

14 Mar 2020

District 58 follow-up: Social distancing recommendations

Good Morning District 58 Students, Families and Sta :

The events of this week were unprecedented, and there are many questions out there about what comes next for our school community. There will be a great deal of digital communication in the coming days. Please take time to read the messages that come your way.

Yesterday's decision to cancel school for the next several weeks came together very quickly. We have been operating with guidance from the DuPage County Regional Office of Education and the experts at the DuPage County Health Department ([their information related to COVID-19 can be found here](#)). They have been explaining to us the [CDC guidelines for COVID-19](#), and how they work to keep us safe. With the absence of confirmed COVID-19 cases in DuPage County, we have been operating for the past week within the strategies recommended by the CDC in the first two columns of the [CDC guidelines](#) on pages 3-7 of the chart. Based on this information, I had fully expected to have school in session until spring break.

However, yesterday the strategy across our community and the State began to change toward an approach of **social distancing**. As a result, we are responding to this crisis as if our community already has a substantial outbreak, even before there was a reported case in DuPage County. As a result we have put into place personal protective measures to close down our schools for students while most of our sta will continue to work to support our community.

This is a very drastic measure, and for it to be effective and not anxiety producing for our students, we ask that you take the following actions with your students and families [based on recommendations by the CDC](#) and the DuPage County Health Department:

- Avoid gathering in public places – especially in close proximity to others.
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Avoid all non-essential travel.
- Try to keep 6-10 feet between yourself and others – give yourself space.
- Be at home as much as possible.
- Try to limit who you and your children interact with to the same people you typically are around.
- Kids and families should not:
 - Be gathering in large groups – this is a time to be close with those who are closest to you.
 - Be visiting each other's homes or having sleepovers.
 - Sharing food or drink.
 - Competing in team sporting activities – use this time to train individually or with someone in the home.
- Kids and families should:
 - Avoid excessive media coverage of COVID-19
 - Take care of their body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.

- Spend time outside – fresh air and exercise is one of the best things you can do over the next few weeks.
- Connect with others. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with friends or family members. Maintain healthy relationships.
- Use your technology and social media for good purposes – support one another and show that you care for one another.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

Keep following the practice of washing your hands regularly and covering your cough or sneeze.

We will be following up on Monday with a lot more information related to teaching and learning. We are focused on demonstrating to our students that we care about them and want to help keep moving their learning forward during these unprecedented times.

We ask that you partner with us in “[flattening the curve](#)”, and helping to stop the outbreak even before it gets into our school community.

I appreciate our partnership in raising healthy and successful students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin Russell
Superintendent of Schools

This message was developed in conjunction with Community High School District 99