

MUSCATINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Parent Communication Regarding COVID-19 Procedures
Updated: March 12, 2020; 11:20 a.m.

The messaging from the health professionals is to expect more infections of the coronavirus over the next few weeks. Certainly, looking at the numbers of new cases in Iowa, the nation, and internationally, this seems to be prudent advice. The Muscatine Community Schools will begin its spring break next week. It is expected that a number of staff, students, parents, and others in the community will be traveling with the chance of exposure to the virus. The high-risk population with this virus is not the young, but those over 60 years old and those with underlying health issues. This does not mean we are not concerned with the health and safety of our students. This does mean we have a community responsibility to help minimize exposure of the virus from a low-risk carrier to a high-risk community member.

This communication is to provide some information concerning practices and procedures commencing on March 23, 2020 (after spring break). These practices will be subject to modification as new information and situations develop. MCSD will make every effort to be preventive in action, responsive to situations, and transparent in practice.

Beginning March 23rd:

1. Schools will not be visiting or hosting events with senior centers or senior assisted living centers to avoid exposures to high-risk senior citizens.
2. Schools will encourage high-risk community members to avoid interaction with large groups of students. Community members in the high-risk population should consider not volunteering in schools until the virus threat has subsided.
3. Elementary schools will begin a hand washing routine for students with a minimum of four times during the school day: at the beginning of the day, prior to lunch, following a recess, and before going home. Middle and High School students will be encouraged to follow the same/similar good hygiene practices.
4. Staff and students will be discouraged from sharing touchscreens, including smart boards. Teachers are encouraged to use smart boards as teacher-driven activities.
 - a. Food Service - the use of bar codes will be enforced. There will be no student data entry.
5. All field trips will be reviewed and minimized to avoid exposure. Out-of-district and large group trips will be scrutinized carefully.
6. Perfect attendance recognition will not be part of a school's program as sick children will be encouraged to remain at home.

- a. Students must be free of a fever for 24-hours without the use of a medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.) before returning to school.
7. Food service will stop self-service lines for elementary students. This may require lunchtimes to be adjusted. High School will substitute salad bar items with pre-packaged items.

What happens if a community member(s), that is not a part of the school district community, becomes a confirmed COVID-19 case(s)?

1. Large group activities (meaning more than 100 people) may become closed to the public or canceled. The use of streaming services, if available, will be used whenever possible.

What if a student (s) or staff member(s) becomes a confirmed COVID-19 case(s)?

1. All schools in the district will be closed for 14 days following notification of the confirmed case. All school activities will be canceled or postponed during this time. During a closure, staff will be placed on paid administrative leave and essential persons will work from home or meet in designated areas.
2. The building(s) that housed the infected person will be closed to all district staff for 4 days. NO STAFF will be allowed in the building(s) for the entire four days.
3. Where possible, teachers may use on-line instruction for students. The most probable courses would be high school AP courses. Appropriate compensation for teachers will be addressed if needed.
4. Following the 14-day period, students and staff who are symptom-free will be allowed back into school with regular programming commencing.
5. During a school closure, the district will provide sack breakfast and lunches for students needing this service. The transportation department would be utilized to transport lunches to various locations in the district to improve access. The sacked food will be a “grab and go” with no meals served in a lunchroom setting. Locations will be determined at the time of closure.
6. At this time, Iowa law would require the district to make up the missed time to meet the 1080-hour minimum instruction requirement. The district currently has 40 hours in reserve.

If you are a staff member, student, or parent traveling please remember the following while on the trip:

1. Avoid being near people appearing sick.
2. Practice good hygiene practices. Follow the 3 C’s:

- a. Cover your cough. Use a tissue or your elbow.
 - b. Clean your hands. 20 seconds of handwashing with soap and water has been shown to be more effective than utilizing hand sanitizer. Use hand sanitizers when soap and water is not available.
 - c. Contain germs. Stay home when sick.
- 3. Monitor your health for symptoms such as fever, a cough, or shortness of breath. If experiencing these symptoms, please call a health care provider but avoid going into a clinic or emergency room until the medical professionals provide direction.
 - a. Students and staff must be free of a fever for 24-hours without the use of a medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.) before returning to school/work.