



March 9, 2020

Dear Students, Families, and Staff,

Over the weekend, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) confirmed several new presumptive cases of COVID-19. The unfortunate reality is that COVID-19 is, or will be, in our community. Updated guidance from OHA is that closing schools may not be an effective method for stopping the spread of the virus. This is the same stance currently being taken by school districts in other communities around the country and around the world.

The best prevention is still practicing good health hygiene habits - washing your hands frequently, covering your cough or sneeze, getting plenty of rest and eating a healthy diet - and avoiding contact with people who are symptomatic.

The best way to limit spread is staying home when ill.

How can I avoid getting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Right now, the risk of getting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low in the U.S.

Steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold can also help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid contact with sick people and stay home if you're sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

For more information visit healthoregon.org/coronavirus

Health
Oregon
Authority

I know you likely have many questions. The most up to date information about COVID-19 can be found at healthoregon.org/coronavirus or by calling 211.

Updated guidance from the Oregon Health Authority is that because COVID-19 is in the community, closing a school may not be an effective method of stopping the spread of the

VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 47J

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virus. There is concern that people would not actually remain in their homes for 14 days, and in the case of children, depending on who their caregiver is, having them home may put that person at greater risk of contracting the virus.

Our schools are not only places where learning can continue, but where our students can be supported, supervised, and fed, which is a necessity for many families.

We will continue with enhanced cleaning efforts, reinforcing health hygiene expectations with students, and asking students and staff to stay home if they are ill. Those actions are thought to be the most beneficial in keeping people healthy and stopping the spread of the virus.

Please know that we are doing everything we can to keep our students and staff healthy and safe. Thank you for your partnership in that effort.

Sincerely,

Aaron Miller
Superintendent

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