

Stanwood-Camano School District
COVID-19 Communication
3.6.20

The district continues to monitor our COVID-19 status daily. We have not received contact from the health districts notifying us of confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 in the Stanwood-Camano School District. We will continue to follow the directions of our county health districts as the safety of our students, staff and families remains our top priority.

When making decisions for our school community, we consult with the county health districts, monitor the DOH and CDC websites, talk to our neighboring districts, and receive guidance from OSPI.

OSPI has reminded us that stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease (for example, Chinese Americans and other persons of Asian descent living in the United States). The Equity and Civil Rights Office at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has asked school districts to remind their school communities of this.

The guidance received yesterday from the Snohomish County Health District about suspending large groups may be confusing for some families because schools bring together large groups of children; however, school closures have significant negative impacts on communities, such as:

- Closing schools may not be effective because some children may congregate anyway, at other locations
- Many parents, such as healthcare workers, need to be at work. If these critical workers stay home with children it causes significant impacts on the healthcare system and other institutions that are essential for our community to function
- If schools close, some children might have to stay home with alternative caregivers, such as elders, who are more vulnerable

We know that some children and staff may be at higher risk for severe illness because of underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system. The Washington State Department of Health advises that those people consult with their healthcare provider to decide the best course of action.

The DOH has recommended that students and staff who have been ill wait 72 hours after symptoms subside before returning to work/school. This is a new practice as previously we have asked individuals to wait 24 hours before returning.

COVID-19 has changed a number of district protocols to mitigate the spread of the virus. The list below summarizes our current status:

To further clarify, the following measures will be in effect until further notice. We will continue to provide updates whenever we have new information to share, including whether we will continue with these measures in the coming weeks, enact new ones, or return to our normal operations.

1. Facilities Use by Outside Groups – Suspended

In order to maximize our resources toward the cleaning of our schools, we will be cancelling external rentals and use of our district facilities. Please note: this includes all field use. It is important to enable our custodians to focus on the daily strategic cleaning and disinfecting required of them and to conserve cleaning supplies. We are so thankful for our custodians' dedication to their work!

2. All Field Trips/Assemblies – Suspended

This includes day trips as well as local and out-of-state travel and in-house assemblies.

3. Concerts, Dances, Plays, and Information and Evening Events – Cancelled or Postponed

We know how much our community loves to enjoy our students' many talents. However, in an effort to reduce possible exposure to visitors attending our events or to students from people coming in, we feel this is an important precaution. Events may be rescheduled or modified.

4. Athletic/Activity Competitions - Suspended

The district is cancelling all school district athletic and activity competitions until further notice. School district Athletic/Activity practices will continue as scheduled. These are viewed as an extension of the school day. Clubs led by outside organizations and vendors will be cancelled. Parents will not be permitted to observe practices. This is to limit the potential exposure of students and staff.

5. Travel by SCSD Staff – Suspended

All out of district work-related trips by SCSD Staff will be suspended for this period unless authorized as essential by executive administration.

6. Volunteers in Schools – Suspended

We so appreciate our volunteers! However, we ask that volunteers please not come to school as we are trying to reduce people entering our schools who could potentially expose our students or staff.

7. Parent and Guardian Normal School Business / Pick Up-Drop Off – Will Continue

Parents and guardians who have essential meetings scheduled, a need to come to the front office, or must come into the school to pick up or drop off a student may do so; **however, we prefer parents and guardians to communicate by email or phone in an effort to reduce people coming in and out of the building.** We recognize that this may slow down the pick up/drop off routines. Thank you in advance for your patience.

8. Before and After School Child Care - Will Continue

Before and after school childcare located within our schools will continue at the discretion of the YMCA as many of our families depend on this service and it is viewed as a continuation of the school day. The district has reached out to the YMCA and they have shared the following with us:

“As a standard, all YMCA School Age and Early Learning program sites follow our Policy and Procedure for Excluding Ill Children to monitor signs of illness in children, report communicable disease, uphold cleanliness and sanitation in our facilities, and enforce illness prevention practices including hand washing for both staff and children. This same exclusion criteria will be followed by our staff in determining whether they should come to work if signs of illness develop and when staff should return to work after an illness.

In the event of a school closure, our YMCA programs within the school will also close. YMCA Site Directors and staff will communicate with families via email and/or text messaging. Families will be updated on closures and openings as the information is made available by the school districts. This is consistent with our severe weather communication procedures.”

Again, these measures will be in effect immediately until further notice. Please know that we did not make these decisions lightly. While we recognize the impact, we believe it is in the best interest of our students, staff, and community. We will continue to work with Snohomish and Island County Health Districts, our neighboring districts, OSPI, and municipal partners in our response. Thank you for your understanding. Please continue to watch our website and your email for new information.