



**Hiawatha Unified School District No. 415**  
706 South First Street; P.O. Box 398  
Hiawatha, Kansas 66434-0398  
(785) 742-2266 Fax: (785) 742-2301



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## **COVID-19 and USD 415 Hiawatha Schools update- March 14, 2020**

Today, District Administration and nursing met with NEK Multi-County Health Department, Brown County Emergency Management, and Hiawatha Community Hospital representatives to discuss a plan of action related to coronavirus and COVID-19.

District administration also attended a virtual meeting with KSDE, Governor's Office, and KDHE so as to have further guidance regarding that plan of action.

As many of you know, KSDE and Commissioner Dr. Randy Watson have broad authority to waive public school laws if health officials choose to close schools because of coronavirus. Again, that authority only exists if health officials make the choice; not school officials.

Please know the information and actions below are based on current information. This is a very fluid situation and new information comes daily and hourly. This information comes from the best medical advice in the state and our community.

### **What has USD 415 Decided?**

- As of now, we have decided to cancel school and all activities for Monday, March 16. This will allow us time to gather more information regarding the travel patterns of our staff and students during spring break and plan for other contingencies and preventative measures in the schools. Essential personnel (administration, nurses, custodians, and office staff) will be in the buildings on Monday. The district office will also be open.
- **It is not the recommendation, however, to close for any longer period of time.** Of course, that is the information we have as of today.
- Social Distancing- It is recommended to maintain a social distance of 6 feet between students. We will do our best to adhere to this recommendation. However, this may prove to be difficult in a school and bus setting. Therefore, we are asking parents to consider providing transportation for their students if possible. We are working to adjust daily (lunch times, passing periods, recesses, etc.) schedules to help meet those recommendations during the school day.
- We have suspended school-sponsored student travel from and within the district until further notice. This includes any and all field trips. A more complete list of cancellations will come from your child's school.
- Sports/extra-curricular practices- For now, these will continue with some modifications so as to better ensure following social distancing recommendations.
- We have suspended any school-sponsored activity where patrons and/or families would be in attendance until further notice.
- Our staff will have daily procedures to clean our schools and busses using approved disinfectants and decontamination systems that sanitize surfaces and kill viruses and bacteria.



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- As many of our students and staff have just returned from Spring Break trips, we strongly urge any staff and students to contact their respective school if they have traveled outside of the U.S. or to any cities/states known to have community-spread COVID-19. Please do so by calling your school. Your school's phone number is listed below.
  - Any students or staff who are ill or have been ill (fever of 100.0 or greater) recently should stay home until cleared by a physician to return to school.
  - In general, the decision to send your student to school is up to you, the parent. Please let the school know if you are keeping your child at home.

### Next steps

We will continue to work closely with our local health professionals, Kansas State Department of Education, and Kansas Department of Health and Environment regarding the status of school openings/closings or other related events. Again, please understand this is a very fluid situation and will likely change based on developing information and suggestions from these entities. USD415 will utilize our website, local media and social media to notify stakeholders of any decisions made.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

#### School Phone Numbers

HES	742-7181
HMS	742-4172
HHS	742-3312
District Office	742-2224

NEK Multi-County Health Department Website

[www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus](http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus)