



CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

Encourage Excellence Every Day with Compassion, Commitment, and Community

Emergency Communications Plan - Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Last updated March, 12, 2020

Dear Central 51 Families,

We are closely monitoring the coronavirus/COVID-19 health issue in our region and district. As COVID-19 is a newly emerging infectious disease, we understand information may change over time. The information included in the FAQ is provided to district stakeholders and is based on the latest information from the Illinois State Board of Education's document titled, [ISBE's Guidance to Schools on Coronavirus](#). We will continue to share updates through our typical modes of communications, such as: mass email, social media sites, and the district's website and app.

As a school district, we are closely monitoring the situation and taking guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). At this moment, we have not received a recommendation to close area schools.

We encourage our students, staff and families to be mindful of key preventive measures. The CDC offers some [tips on its website](#) that can be useful in avoiding the spread of this and other illnesses.

In addition, please remember that if children are sick, they should not be at school. Students need to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school after any illness. Please refer to the health guidelines outlined in the student handbook on our district website. Keeping children home when they are sick is critical to prevention. It is also worth noting that those individuals over the age of 60, or with underlying health issues or with a compromised immune system are at a higher risk of serious complications from this illness. Please consider this when attending community and school events.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale Heidbreder".

Superintendent, Central School District 51
[309-444-3943](tel:309-444-3943) | dheidbreder@central51.net

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can up-to-date resources and guidance on COVID-19 be found?

Tazewell County Health Department [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#) Phone: 309-925-5511 / Fax: 309-925-4381 / For after hour emergencies call 309-303-1375

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\)](#) Hotline 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC) [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

2. Who would make the decision to close schools?

Local school districts, acting in accordance with guidance from IDPH and local public health departments, will make the final decision as to whether or not conditions require the closure of schools. It is our intention to make every effort to keep our schools open.

3. Are schools being advised to close at this time?

No. IDPH does not currently recommend closing schools.

4. Some districts have received requests from families wanting to “self-quarantine” their students with no proven medical reason. Should these students receive unexcused absences? Should such a student be labeled truant?

A parent may hold their student out of school for any health or safety reason. While the district has the final say in whether the reason is truly a health/safety issue, these absences will not be counted as unexcused, and the student will not be labeled truant.

5. Can districts exclude students, staff, or volunteers for 14 days if they present at school after having visited a region affected by the virus?

No. If a student, staff member, or volunteer presents at school with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing after visiting an affected region, school authorities will relocate the individual in the nurse's office (or designated room) and immediately notify the local health department (and parents if the individual is a student). Individuals will be cared for by appropriate staff while awaiting direction from health department officials.

Districts cannot exclude or deny enrollment or education to students who are residents of the district based on a student's travel history. Decisions to quarantine students must be made by state or local public health officials.

6. What are emergency days on a school calendar?

A minimum of five Emergency Days are included on the school calendar by districts for conditions deemed as emergencies that necessitate the closure of all district buildings. Typical use of emergency days includes severe weather conditions, but would also include circumstances related to COVID-19. Emergency Days must be made up prior to the end of the school year or e-Learning Days can be used in place of emergency days.

7. What are Act of God Days on a school calendar?

An Act of God Day is a day that is used for a condition beyond the control of the district that poses a hazardous threat to the health and safety of the students. Act of God Days may only be requested after the district has exhausted all of its Proposed Emergency Days built into the proposed calendar. Act of God Days must be approved by the regional superintendent and the State Superintendent of Education. Act of God Days count toward the required number of student attendance days in the Public School Calendar and are not required to be made up.

8. Can our district use e-Learning Days in the event that there is widespread transmission of COVID 19?

Yes, we can. Keeping students engaged in learning, especially in times of uncertainty, is of critical importance. Beyond e-Learning Days, if schools need to be closed for an extended period of time, school districts should take affirmative steps to work with their staff and communities to ensure continuity of education to children. All districts are strongly encouraged by the ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) to continue providing educational supports, activities, and opportunities for students during school closures.