



Richmond Elementary School District

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March 9, 2020

Dear Richmond School Community & Staff:

In the past few weeks, we have been flooded with the news updates surrounding the Coronavirus, or COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and California Department of Education have issued statements that we should all begin preparing for possible transmission of Coronavirus in communities throughout the state. Since that time, I have received a number of questions from parents, community members, and Richmond School staff members regarding the District's efforts to prepare for and prevent the possible spread of the Coronavirus. In response to those inquiries, we have prepared the attached set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which summarize Richmond School's current answers to many of the questions we have received to date. It is our hope that we are making plans that we will not have to implement. However, if we do need to implement them, we will be prepared.

As you review the FAQs, you will notice that we have not attempted to interpret or rewrite any of the information coming from the health officials such as the Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Their information speaks for itself. Instead, we have provided direct links to their websites so that you can access reliable information and guidance. I invite you to visit their websites frequently to receive the most up-to-date information surrounding the Coronavirus.

Thank you for your diligence in working with us to keep our children, staff, and community safe. We appreciate the telephone calls, emails, and offers of support regarding the Coronavirus that we have received. Ensuring both the physical and emotional well-being of our children continues to be a very high priority for the school. You can help keep our schools safe for everyone by sharing accurate information with your children and fellow community members. Please be sure to seek out information regarding the Coronavirus from reliable sources.

We are dedicated to giving our students a safe and welcoming learning environment. We appreciate your support in that endeavor.

Sincerely,

Vicky Leitaker
Superintendent/Principal

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between a school dismissal and a school closure? (March 9, 2020)

School Dismissal – During a dismissal, school facilities are kept open for staff, while students stay home. This would allow teachers to develop and deliver lessons and materials, thus maintaining continuity of learning, and allow other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts.

School Closure – During a school closure, all students and staff members are sent home, and no services are provided at the school.

The decision to dismiss or close a school because of Coronavirus cases will be made through direction given to the Richmond Elementary School District by our Lassen County Health Officer, Dr. Korver, and the Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) and not by the individual school alone. If Dr. Korver and the LCDPH determine that our school should dismiss or close, we cannot override that public health decision.

Will Richmond School be closing or dismissing schools due to the Coronavirus? (March 9, 2020)

As of today, we are operating as usual, and there are no planned school dismissals or closures at Richmond School. However, like all other school districts within Lassen County, Richmond School will dismiss or close schools as appropriate **IF** Dr. Korver and the LCDPH determine closure is necessary to contain the spread of the Coronavirus in order to protect our students, staff, and community. Additionally, the District will call for a school dismissal or closure if other situations occur preventing the safe and efficient operation of school.

How will Richmond School find out if a student or staff member in the District is diagnosed with the Coronavirus? (March 9, 2020)

Richmond School staff are in regular communication with the Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH). Currently, LCDPH is the agency responsible for testing suspected cases of Coronavirus in our county. As part of their protocol, they will contact Richmond School if there is a diagnosed case within any of our schools, and as part of that contact, give us direction on how to proceed. This is the same protocol followed in the event of other disease cases such as measles, hepatitis, etc.

How will parents be notified in the event of school dismissals or closures? (March 9, 2020)

In the event we need to dismiss or close Richmond School, we will contact you through a recorded message to your telephone number of record and a written correspondence to your email of record. Please make sure we have your current contact information. If your phone number or email has changed, it is important that you update the information by contacting the school office at 530-257-2338. We will also post news of school dismissals or closures on our District's website at www.richmondelementary.com.

Is Richmond School working with any other public agencies regarding the Coronavirus?
(March 9, 2020)

As of today, the District is in regular contact with the Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) and Susan River Fire Department. The communication with these agencies is helping us ensure that we are making decisions with the most current and factual information.

