



March 13, 2020

In an effort to slow the threat of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Caldwell County Schools will adhere to the statewide guidance to postpone or cancel any event, gathering, or school-sponsored activity that involves 100 people or more effective immediately. The school district will also cancel all field trips, including in-county, out-of-county and out-of-state field trips until further notice.

We will continue to encourage all students, faculty, and staff to stay at home if they are sick and not return to school unless they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. Schools are being sanitized on a rotational basis and employees are encouraged to disinfect surfaces and workspaces. We recommend that all parents, visitors, and volunteers limit their involvement on school campuses until the state guidelines are lifted. The district is implementing strategies to prepare for distance learning if it should be required locally or by the state. However, the state has not recommended a pre-emptive school closure at this time.

NC Governor Roy Cooper expects the citizens of North Carolina to abide by recent guidance to stay at home if sick and to avoid participation in large gatherings. The implementation of these social distancing practices will begin on March 13, 2020. It is our hope that this protocol will keep more of you safe from illness.

The number one priority in the Caldwell County School System is the safety of our students, faculty, and staff. We realize this is a difficult and unsettling time throughout the country, and the school district will continue to monitor these evolving circumstances and work closely with local and state health agencies.

We ask that everyone be vigilant in their efforts to prevent the spread of any sickness and to follow the statewide guidelines. Thank you for helping us to keep our students and families healthy. We appreciate your willingness to exercise patience, support, and cooperation as we move through this serious global threat.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donald Phipps
Superintendent

The following actions and recommendations are in place to help reduce the spread of infection, to protect lives, and to maintain a healthy and safe school environment. Please see below for specific changes that may affect you and your family:

School-Related Travel

Effective immediately the Caldwell County Schools will adhere to the statewide guidance to postpone or cancel any event, gathering, or school-sponsored activity that involves 100 people or more. All field trips, to include in-county, out-of-county and out-of-state field trips are canceled or postponed until further notice.

Travel Refunds

Understandably, there are concerns about the potential loss of money already paid for field trips, and school administrators or their designees are in contact with the travel organizations regarding refunds. Parents will be notified by their respective school contacts.

Athletics

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), which governs our athletic programs, has **suspended all interscholastic athletics for middle and high school students beginning at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020, through Monday, April 6, 2020.** This includes all workouts, skill development, practices, and contests.

Extracurricular Activities & Community Events

All school-related extracurricular activities and community events held at schools have been suspended until further notice. This includes after school activities like clubs, school dances, and spirit nights held at area restaurants. Special events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Caldwell County Schools are suspended until further notice.

WrapAround, the before- and after school program, will still be available to students enrolled in the program.

What are we Doing Now?

As a reminder, here are a few things we are doing to be proactive regarding the coronavirus, as well as the flu, colds and other illnesses, to keep students and staff healthy:

- Teachers are reviewing hand-washing techniques with students and providing time for students to wash hands before eating.

- Additional signage is posted throughout the school facilities as a reminder of good hygiene and handwashing.
- The district has created a systemwide team to sanitize and disinfect schools and buses on a rotational basis using EPA approved products.
- Our custodial staff is disinfecting “high-touch” surfaces like doorknobs, water fountains, bathrooms fixtures and floors using EPA approved products.
- As a district, we continue to communicate with health officials regularly to stay current on the facts and proven protocols and procedures.

Future Plans

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The district is implementing strategies to prepare for distance learning if it should be required locally or by the state. The state has not recommended a pre-emptive school closure at this time.

Helpful Tips to Keep You and Your Family Healthy

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, and for at least 20 seconds each time. Hand-washing is more important than ever especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it's the most basic action any person can take to minimize the threat.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Do not reuse tissue after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.
- All faculty, staff, and students should not attend school if they are sick or have a fever; all need to be fever-free for 24 hours without any fever-reducing medication before returning to school.

Visit these helpful official resources for more information:

- [Center for Disease Control & Prevention's Website on Coronavirus](#)
- [North Carolina's Department of Public Health's Website on Coronavirus](#)
- [Caldwell County Health Department](#)