/guardians can't stay home.
- o Look for opportunities to address food insecurity for families who rely on schools for breakfast and/or lunch.
- o Identify at-home learning opportunities during student absences or school closures.
- o Identify how the school will communicate updates to parents/guardians.
- o For more information about use of NPIs to respond to pandemics, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/>.

#### **WHAT SHOULD SCHOOLS DO WHEN COMMUNITY SPREAD OCCURS**

- Continue to ensure that soap/paper towels, hand sanitizer, and tissues are widely available in school facilities. Regular hand hygiene should be built into the daily routine.
- Consider limiting the number of people that have contact with students in the school building including parents or volunteers during the school day and gatherings that occur in the school building during non-school hours.
- Consider having students eat meals in the classroom or in smaller cohorts in the lunch room
- Avoid assemblies and multiple class activities to limit non-essential contact between students in large gatherings.
- Consider canceling or postponing events that bring groups of families and students into more frequent contact with each other.
- Have a separate room for sick children to be in while waiting for a caregiver to pick them up if they become ill during the school day.

#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS BEFORE CLOSING SCHOOLS FOR COVID-19**

- The Kent County Health Department would recommend the closure of schools **only** if there is an imminent public health threat created by the schools being open.
- Careful consideration for school closure recommendations will take into account the severity of disease, benefits to public health, impact on student learning, families, childcare, school staff and the economy.
- **Closing schools could potentially accelerate the transmission of COVID-19 to the most vulnerable people** (e.g. older adults and those with chronic health conditions) if individuals from these categories, such as grandparents, are used as caregivers during a school closure or if children will congregate in other settings.
- **Schools in Kent County considering closure due to COVID-19 (or other infectious diseases) should work with KCHD before closing. Please contact KCHD if you are considering closing a school.**

KCHD staff are working day and night to monitor this evolving situation and will continue to provide new information to the community as things change. If you have questions or are seeing increases in illness and would like to consult with our team, please call us (616) 632-7228 or the numbers below.

For up-to-date information, please visit our website at <https://www.accesskent.com/Health/coronavirus.htm>.

Sincerely,

Joann Hoganson, MSN, RN  
 Director of Community Wellness, Kent County Health Department  
 Liaison to schools

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