

Nezperce School District Stakeholders,

There is a lot of anxiety and worry around the COVID-19 virus. You should know that we are CONFIDENT that we will continue to act in the best interest of kids and all of our community. We have been actively watching and planning for this specific circumstance for the last month and for circumstances like this for years before this because of the potential impact of infectious diseases on schools. We want you to feel CALM and CONFIDENT that we will make decisions based on sound science, best practices, and with close consultation with medical and epidemiology experts at the local, regional, state, and federal level.

We always have worked hard to ensure that our school is a clean environment that discourages the spread of any type of illness. (Susan does an amazing job cleaning and disinfecting the school EVERY DAY!!!). We will continue and even double down on our efforts by bringing in some additional cleaning/disinfecting support. We are well stocked with cleaning supplies and other necessities. While this specific virus is new and we take it very seriously, we have seen outbreaks of the flu, colds, and even lice (YUCK!!) before and we will see them again.

We also have a dynamic and flexible 5 stage (stages 0,1,2,3,4) plan in place in the event of a positive COVID-19 test in the surrounding area, our community or within the school. We were at stage 1 but with the first positive case in Idaho we are transitioning to Stage 2. Depending on the progression of the stages, or by proclamation of the Governor, this may or may not include school closure. IF a decision is ever made to close school for an extended period of time (weeks) we are continually working on a plan to continue educational services for our students. In all likelihood, if we were to do this, the first 2 or three days would be like snow days (no educational services provided) while we switch gears to a different mode of delivery. Delivery of education to a kindergarten student would be significantly different than delivery to high school students. This includes planning for special education students and our school breakfast and lunch programs. Special consideration could also be given to younger students whose parents work in a healthcare-related field so that they do not have to miss work. Any cancellation of special events, extracurricular activities, and intracurricular organizations will be communicated separately.

We will NOT be requiring a doctor's note to receive a medically excused absence. These absences will also be exempted from any finals or credit decisions in the secondary building, effective immediately. All attendance based practices are temporarily suspended. If you have a fever, cough, or achy symptoms you need to stay home for at least 48 hours after the symptoms are resolved. The same rules apply to staff members. To repeat simply: if you are sick, stay home.

With our transition to stage 2, students and staff members who are or live with high-risk, immune system compromised, or medically fragile students may be excused from school if they desire after consultation with the school to develop a plan to complete schoolwork at home.

We BELIEVE that our school is ultimately a safe and clean place to be. Every disease outbreak has the potential to cause harm so we take this and other outbreaks seriously. Anxiety and fear also have the potential to cause as much or more damage than any outbreak of disease. While some individuals may not agree with every decision we make in this process, we ask that you TRUST that we will stay consistently focused on the HEALTH, SAFETY, WELL-BEING, and EDUCATION of our students and community. If you are a constituent who has any questions or concerns, please free to contact us on this page or email or call me personally.

A few notes at this point to be aware of (all of these are subject to change):

The 4th-grade event in Spalding on Tuesday has been canceled.

Drama and Honor Society Induction are still scheduled to occur.

All remaining State Leadership conferences for FFA, FCCLA, and HOSA have been canceled.

Outside Spring Sports are still practicing and planning to compete in events and games.

Sincerely,

Shawn Tiegs, Superintendent