

Muncie Community Schools

2500 N. ELGIN STREET • MUNCIE, IN 47303- 2241

Prepare Now - Anticipate the Future

March 12, 2020

Dear Muncie Families,

As we shared last week, Muncie Community Schools (MCS) is closely monitoring the spread of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) through our contacts at both the state and local level. We want to share with you updates to our plans and guidance for families and staff. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SITUATION IS VERY FLUID, AND THAT MCS WILL MODIFY OUR PLANS HEREIN AS NEEDED TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES.**

What happens if Muncie Community Schools (MCS) has to close school?

- If MCS must close schools, we would begin with eLearning days for the first five days. Elementary teachers are working on packets which will be sent home on Monday, March 16, for you to keep at home in case of school closure. Secondary students will utilize Schoology, our online Learning Management System. After five days, the district will reevaluate and make decisions whether to extend e-Learning or to cancel school.
- We will follow the guidance of state and local health officials to determine the length of the closure.
- Chartwells, our food service provider, would offer grab and go food service at various schools across the district for breakfast and lunch on a daily basis to help mitigate food insecurity for our students.

Will field trips and other travel continue?

- Muncie Community Schools is asking principals to work with teachers to cancel or reschedule any field trips planned for the next few weeks. However, there may be a situation where a field trip may continue, if deemed appropriate by the building and district administration. We have two prepaid overnight trips planned for students over spring break and early April. The trip sponsors, Kim Conner and Julie Snider, will keep families updated regarding these trips as we are working closely with the travel companies.
- We are asking all staff members to cancel any travel that is work-related until further notice is provided.

What is the CURRENT plan for extra-curricular activities and before/after school childcare?

- At this time, we plan to continue extra-curricular activities as scheduled. We want to honor our commitment to our students who have worked hard to prepare for these events and competitions. This decision will be reevaluated on a daily basis.
- We recognize some parents may prefer their students not attend due to concerns about COVID-19. In those cases, parents and guardians should communicate directly with the principal and coach or sponsor. Students will be excused from the activity without penalty.

- We will continue to welcome fans to our events. Muncie Community Schools has increased the frequency of our already-thorough cleaning process. However, we ask that anyone who is included in the special populations identified by the [CDC as high-risk](#) take precautions to protect themselves, including not attending the event. For anyone experiencing illness, we ask that you not attend the event.
- Our before and after school childcare programs will continue as scheduled at this time.

What should I tell my student who is worried about COVID-19?

COVID-19 is on everyone's mind and we are seeing students who are feeling anxious about it. Students are looking to adults for guidance on how to react. We can reassure them that the school and their family are working hard to help them stay healthy and stop the spread of germs. The National Association of School Psychologists developed a document with some tips for parents including:

- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Monitor your child's television viewing and social media.
- Be honest and accurate.
- Know the systems of COVID-19.
- Review and model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection.

What can I do to stop the spread of illness?

As with all illnesses. Handwashing is the most effective way to stop the spread. Please remind your students to wash their hands thoroughly and to practice good hygiene. Our custodial staff diligently cleans and disinfects surfaces throughout each school building on a daily basis. We recently purchased electrostatic sprayers which thoroughly coats all surfaces with a disinfectant. Hand sanitizers are available throughout the schools.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve, rather than your hands, if a tissue is not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- If you develop flu-like symptoms, call your healthcare provider to determine the next steps for care.
- We appreciate your continued partnership in keeping our students and staff safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Lee Ann Kwiatkowski

Director of Public Education, CEO
Muncie Community Schools