



**NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha,
Knox, Pierce and Rock Counties

Dear School Administrators:

In light of the expanding COVID-19 pandemic, and the recommendations released on March 15th, 2020 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the limitation of gatherings and groups, it is my recommendation that public and parochial schools in the NCDHD health district begin a two week recess—starting Tuesday, March 17th. This initial recommendation is for a two-week period of time, with classes tentatively resuming on Tuesday, March 31st. The incubation period for COVID-19 is two to fourteen days. For this reason, a minimum of two weeks closed would be necessary to disrupt the incubation and shedding cycle. However, schools should be prepared for a possible extension of this adjournment for a longer period of time if circumstances should warrant.

In addition, I recommend the following measures:

- Faculty and staff may continue to report to work at the discretion of the school administration, however, measures must be put into place now to eliminate mingling and blending of staff members. This would include limited or no access to the staff lounge, a strict strategy for disinfecting commons areas—such as the restrooms, school office, meeting rooms, foyers, etc.
- Any staff or faculty members reporting to work should have a symptom screen prior to being admitted. This includes temperature and assessment of cough and/or shortness of breath. Please note, that with any respiratory virus, viral shedding can occur before a person becomes symptomatic or realizes that he/she is sick. Because of this, social distancing (six feet apart) of faculty members continuing to work is recommended for optimum impact. Any staff member that feels sick to any extent before arriving at school, or begins to feel sick after already arriving at school, must immediately leave the premises. The doors should be locked to visitors.
- All staff reporting to work during the closure should be ordered to wash their hands upon arrival at school, and before leaving school.
- Meetings should take place by way of technology to limit exposure to others.
- Finally, of utmost importance, we ask for your assistance in supporting and encouraging strict social distancing during this time of closure. This would include encouraging students to stay home, and limit time with people from outside of their household. Keeping interactions to a bare minimum will help in disrupting the exposure period and periods of contagiousness.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in proactively assisting us in keeping our students, staff, families and communities safe. Should you have any questions, please call our office at 402-336-2406. Or our 24/7 emergency line at 402-961-1718.

Sincerely,

Roger Wiese, Health Director, North Central District Health Department