

Deerfield Community School District

Excellence and Equity in Education



March 12, 2020

Dear Deerfield School District Families,

We recognize the concern that exists with COVID-19 locally and on a national basis. Please know that the well-being of our students, staff and school community remains our top priority.

We are diligently working to provide you with current information as we update our pandemic plan. As a learning institution, we are also providing you with educational information to share with your children.

Public health officials indicate the risk to our area remains low. As a District, we have had no confirmed or suspected cases in our schools. We will be notified by the WI Department of Public Health if there is a case in our schools. I want to reassure you that our District is meeting daily to review updates and communicate with local and state health officials, and neighboring school districts.

In addition, we continue to monitor and take guidance from state and national organizations, including:

- [Public Health of Madison and Dane County](#)
- [WI Department of Health Services \(WDHS\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

Below is the most updated information we have on COVID-19. Please know that we will continue to communicate with you, as this information is being updated frequently.

Prevention

We continue to encourage all students, staff and families to be mindful of key preventive measures outlined by the CDC to avoid the spread of this and other illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze;
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces; and
- Stay home when you are sick (students must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to class after any illness).

Our custodial staff has been, and will continue to clean and disinfect our district facilities on a routine basis. We have ordered additional supplies and at this time there have been no supply disruptions.

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Spring Break

Our spring break is the week of March 23-27. We know that many families might be traveling during that time. At this time, the WI Department of Health Services recommends that people who travel to places where there is a community spread of COVID-19 (international and domestic locations) should self-quarantine and monitor symptoms for 14 days upon return.

The District cannot, and will not, make travel decisions for families. If you are concerned that you may have traveled to, or have travel plans to, an area of community spread, please contact Public Health Madison and Dane County to find out more information. It is important to know that at this time, the Centers for Disease Control has not officially placed any travel restrictions within the continental United States. This could be subject to change.

Contingency Planning

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) holds statutory authority to close schools to control outbreaks and epidemics. WDHS officials acknowledge the enormous impact closing school would have on our communities (instruction delivery, lost work time, daycare costs, access to school lunch, etc.) and do not take this decision lightly.

The Deerfield Community School District will be developing plans for virtual learning in the event we need them. This may include online learning and take-home activities for our students. Please note that we have a number of online resources already in place at the middle and high school grades through our use of Canvas. At the elementary grades, there are many learning resources that are used regularly by our students while at school located on the district website under Students-Technology Links.

We recognize that not all families have access to technology and/or internet due to areas of little or no coverage within our district boundaries. Any decisions made regarding educational requirements, should we need to close school for an extended period of time, will take these factors into consideration.

Talking with Your Children

We understand that this situation may be concerning for families and children. Below are tips from the [CDC website](#) for talking with your children:

- Remain calm and reassuring;
- Make yourself available to listen and to talk;
- Avoid language that might blame others and lead to stigma;
- Pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio, or online;
- Provide information that is honest and accurate; and
- Teach children everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs.

We know this is a rapidly changing environment with many moving parts. We will send out further information over the next week as we continue to monitor the situation and receive regular updates from state and national sources.

Sincerely,

Michelle R. Jensen
District Administrator