

March 25, 2020

Dear RE-1 Valley School District Families,

On Friday, March 20, I listened to Gov. Jared Polis's phone conference with Superintendents, where he issued a "No In-Person Learning" order for all schools in Colorado. The latest update from the state Health Department states that all gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited and all Coloradans must keep a six foot distance, to stop the spread of COVID 19,

We want to assure you that our three priority areas: social and emotional well-being, food services, and educational resources and support, will continue as essential activities in our community. As we return from the extended Spring Break on March 30th, Central Office administration, building administration, and your child's teachers are meeting to plan the next few weeks of remote learning for your children.

Our goal to provide your children with opportunities to learn is second to assuring your students are getting some strong adult support and connections from their school. We will have all instructional staff with the highest priority of reaching out to your child, but without overwhelming him/her at this time of such a disruptive event. In an attempt to bring some consistency to your child's routine, we will hold on the same days as our RE-1 School Calendar. Teachers and support staff may adjust some learning time to best meet the needs of your children.

Learning opportunities developed by your child's teachers and teacher teams will be designed and structured for your child and provided both electronically or in paper form. Although learning will not look the same as a school day, teachers are creating schedules to send home,

Our Student Support Services Team will continue to provide support and resources to students and families. Parents may use the online referral form on the district website if they have any questions or concerns or email/call a team member directly. Our support team will provide phone or facetime support as needed.

Teachers are using our Google Classroom and Google Meets as the primary platform to connect with your children. All students in RE-1 Valley have a Google email account, so with some help, your students will have time with their teacher in a supporting and reassuring activity of learning. We will be using phone calls to make initial contacts with students and families beginning April 2.

We sent a survey yesterday to gain information about what families need as far as Internet connectivity and devices such as smartphones, iPads or laptops. We will compile this information at each building and begin contacting families the week of March 30.

We plan to begin some instruction remotely the week of April 7. The first week we will be getting to know what children and teachers need. We are planning to increase the amount and structure of learning time in the course of the next three weeks. Please use resources on our RE-1 Valley website. We have been posting information for families over the last several weeks under the News and Live Feed features.

Lastly, I know this is a stressful time for families and for children. We have never experienced anything like this virus that seems to have taken over our lives.

The following is some suggestions for talking with your child. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) updates their site with new information in English and Spanish regularly.

We will be in contact in the next week,

With Respect and Care,

Jan DeLay, Ph.D.

*Jan DeLay, Ph.D*  
Superintendent of Schools

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As public conversations around coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) increase, children may worry about themselves, their family, and friends getting ill with COVID-19. Parents, family members, school staff, and other trusted adults can play an important role in helping children make sense of what they hear in a way that is honest, accurate, and minimizes anxiety or fear. CDC has created guidance to help adults have conversations with children about COVID-19 and ways they can avoid getting and spreading the disease.

General principles for talking to children

**Remain calm and reassuring.**

- Remember that children will react to both what you say and how you say it. They will pick up cues from the conversations you have with them and with others.

**Make yourself available to listen and to talk.**

- Make time to talk. Be sure children know they can come to you when they have questions.

**Parent Information:**

Closing schools is one of the most powerful ways we have to slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect people at higher risk from getting very sick or dying. We encourage parents and guardians to understand the situation and do their part to protect these people, too.

**Though kids are thought to be at lower risk for severe disease from COVID-19, they can easily spread it to others.**

- The people we are most concerned about are people over age 60 and people who have chronic medical conditions like heart, lung, or kidney disease, or diabetes.

**This is not just about keeping kids safe; it's about keeping the whole community safe by removing as many disease pathways as possible.**

**When school is closed, kids and grownups should practice social distancing. Aim to stay 6 feet away from others as much as possible.**

**Do not take children into any social setting when they are sick.**

- If your child is sick, keep them home and separate them from others.  
Call your health care provider if you are concerned about your child's illness.
- Children and teens with chronic health issues and immune-compromising conditions should check with their health care provider before participating in a shared childcare arrangement or gathering.

**If you are over 60 or have a chronic medical condition, avoid gatherings and caring for other people's children.**

**Small groups and big spaces lower the risk of disease spread.**

### **Recommendations for indoor gatherings and sharing childcare**

- Consider the size of the space vs. the size of the group. Aim to have the fewest number of children possible in the largest space available.
- Consider asking participating families to take their children's temperature before gathering.
- Frequently clean high-touch surfaces like doorknobs, toys, and keyboards. [Everyday cleaning products are effective against COVID-19.](#)
- Practice social distancing measures. With kids, that's hard. To increase the distance between children:
  - Think small — only a few friends at most.
  - Play games that involve fewer opportunities for touching.
  - When kids do touch, remind them to cover coughs and sneezes and to wash their hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Adults who join should practice social distancing and not participate if they are sick.

### **Recommendations for outdoor gatherings**

- The smaller the group size, the lower the risk.

- Limit face-to-face contact.
- Minimize activities that involve direct or close contact and avoid shared equipment as much as possible
- Repeatedly [clean and disinfect](#) any shared sporting equipment, especially objects touched with hands, like balls, bats, and playground equipment.
- Adults who join should practice social distancing and not participate if they are sick.

### **Recommendations for teenagers**

- The smaller the group size, the lower the risk.
- Avoid spending time in larger groups and in crowded places like parties, retail spaces and movie theaters.
- Low-contact, outdoor activities, like hiking and bike riding, are great ways for small groups of teens to socialize.

### **Teach your children to**

- Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash their hands. Teach kids to use their inner elbow if a tissue is not available.
- [Wash hands often](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. If soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Not share food, water bottles, utensils or cups.

### **More information**

[Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019: Messages for parents, school staff, and others working with children \(CDC\)](#)