



## Southeast District Health Department

*Serving Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson counties*

March 25, 2020

ESU 4 School Administrators

RE: Updated School Closure Recommendation

The Southeast District Health Department (SEDHD) and its local communities continue to prepare for the anticipated impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). While initial health measures have been implemented across the state and currently practiced in southeast Nebraska, additional aggressive prevention measures are needed.

On March 21, the Commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) hosted a conference call with Educational Service Units (ESU) and local health departments across the state to discuss long term school closures, outside of the initial two-week closures as recommended by SEDHD on March 17, 2020. During the call, the Commissioner recommended that schools prepare for closings for through May 1, 2020. This recommendation is based on the increasing severity of COVID-19 pandemic across the state.

Based on the NDE Commissioner's recommendation and current trends of the COVID-19 transmission, SEDHD recommends that ESU 4 schools suspend class and cancel school events through May 1, 2020. SEDHD and ESU 4 school administration will reevaluate school closures after May 1, to ensure that these measures continue to be appropriate and determine if longer- term closures are needed.

This recommendation is not made lightly. However, the SEDHD's primary objective is to prevent the spread of the virus, and the department is confident that this recommendation will reduce COVID-19 morbidity should community transmission develop.

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Executive Director