

March 12, 2020
7:45 a.m. Update

RE: School events, gatherings, field trips suspended

Greetings Families,

Governor Kate Brown announced new guidance late last night regarding group gatherings and social distancing for schools. We expect to learn more about her plan after she updates the public this morning during a press conference.

We understand that the Governor will be making the following orders this morning:

All gatherings of more than 250 people in Oregon will be canceled for the next four weeks. A gathering is defined by the Governor as any event in a space in which appropriate social distancing of a minimum of three feet cannot be maintained.

All non-essential school-associated gatherings and group activities — such as group parent meetings, field trips, and competitions -- should be canceled.

At this point in time I understand there are questions about what the Governor's order will mean for us. I intend to send you more detailed information as soon as we have it following the Governor's press conference.

We remain committed to keeping our schools open and safe. In accordance with this preliminary guidance, and in order to minimize potential opportunities for the virus to spread, we will begin suspending events that bring large groups of students, adults, and community members together.

To be clear, we are taking every step possible so that we can continue to provide high-quality education for all of our students and keep our schools open.

The safety, health and well-being of our students and staff is a high priority. We will continue to work in close partnership with public health authorities to minimize both the spread of COVID-19 and disruption to schools and students. We will continue emphasizing the importance of handwashing at school. Our custodians will continue to prioritize high-touch surfaces in classrooms and common areas, and make sure schools have adequate handwashing and cleaning supplies.

Students, families and everyone in our community can best support our efforts by washing hands frequently, covering mouths when coughing or sneezing, and using hand sanitizer. Those experiencing fever and/or flu or cold symptoms should stay at home, only returning to school or work when symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medicine. If you are concerned about symptoms, please consult your healthcare provider.

Finally, you can find information about coronavirus COVID-19, resources and links to public health agencies by visiting www.bend.k12.or.us/COVID-19.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding during this challenging time. We will continue to rely on the guidance of Oregon public health authorities, the Department of Education, and the Office of the Governor.

Best,

Shay Mikalson, Superintendent