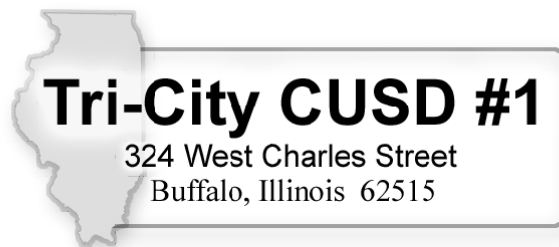




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March 12, 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s):

This morning the Sangamon and Menard County school superintendents met with regional health and educational officials regarding (COVID-19), coronavirus regarding the possible impact to the educational process, even if there are no known cases in our area.

***But if COVID-19 isn't here, why should we change our usual practices?***

Our greatest concern is not just about the threat/risk to individual students, but also about doing all that we can as a community to minimize the impact as a whole. This is best accomplished through something known as "social distancing." Public health authorities advise that practicing social distancing is the best way to slow the spread of infection and prevent the challenges of providing care for many people being infected at once and overwhelming our healthcare system. More on this here: <https://www.vox.com/2020/3/10/21171481/coronavirus-us-cases-quarantine-cancellation>

***We need to be prepared***

With the rapid spread of the virus and its proximity to Springfield, we know from public health authorities, that it is best to assume that the virus will eventually reach Sangamon County. Based on recommendations from health authorities, our district may enact temporary procedural changes, which could include restrictions on visitors to school buildings, possible cancellation or rescheduling of large gatherings or events, and even closing school buildings. Social distancing is an important component of pandemic planning, reducing the potential for exposure of the virus if found in our community. The decision to close schools is made with guidance from IDPH, ISBE, and our local health department. Even though, at this time, IDPH is not recommending closing schools, we need to be prepared.

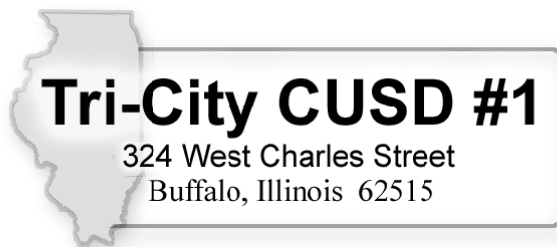
We are preparing for the possibility of schools being closed by county, state, or federal authorities. If schools were to close due to circumstances related to COVID-19, we are required to exhaust our five allocated emergency days first, which we have one left. The remainder would be considered Act of God Days, and would not be made up at the end of the year if approved by the regional superintendent and the State Superintendent of Education. We know that any disruption to the normal school schedule is a hardship for our parents and students.

Our teachers are working on providing continued learning activities, either by e-learning or a learning packet. This learning will not be perfect and will not meet the high level of standard of education that goes on a normal basis. This is an attempt to do our best to continue to serve our students during a state and global crisis.

As spring break approaches on March 23 – 27, any student or staff member traveling to a country under



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a level 2 or 3 travel advisory by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>) will be subject to a 14 day quarantine before returning to school. Please communicate with your school principal if you plan on vacationing outside of the United States before the break begins.

Once again, we know the hardships that each of you encounter when school is closed. We highly encourage you to develop a plan for your children if this was to occur for an extended period of time such as 14 days.

We will continue to provide you with any new information we receive from local, state, or federal officials regarding COVID-19, or any changes made to our normal operations. We will contact staff and parents via phone, e-mail, text, social media and website postings, as well as local media notification to report any important information regarding closures or cancellations.

Educationally yours,

Jill Larson  
Superintendent