

# Hillsboro Public School #9

PO Box 579 Hillsboro, ND 58045



## ADMINISTRATION

Paula Suda, Superintendent  
Terry Baesler, Secondary Principal  
Jon Dryburgh, Elementary Principal  
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## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tim Kozojed, President  
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Rich Diehl  
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Mary Mattson

Friday, March 13, 2020

Parents, Staff, and Stakeholders,

As can be expected, there has been concern to how the school will respond to COVID-19. This is a challenging circumstance and there are no easy answers. In general, it is important to reiterate that we are continuing to work with the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH), our local health officials, and ND DPI on a regular basis.

The question heard most often relates to if school will continue to be in session. The simple answer to that right now is that yes, school will be in session.

The decision for school to be held as scheduled is not a decision made arbitrarily. It is done with great care and with the guidance of experts. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has [guidelines](#) on school closures that help school district leaders. In following CDC guidance, the Hillsboro School District will consider both community spread and cases of COVID-19 within the students and staff at HPS in making school closure decisions. As neither community spread nor known/confirmed cases of COVID-19 are occurring, the Hillsboro School District has made the decision to continue with regularly scheduled classes.

As noted by the CDC, closing schools early in the spread of disease for a short time (e.g. 2 weeks) will be unlikely to stem the spread of disease or prevent impact on the health care system while causing significant disruption for families, schools, and those who may be responding to COVID-19 outbreaks in health care settings.

In terms of activities outside the school, NDHSAA has suspended the Class B Boys' basketball tournament next week. All practices have been suspended right now. We will communicate any information about when the suspension is lifted.

The Hillsboro School District will continue to enact strategies within the school setting to help eliminate the spread of contagious illness. This includes, but is not limited to, enhancing school cleaning routines, social distancing, and teaching/bringing awareness to healthy hygiene practices that help mitigate the spread of these types of illnesses.



**Mission:** To lead and prepare learners to succeed in life.



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It is critically important to recognize the school-home partnership. We ask that families encourage healthy hygiene practices, such as handwashing, at home and at school. Most importantly, please keep sick children at home.

The more complicated answer to school closure is that this is an evolving situation. Please know that we will continue to review what is happening at a state and local level and make decisions as necessary. As things change, we will keep communicating with parents, staff, and the community.

## Guidance from the North Dakota Department of Health

Please encourage the following behaviors:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw it away;
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces/objects regularly;
- Get plenty of rest, drink fluids, and eat healthy foods;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Stay at home when you are sick.

Thank you all for your flexibility and understanding as we work through these challenges.

Sincerely,

*Paula Suda*

Paula Suda, Superintendent



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