

**February 28, 2020**

**10:00 PM**

**FAQs**

### **How can families and schools help to slow or stop the spread of COVID-19?**

The Oregon Health Authority recommends that schools and districts take “common sense precautions” that help prevent the spread of all diseases. These can also be practiced by children and their families. These include: keep children home if they are sick until a fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine; seek medical care immediately if symptoms, such as a high fever or difficulty breathing, become more severe; cover coughs with a sleeve or tissue; keep tissues and “no touch” trash cans close by; wash hands often and keep soap dispensers filled; routinely clean surfaces that are frequently touched; if desired, wear a face mask if you are coughing or sneezing.

### **The CDC is recommending non-pharmaceutical interventions. What does this mean?**

To slow the spread of COVID-19, and other respiratory infections (including flu and pertussis), families, students and staff can take every day non-pharmaceutical interventions, including:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when you are sick.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Getting your annual flu vaccine (to protect against flu).

### **What is Bend-La Pine Schools doing now?**

We have been monitoring the situation closely and have been in near daily contact with our local public health department and healthcare partners. While you may be hearing many different perspectives on what is happening or should happen, please know that we will use federal, state and local public health officials as our primary source of information and direction.

We are following our Pandemic Plan, which provides an outline for dealing with pandemic issues. In short, Bend-La Pine Schools is continuing to take precautions to reduce the spread of the COVID-19. A few of our mitigation plans that will be implemented as necessary include: increased disinfecting by staff of “high touch” surfaces, encouraging visitors and volunteers to wash their hands when arriving and leaving our schools, discontinuing self-serve lunches, and continuing education of employees and visitors not to come to the facility if they have influenza-like symptoms.

Additionally, employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines.

### **Have any school children in the United States or Oregon been diagnosed with COVID-19, a novel coronavirus?**

At this time, no school children have been diagnosed with the virus in the United States or Oregon. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “preliminary data suggest that older adults and persons with

underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems might be at greater risk for severe illness from this virus.”

**Have any adults in Oregon been diagnosed with COVID-19, a novel coronavirus?**

As of this message, there is one confirmed case of COVID-19 in Oregon. Based on current information, the Center for Disease Control and our local and state public health departments consider that the risk to most Oregonians is low. You can review [statewide tracking here](#).

**What should I tell my child about the virus — if anything?**

Families can check out the tools available at [SAMHSA Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)

**Has the virus affected student or teacher travel abroad?**

Yes. Bend-La Pine Schools recently suspended its overseas teacher exchange program to China. Additionally, an exchange planned in March to Central Oregon by students and families from Japan was canceled today.

**How can I help to reduce stigma?**

Do not make determinations of risk based on race, ethnicity, or country of origin, and be sure to maintain confidentiality of people with confirmed COVID-19 infection.

**What is next?**

We will continue to provide information regarding prevention, responses and resources to our school community. Please be assured that we will provide more information as it becomes available. We are committed to the safety of our community. We have no current plans to close or cancel school or classes.

**Where do I find more information about COVID-19?**

For general information on COVID-19, call 211.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

[OHA's COVID-19 webpage](#)