

Twin Valley Schools

Unified District No. 240
Box 38 / Bennington, Kansas 67422-0038
(785) 488-3325

Friday, March 13, 2020

Dear USD 240 Parent, Student, Patron, and Staff Member,

I apologize in advance for the length of this letter but also want to provide as much information as possible as it relates to the Covid-19 situation that is obviously of great concern worldwide. As a school district, we are working with local officials to ensure the safety of students, staff, employees and patrons. This is a fluid situation and things are bound to change daily. We will do our best to keep you posted as those changes affect what we do as a school district.

One thing to keep in mind is the concept of “flattening the curve”, meaning social distancing, quality hygiene, recognition/reporting of symptoms, and communicating as per the guidance given. The big thing is not to panic, rather to follow advice provided by the health professionals.

I will be working with the school nurse, principals, teachers, and all other staff to ensure the safety of our people. There may be changes in situations at school where there are large crowds of students, such as at lunch, etc. to minimize exposure. We will be working through those as per KSDE guidance that is being issued daily.

I have tried to categorize topics to make it clear as to your specific situation. I would strongly suggest that you read the whole letter as there is a lot to consume.

WHAT ARE THE BASIC PRACTICES TO BE PROACTIVE?

- Practice social distancing in relation to large gatherings, etc.
- Handwashing for at least 20 seconds USING soap and water
- Covering cough and sneezes in your elbow
- Stop handshaking
- Avoid touching your face
- Disinfect surfaces
- If you are sick, stay home!

FOR THOSE THAT TRAVELED IN AREAS AFFECTED BY THE VIRUS

If you have been on a trip outside of the United States, outside of the state of Kansas or were in Kansas county with a known case over spring break, we are going to ask that you report to the school office upon arrival each morning to be temperature checked for 5 days. We will then re-evaluate the situation based upon current information. This is strictly a precautionary measure to protect our most vulnerable individuals.

If your student (or a staff member) falls into this category, we are asking that you contact Nurse Becky Racette via email bracette@usd240.org or via text at 785-488-6091 before 5 pm on Sunday, March 15, 2020. We also need those students to report directly to the BGS office if at Bennington and the school office at Tescott upon arrival to school.

Twin Valley Schools

Unified District No. 240

Box 38 / Bennington, Kansas 67422-0038

(785) 488-3325

WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS AND TRAVELED IN AREAS AFFECTED BY THE VIRUS

If you have a travel history as described above and have a fever above 100 degrees along with respiratory symptoms, we will ask that you contact your healthcare provider via phone or contact your county health department via phone for further instructions to be screened. It is important to note that these entities are requesting that you call in advance and not show up in person as they have protocols to follow in relation to screening. Please realize that they can easily become overwhelmed if individuals with symptoms just show up onsite. They are equipped to give you the necessary guidance as to screening, etc. Schools do not have the capacity to screen.

If you are a resident of Ottawa County, the number to call for screening purposes is 785-392-2822. The physical address of the Ottawa County Health Department is 817 A Argyle Ave, Minneapolis, KS 67467. It is important to remember to **CALL** in advance. Please do not just show up in person to the Health Department for the reasons discussed earlier.

If you are a resident of Salina County, the phone number for the Saline County Health Department is 785-826-6602. The physical address for the Saline County Health Department is 125 W. Elm, Salina, KS 67401. It is important to remember to **CALL** in advance. Please do not just show up in person to the Health Department for the reasons discussed earlier.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF THE VIRUS AND HAVE NOT BEEN IN AFFECTED AREAS

If you present any of these symptoms (temperature, respiratory issues to include shortness of breath, dry cough, etc), we will ask that you stay home for a minimum of 14 calendar days from school. We will also ask that you contact either your County Health Department or local health provider and follow their direction as it may relate to screening. When you have made that contact with the health provider, please communicate with the school in relation to their advice, etc. Any student with these symptoms will be exempted by the school from truancy reporting for these instances only.

INFORMATION SPECIFICALLY ABOUT COVID-19 CAN BE FOUND AT:

KDHE site: <http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/index.htm>

CDC site: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>

This is obviously a fluid situation and will change daily, if not hourly. With the spring break ending and the situations taking place across the country and state as they are, this information might be outdated prior to Monday morning with the students and staff return. We will do everything in our power to see that we provide as much information and as safe a learning environment as is humanly possible.

Sincerely,



Fred Van Ranken-USD 240 Superintendent