



Knob Noster R-VIII School District

401 E. Wimer, Knob Noster, MO 65336
Office: (660) 563-3186 Fax: (660) 563-3026
Student Services: (660) 563-5597

Dr. Jerrod Wheeler, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Michael Cohron, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Angela Rolofson, Director, Student Services

Our Mission Is Student Success

Date: March 12, 2020
To: Knob Noster Public Schools Community
From: Superintendent Jerrod Wheeler
RE: Covid-19 Update (4)

Dear Knob Noster Public Schools Community,

I am writing with an update and fourth communication regarding the Covid-19, the Novel Coronavirus.

The safety and health of our school community continues to remain of utmost concern. Over the last 24 hours, the level of response and precautionary activity across our country and state has elevated significantly. Accordingly, our district is moving to our next tier of response to further reduce the chance for exposure. We remain in close communication with Whiteman AFB officials to ensure alignment and will continue to follow guidance from state agencies on this issue.

Known Facts:

- *At this time, we have learned of a second “presumptive-positive” case of Covid-19 in Greene County following last week’s confirmed case in St. Louis, Missouri. At least 65 residents have been tested state-wide.
- *There are no known confirmed cases in Knob Noster Public Schools, and we have been informed of no known cases related to Whiteman AFB.
- *The situation has been classified worldwide as a pandemic, causing additional responses over the last 24 hours.
- *Currently, we have asked a handful of faculty to stay home following travel out of district. We have also asked a group of students returning from out of state to stay home for Friday, March 13. These have been precautionary steps only and are not based on any symptoms. Students and staff will be excused for these absences.
- *One family from Whiteman AFB has been asked to stay home following travel, which includes students from our district and a district substitute employee.

KNPS Next Tier Precautionary Interventions:

Along with precautionary interventions currently in place as communicated in prior memos, the following additional precautionary interventions are being implemented.

1. The district schedule remains unchanged, with students scheduled to dismiss for Spring Break tomorrow, Friday, March 13 (1:00 p.m.) and scheduled to return to school Monday, March 23. The return date will be evaluated daily. Any change in schedule will be communicated to parents. This nine-day break comes at a very helpful time to provide some flexibility and separation of students and staff as it relates to this issue.
2. The district has suspended all non-essential travel activities for students, and has suspended all work related non-essential travel for employees until further notice. The district has no authority to suspend personal travel, although we have asked parents and faculty to notify us of travel to any location with elevated confirmed cases of Covid-19. Thank you to the many parents and staff members who have responded to this request.

3. The district has not canceled MSHSAA sanctioned team practices during the break at this time, as we await guidance from that organization related to required practices / competition eligibility. However, we have suspended some activities and will closely monitor this detail. Until further notice, practices will be considered 100% voluntary based on parental discretion, and no penalties will be assessed to players beyond what is required by MSHSAA bylaws for participation eligibility.

4. The district has arranged for all district-issued student devices (and charging cords) to be sent home with students on March 13 in case the district extends Spring Break and chooses to deploy virtual learning options. We have a variety of options on how this could occur, should school be forced to close. Should this occur, this would represent the district moving from precautionary intervention to responsive interventions based on local impact.

5. Our Instructional Technology team, along with our Building Principals, are aligning plans on how instruction may be delivered for all students, K-12, should we shut down our school following Spring Break. This could occur immediately or at any time following a school shutdown, based on the situation at that time. We recognize that internet accessibility may be an issue for a small portion of our student population. We have plans in place to address this issue to the greatest extent possible, with the smallest level of inconvenience. Details on this plan will be communicated, should it become necessary to implement this tier of response.

6. Additional updates will be sent as we respond to the quickly-evolving facts as we know them related to Covid-19.

I want to again stress that the full scope of our currently-implemented tiers of response are precautionary only. While we hope there will be no change to our schedule, we recognize this could occur, and if it does, our team will be ready to carry out our mission.

Likewise, should the Covid-19 cause significant and prolonged impacts in our school or community, we have planned for additional tiers of response. In this instance, our mission as a school would temporarily shift away from education and would focus on coordination and delivery of food, care, and basic needs to our students, patrons, and community. We have begun plans for those tiers of response, and will continue to do so as the situation unfolds.

In order to put all district memos, communications, and information in one place, the district has created a link on our school webpage which may be accessed by [clicking here](#). Or, you may visit www.knr8.net.

To date, our district may have communicated on this issue more than some of the other local school districts. This communication is in no way meant to sensationalize or misrepresent the severity of this issue. Rather, it is meant to inform you of our position and demonstrate our preparation to serve our students and community in this uncertain and evolving situation. As in all issues where we ask for your partnership and teamwork, calm decision making is critical for success. District leadership continues to be in contact with our local and regional districts and continues to engage as a member of the regional education task-force related to this issue.

As always, we sincerely appreciate your understanding and partnership as we work together to serve our students and community. Should you have any questions or comments, please direct your inquiry to jwheeler@knobnoster.k12.mo.us. As a reminder, from our last memo notifications, our district does not plan to engage or respond to social media inquiry threads on this issue. However, the district may share communication related to this issue through these media outlets.

Very Respectfully,

Jerrold Wheeler, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools