



COLOMA

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

INSPIRE TO ACHIEVE - EMPOWER FOR SUCCESS

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March 12, 2020

Dear Parent,

The Berrien County Superintendents have and will continue to work closely with the Berrien County Health Department to stay abreast of the COVID-19 virus and its impact in our schools. Please understand that this is a **RAPIDLY** evolving situation and we will continue to communicate with you as information changes.

WHAT IS KNOWN

- 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.
- As of March 12, 2020, there are 2 presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in Michigan. At this time cases are in Wayne and Oakland Counties.
- As of March 12, 2020, there is **NO** confirmed community spread of COVID-19 in Berrien County.

In addition, the 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. Also, 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.

We will continue to ensure that soap/paper towels, hand sanitizer, and tissues are widely available in school facilities. We will also continue to disinfect hard surface areas as part of our daily cleaning routines. In addition to our efforts to provide clean, safe schools for our students, we would ask that parents keep any students who are ill, especially with fever and/or acute respiratory symptoms (*not allergies or chronic conditions*), home until symptom-free for 24 hours. It is recommended that parents/guardians have a plan to designate a caregiver (*under the age of 60*) for a sick child(ren) if parents/guardians can't stay home.

As you may have heard, some colleges and universities are choosing to move toward virtual instruction instead of face-to-face instruction. It is important to note that colleges and universities are dramatically different environments including unique opportunities for disease transmission, such as housing in dormitories that are not present in our K-12 schools. Area schools will continue to develop a plan with regards to a possible school

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shut down for an extended period of time, however, we will only close local schools (K-12) if there is an imminent danger or the need to reduce transmission risk of COVID-19 disease.

Finally, over the next few days we will be communicating with the Berrien County Health Department and other state agencies to determine whether field trips, athletic contests, concerts, or other events need to be canceled for the betterment of public safety amid health concerns. As we continue to monitor this evolving situation, we will continue to update you as things change. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



David A. Ehlers
Superintendent