

Update from the Oregon Department of Education and InterMountain Education Service District on Coordinated Response To Coronavirus

The school districts are in close contact with their local health authorities, Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education as they work to inform students, faculty and the community.

Schools districts in the InterMountain Region are combining local resources and coordinating with state officials in response to today's news that Oregon health officials have identified a presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in our community.

According to [Oregon Health Authority this is the third presumptive positive case](#) of COVID-19 among state residents. The third case is an adult Oregon resident from Umatilla County who is hospitalized in Walla Walla, Wash.

Preliminary reports indicate the Oregon resident attended a youth basketball game at a gymnasium at Weston Middle School, 205 E. Wallace St. in Weston, Ore., on Saturday, February 29.

"Our area school districts are working closely with local health officials, Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education to keep the community safe and informed," said Dr. Mark Mulvihill, Superintendent of InterMountain Education Service District. "Any decisions about school cleanings or closures are made in direct consultation with our local health authority and OHA. I encourage everyone to reference and use the helpful updates coming from [OHA](#) and [ODE](#) to stay healthy and safe."

[OHA](#) continues to recommend all people in Oregon take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of many respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19 and influenza:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are often touched.
- Take care of your health overall. Staying current on your vaccinations, including flu vaccine, eating well and exercising all help your body stay resilient.
- Consult CDC's travel website for any travel advisories and steps to protect yourself if you plan to travel outside of the US.

Coronavirus typically spreads through close contact. Close contact is considered to be any time two people are within 6 feet of each other for a prolonged period of time.



All school closure decisions are made by the local public health authority and the local school district and in consultation with the Oregon Health Authority. Health authority officials review each case and follow CDC and state protocols to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus.

While the spread of novel coronavirus is troubling, we must remind ourselves that fear, rumors, and stigma do nothing to stop the further spread of the disease. Facts and science, proven public health measures and common-sense precautions (like those listed above) in our personal lives are the best measures we can take to protect the people we care about.

The Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority have developed a set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) that can serve as a resources for families and schools. You can look here to find answers to questions such as:

- Should my child stay home from school?
- Should my child be tested?
- Why aren't schools closed?
- And, much more...

Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms. If you are feeling sick with mild symptoms and do not need to see medical care, stay home while you recover. If you are sick and plan to seek care, please call before going in for care so arrangements can be made to prevent exposing others. For urgent medical needs, call 911.

For more information:

- [OHA Emerging Respiratory Disease page](#)
- [Washington Department of Health](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 page](#)
- [CDC travel notice](#)
- [WHO page](#)