

March 11, 2020
2:15 p.m.

Bend-La Pine Schools Community,

We just received word from Oregon Health Authority of a presumptive case of COVID-19 in Deschutes County. Our thoughts are with the individual who has been diagnosed as we are all hoping for a healthy recovery. Their full media release can be viewed [here](#).

We continue to be in hourly and daily communication with local Public Health agencies, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and have been preparing for a possible case in our community for several weeks.

Since early March, we have made the following changes to our operations:

- Increasing cleaning to include libraries, under lunch room tables, and high touch areas, e.g., door knobs, keys, telephones.
- Deep cleaning buses twice daily.
- Reinforcing education regarding influenza infection control and emphasize a triad of good health habits: hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and not touching the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Asking all visitors and volunteers to wash hands when entering and exiting schools.
 - Hand washing instructions: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
 - Hand washing videos: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/videos.html>
- Educating employees and visitors not to come to the facility if they have influenza-like symptoms.
- Initiating screening for influenza-like illness at front desk and nurses' offices.
- Following athletic and activities recommendations from Oregon School Activities Association.
- Reviewing possible measures to increase "social distancing."
- Reviewing our workforce reduction plan at the district level.
- Reviewing our distance learning plan at the district level.
- Reviewing our substitute teacher pool list at the district level.
- Reminding families to plan for childcare in the event of any school closure.

At this time, there is no known nexus to our schools and we will remain open, per [Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education recommendations](#). We will continue to follow this guidance and be in regular communication with our local public health partners regarding any potential future school closures and potential changes to our schedules.

With the announcement of a presumptive case in Central Oregon, we are now moving into the next phase of our Pandemic Plan, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Increasing use of our deep cleaning sanitation system at district facilities.
- Expanding cafeteria cleaning between service times.
- Removing all 'No Thank You' sharing bins at meal service.
- Regularly ventilating schools remotely to increase fresh airflow at night.
- Securing an outside deep cleaning service agency to provide rapid, deep cleaning if a future exposure is identified in one of our facilities in order to minimize interruption to teaching and learning.

We intend to keep these practices in place through the end of the school year.

Access to accurate, timely information about COVID-19 is critical for all of us. Our [County Public Health](#) experts point to the [Oregon Health Authority](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) as good sources of information. www.coemergencyinfo.blogspot.com provides a collective resource for up-to-date information. You can continue to check our website www.bend.k12.or.us/COVID-19 for general updates.

And, in an effort to streamline questions that you may have about COVID-19, we have set up a dedicated email address: askbls@bend.k12.or.us.

Thank you for your continued support as we navigate this emerging issue.

Best,

Shay Mikalson
Superintendent Bend-La Pine Schools