



Parents and Guardians,

3:16 PM March 12, 2020

School Update on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

There are no confirmed cases of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Montana at this time.

Park County Public Health with Montana State DPHHS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to closely monitor and respond to the COVID-19 outbreak caused by this coronavirus. **Guidance from these agencies indicates the risk to our school community is low at this time.**

The Shields Valley School District is committed to the safety of our students, staff, families and the community. This will be the primary focus of our prevention and control efforts.

At this time, the virus causing Covid -19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe disease. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure and include: fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Based on current recommendations, the steps to protect against corona virus are the same steps to take for the prevention of the spread of illnesses like the common cold and influenza:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Steps that are being taken to prevent the spread of disease at Shields Valley School:

- Personal protective equipment has been purchased
- Board policies related to school health have been and will be reviewed as the situation warrants
- Increased cleaning and disinfecting of high contact surfaces throughout the school and busses
- Upcoming lessons on effective handwashing technique and hand hygiene lessons for grades K-12
- Preparation of pre-plans focusing on potential scenarios affecting our school community
- Upcoming meeting including administration and staff with Park County Public Health Department

As this situation changes, our plans will continue to be updated. Updated information from the CDC on coronavirus in the United States can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

Thank you, Park County Public Health Department

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