If a student or staff member is diagnosed with the Coronavirus, will parents be notified? (March 9, 2020)

Yes. In the event the District receives information from the Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) indicating that a student or staff member has been diagnosed with the Coronavirus, the District will immediately notify parents and staff. This communication will take place in conjunction with the LCDPH

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and is standard protocol anytime there are cases of communicable illnesses in our schools (i.e. measles, hepatitis, etc.) While we will notify parents, it is critical that we also maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the affected student or staff member.

If schools are dismissed or closed, will there be alternative instructional methods so that learning can continue? (March 9, 2020)

Yes. Richmond School is already prepared to continue our students' education in the event of a school dismissal, and we are currently developing a process for alternative instruction in the event our school is closed. The type of alternative instruction we are able to offer will depend upon the length of any school dismissal or closure, the reason for the dismissal or closure, students' access to technology, and the grades/subjects needed to be taught. In the event of a school dismissal, our TK-2nd grade students will have instructional packets developed and made available in the school office for parent pick-up. Our 3rd-8th grade students will continue their education through Google Classroom. Chromebooks will be made available for checkout if necessary. All students will be placed on independent study in the event that Richmond School is dismissed or closed due to the Coronavirus.

Is Richmond School currently doing any extra cleaning or disinfecting to prevent the spread of germs? (March 9, 2020)

In addition to our regular cleaning procedures, Facilities Services has initiated the following extra measures:

1. High touch areas such as door handles, handrails, and restroom fixtures are being sanitized to reduce germs and viruses that may accumulate during the school day;
2. Restrooms are being monitored throughout the school day to ensure they are adequately stocked with soap and hand towels;
3. Hand sanitizer stations are provided throughout the school for use in locations that do not have running water for hand washing;

What is Richmond School doing to teach students about the Coronavirus and other such illnesses? (March 9, 2020)

Staff at Richmond School have been messaging the following to students:

1. Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds
2. If water is not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
3. When coughing, cover your mouth with a tissue, or cough in shirt, elbow/sleeve
4. Throw used tissue in trash and wash hands
5. Stay home when sick

Can my child use hand sanitizer at school? (March 9, 2020)

Yes. Under current circumstances, students may bring hand sanitizer and use it while at school. Please remind your children that hand washing with soap and water is the first, best practice in preventing the spread of illnesses such as the Coronavirus.

I always hear that I should keep my child home if they are sick. What symptoms trigger the need for my child to miss school and stay home? (March 9, 2020)

Following are the guidelines and recommendations for keeping your child home from school:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or above (Students must be fever-free without fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin for at least 24 hours before returning to school)
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea. (Student may return to school 24 hours after last episode)
- Uncontrollable cough, wheezing, or shortness of breath
- Suspected communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox)

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- Suspected infections
- A rash of unknown origin - students may return to school when written authorization is received from a healthcare provider.

Should I notify anyone if my child is going to miss school? (March 9, 2020)

Yes. Please notify the school office of the child's absence at 530-257-6163.

If my child is sick and gets better, when can he/she return to school? (March 9, 2020)

If the student has been symptom free without the use of medication for a minimum of 24 hours, the student can return to school, unless a doctor has ordered that the student remain at home for a longer time period. The student needs to provide a note from the parent and from a doctor when the student has been absent for five (5) days or more due to an illness/injury.

How do I prevent my family or me from contracting the Coronavirus? (March 9, 2020)

Health authorities remind us that the best way to avoid contracting the Coronavirus or other illnesses is by practicing the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
- Avoid contact with sick people
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Refrain from handshaking
- Limit close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, with people who are sick
- Clean surfaces that are touched often, like toys and doorknobs

Where can I get additional information regarding the Coronavirus? (March 9, 2020)

Updated, factual information regarding the Coronavirus can be obtained from the following agencies:

- The Lassen County Department of Public Health (LCDPH): <https://www.facebook.com/LassenPH/> or <http://www.co.lassen.ca.us/dept/public-health/public-health>
- The California Department of Public Health: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>
- The Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

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