



Ellensburg School District #401

1300 East Third Avenue Ellensburg, WA 98926, www.esd401.org, Phone: 509-925-8000, Fax: 509-925-802

Dear Staff and Parents/Guardians,

Attached is the latest press release from our Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD). I am in close communication with Dr. Larson, KCPHD Health Officer, concerning actions that we must take in the Ellensburg School District (ESD) to help control the spread of COVID-19, the disease caused by novel virus 2019. The Kittitas County Public Health Department directs the actions of ESD related to public health issues such as decreasing the spread of COVID-19. We are regularly consulting with Dr. Larson concerning the potential cancellation of events or closure of facilities.

Currently, the Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) is recommending that we continue to take the following **precautions**.

- Wash hands often with soap and water. If that is not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- **Stay home** while you are sick.
- Cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough.
- When possible, wipe commonly used surfaces (like cell phone screens) with disinfectant wipes.
- **Be aware of social biases that may be present. Support the message that attaching a stigma to or stereotyping any population is wrong. Stigmas will not fight the coronavirus but sharing accurate information will.**

Also, our custodial staff is taking extra steps (in addition to their regular routines) to keep our buildings clean. These actions include being intentional about scrubbing "high touch" areas, such as drinking fountains, hand rails, door knobs, and bathroom sinks more frequently throughout the day.

As the Health Officer, Dr. Larson is tasked with controlling and preventing the spread of any dangerous, contagious or infectious diseases that may occur within his jurisdiction to the extent which that is possible (RCW 70.05.070(3)). At this time, Dr. Larson is not recommending the cancellation of any student events sponsored by Ellensburg School District. This specific recommendation could change depending on Dr. Larson's recommendations, and staff and students would be notified.

At this time, there is only one known case of COVID-19 in Kittitas County. This person is in isolation, and the Kittitas County Public Health Department is working with and contacting individuals who may be at risk of exposure to COVID-19 from this individual.

ESD will keep you informed of any cancellations of ESD sponsored events or any other actions that need to be taken with our schools, students or staff. We are very grateful for the strong



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partnership that we have with the Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) and will continue to stay in close communication with them concerning any actions that are needed to prevent the spread of the COVID-19.

If you would like to receive the most up-to-date notices from the KCPHD, then click on this link: <https://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/login/default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fdept%2fdefault.aspx>. You'll have to register, and check it for Press Releases. That way you won't get every single notice that is sent out from the county. Every time KCPHD notifies the public about the corona virus, they send it through this system.

The Washington Department of Health website at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/> is also an excellent resource on topics like proper hand washing techniques and other important up-to-date information.

Feel free to contact me at jinger.haberer@esd401.org if you have questions related to ESD.

Sincerely,

Jinger Haberer, Superintendent

Here is the last press release from KCPHD:

PRESS RELEASE

Date: March 9, 2020

Contact: Kasey Knutson, Public Information Officer, (509) 962-7515

Presumptive Positive COVID-19 is now Confirmed Positive

The presumptive positive COVID-19 in Kittitas County is now a confirmed positive. The 67 year old female patient's health status remains the same and continues to be in home isolation.

The Kittitas County Public Health Department continues to monitor and investigate COVID-19 in our county. As of this morning, the most recent update is below:



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- As of this morning, KCPHD is not requiring or recommending any event cancellations or closures, although people should be prepared for that possibility. Please continue to watch for updates, since this can change quickly.
- All known potential close contacts have been notified. As the investigations continue, more potential contacts will be notified. KCPHD is coordinating with partners, including local healthcare response, Washington State Department of Health (DOH), and neighboring health jurisdictions.
- Close contacts who require testing must stay home in isolation until test results are returned.
- People who are concerned they may be ill with COVID-19 and require non emergent medical attention, can visit the Kittitas Valley Healthcare temporary clinic at 716 E Manitoba between 9am and 5pm or you can call at 509-933-8850.
- Anyone who gets tested for COVID-19 will be required to isolate until results are returned.

“We want to clarify that presumptive positive testing, which is the initial screening test, is accurate. Having a presumptive positive test result confirmed is essentially a formality,” states Health Officer Dr. Mark Larson. “We are monitoring social media and response from our community, so we know that there was confusion around testing. Our goal is to continue to communicate and maintain the trust we strive for in Kittitas County.”

Recommendations may change as the outbreak continues, so please continue to monitor our county website at www.co.kittitas.wa.us or our Facebook page.