

Superintendent Message, March 9, 2020

Each day school leaders of both public schools and universities receive updates from the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Education. Below are the highlights from yesterday's, March 8, 2020 update. I assure you that the Pendleton School District takes the COVID-19 outbreak seriously and that we are following the best and most recent scientific and medical recommendations.

Colt Gill – Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, State of Oregon:

"I appreciate the strong partnership and guidance from the Oregon Health Authority as Oregon rallies in response to the COVID-19 challenge," Oregon Department of Education Director Colt Gill said. "Keeping schools open is the best option for our state and, most importantly, for our students. Our safety efforts should focus on practicing good hygiene, staying home when we are not feeling well, and cleaning surfaces in our schools. We can all play a part with these simple steps to protect ourselves and our friends, classmates, and community."

Oregon Health Authority:

Public health experts at the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and education officials with the Oregon Department of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission today issued [guidance and best practices](#) from public health experts to schools, colleges and universities for decision-making concerning the novel coronavirus in Oregon.

At this time, the guidance recommends against closing schools and campuses where no cases of COVID-19 are present. It also recommends that schools, colleges, and universities consider all alternatives before closing a school, college or university in the event that a COVID-19 case is detected among students or staff. The guidance identifies important strategies educational administrators can use to reduce the risk of COVID-19 within a school community and protect students from lost instructional time.

OHA state health officer Dr. Dean Sidelinger said, "We know many parents, students and educators are worried that COVID-19 will appear in their school communities. We want schools and universities to know there are steps they can take to prevent infection and keep students safe, healthy and learning in the classroom."

If you would like to read the entire update, please click on the following link. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORDHS/bulletins/27ffdb>

Thank you,

Chris Fritsch, Superintendent