



COVID-19 Update for The Winnetka Public Schools

March, 12, 2020

Dear Parents and Staff,

Based on the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19 and recommendations from public health officials, we are **canceled school for students tomorrow, March 13. While we have no confirmed COVID-19 cases in the District, we are shifting to our e-learning plan in an abundance of caution. Remote learning will begin Monday, March 16 and continue until further notice. Our school buildings will be closed to students beginning Friday, March 13th. All activities and events are canceled until further notice.**

The remainder of this letter addresses a number of issues related to COVID-19, including:

- Remote Learning
- Spring Break Travel
- Sports, Clubs, and Community Events
- Communication with Families

Remote Learning

We are implementing Remote Learning (E-Learning) Plans starting Monday, March 16 in an effort to continue instruction and offer some consistency to our students. A letter from Principals regarding eLearning will be shared with parents on Friday, March 13. Teachers will be communicating individually or as teams to students (5-8) and parents (K-4) starting on Monday, March 16th. Please know this is our first time implementing such plans, so we ask for your patience and understanding. We will continue to refine our systems and improve as we move along. A technical support hotline is available for all students, staff, and parents and will be included in all eLearning emails.

The District's eLearning plan aligns with other districts' plans already approved by the Regional Office of Education. The E-Learning Plan does fulfill the requirements of the law and does allow for some continuity of learning for our students.

Spring Break Travel

The Centers for Disease Control has issued guidance regarding quarantining for anyone who has traveled to a high-risk country. Presently, those include: China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea. Travelers returning from Spring Break trips to these countries would need to be in quarantine for 14 days (without symptoms) prior to returning to school. Such missed days would not be counted against the student and we would take steps to initiate remote learning opportunities for such students.

Please continue to monitor [CDC guidance](#) in this regard as the identification of high-risk travel destinations may change quickly. The district cannot prevent students from returning to school unless they are confirmed to be in required quarantine or are symptomatic for COVID-19 or have tested positive for it. Still, please use all necessary caution when deciding to return to school after Spring Break travel.

Sports, Clubs, and Community Events

All sports practices, team gatherings, and competitions, performances, clubs, class activities, and other events are canceled until further notice. We discourage students from organizing their own gatherings.

Communication with Families

We will continue to provide you with regular updates as this situation develops. For the latest information, please visit our website and monitor your email and phone for messages from the District.

Additionally, it is important that for our students that we model measured behavior and rely on each other for support. Our students take their cues from the important adults in their lives and we can weather this challenging time together by refraining from alarmist or stress-inducing language in their presence. Our principals have shared some information related to speaking with your children about COVID-19, and I am also including these resources here:

[How to Talk to Your Kids about Coronavirus](#)

[How to Talk to Your Anxious Child about the Coronavirus](#)

This is a stressful and unprecedented situation for our school, our families, and our local and global community. We know there will be bumps in the road along the way, but together we will support our students and do what is best for them. I am proud to be part of a community with such a strong history of support for education. Thank you for your support, your patience, and your understanding as we navigate this situation together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Trisha Kocanda
Superintendent