



HOCKINSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Preparing all students for lifelong success

March 9, 2020

HSD Parents,

As you likely already know, late last week Clark County Public Health (CCPH) announced the first case of coronavirus in our county. That patient is currently in isolation at PeaceHealth. While we do not know if he lives in Vancouver, east county or north county, there are no indications that he has any involvement with local schools. As of this afternoon, CCPH reports that they are awaiting the results from 18 other individuals. I assure you that the health department and our district will notify you immediately if we become aware of an occurrence of coronavirus that impacts our schools.

All of this means we enter this week under the same status as last week: No cases of COVID-19, but taking precautionary measures to prevent the spread of this virus. Starting this past Friday, our district's custodians began disinfecting our buildings three days a week. We will continue to follow this cleaning schedule through Spring Break at a minimum.

As I shared in my last email, keeping our students safe and healthy is a team effort. I ask for your continued help by reinforcing good hygiene habits with your children. I also wanted to pass along a couple of other resources (neither one is particularly new, but you might find them useful).

The first resource from the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of School Nurses regarding the coronavirus. It provides some talking points to educate students and reduce anxiety about the disease. They advise parents to:

...remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If parents seem overly worried, children's anxiety may rise. Parents should reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy. However, children also need factual, age-appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk and concrete instruction about how to avoid infections and spread of disease. Teaching children positive preventive measures, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety.

[Here is a link to the full text of this document.](#)

The second resource is a comic strip that was put together by an NPR reporter as a kind of illustrated FAQ for kids. It has been shared by health departments across the country, including CCPH. As you will see, the format and tone is geared for children. But it is also informative and, in this instance, I think kids might find factual information reassuring. You can check it out by pasting the following address into your web browser: www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus.

While some schools impacted by this virus have closed down for varying lengths of time, others have not. So how would our district respond if there were a confirmed coronavirus case in a staff member or

Steven Marshall, Superintendent

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student? Our decision would depend on the circumstances of the situation and the guidance of Clark County Public Health. I know that this comes as no surprise to you since school is in session, but CCPH has made it clear that they do not support the practice of proactively closing school to prevent the spread of this disease.

That is all the information I have to share at this time. I want to thank you for supporting our students and schools during these uncertain times. I will update you as new information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Steve Marshall

Superintendent, Hockinson School District

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