

March 13, 2020

Today, Governor Inslee announced all K-12 schools in Washington State will be closed through at least Friday, April 24th, 2020.

Below is the statement Nooksack Valley had prepared early Friday morning.

Last night, our county health department called the county superintendents together to tell us they are recommending closure of our schools. We have communicated from the early stages of this situation that we are educators, not medical experts, and that we would follow the lead of our county health department. Later today, there will be a press release distributed announcing that all school districts in Whatcom County will be closed. For Nooksack Valley, our last day of school will be today. This closure will last through April 24, 2020. Keep in mind that this closure recommendation was for mitigating the spread of the virus, not because we are in an emergency situation. Everyone continues to learn more about this virus and how to slow its spread through social distancing and other measures.

This decision is certainly not something we take lightly, and we haven't had much time to process (less than 24 hours!). In my 39 years as an educator, I've never experienced this type of situation. There is much to consider, such as a) how might we continue to provide meals for our children, b) how might we continue working together to provide learning experiences outside of school, during these closures, and c) the list goes on.

This is a time where we need to come together as a community to truly love our neighbors. The most vulnerable in our midst need our protection and care. We need to ensure those more elderly citizens have what they need, while keeping them safely distanced from exposure to the virus. Our children need supervision and guidance, so we'll need to work together to creatively ensure this can continue. We strongly encourage neighbors and neighborhoods to play a critical role in mitigating these challenges.

Please know that we're working diligently to navigate this situation. I ask that you continue to show patience, understanding and grace as we work through these challenging times and uncharted territory.

With love and appreciation,
Mark

"Facts not fear. Clean hands. Open hearts.
Our children will thank us for it." By Dr. Sharkawy