

COVID-19: SCHOOL UPDATE 3/17/20

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Southeast Warren CSD has committed to following the guidance of the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Governor's Office. As this situation evolves, the district will continue to take its cues from health care professionals and state leaders. On March 15th, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds recommended "that all Iowa schools close for a period of four weeks to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19." Pursuant to this recommendation, the Southeast Warren Board of Education has decided to close all school buildings **through April 12, 2020**. School will resume **April 13** (no Easter Break) unless there are further changes.

This closure will apply to all district programs, activities and facilities. All district extra and co-curricular practices, rehearsals, contests and events will be postponed or cancelled in accordance with the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union's, Iowa High School Activities Association's, Iowa High School Music Association's and Iowa High School Speech Association's decision to suspend all spring activities. All district facilities will be closed to the public, and district employees will have only pre-approved access to buildings. All district facilities rentals and reservations will be suspended until further notice.

On Wednesday, March 18th, all buildings will be open to students and staff for two 2-hour time slots: 7:00 am to 9:00 am and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm, for the purpose of retrieving personal items. Secondary students are encouraged to clean out their athletic lockers also. Other than these times on Wednesday, there will be no access to the buildings.

Elzora Town Daycare will stay open at the request of the Department of Human Services. CDC precautions will be followed as closely as possible, and the board approved this service to continue for currently enrolled participants. **Emergency Daycare**: The Iowa Dept. of Education and Dept. of Human Services have directed us to provide daycare services for parents who work in critical roles* (see below) with school-age children (12 and under) or special needs children, who are not currently enrolled at Elzora Town Daycare. Email the school district office for more information (see below) or call 641-466-3331, or 641-466-3510.

**Critical role service areas: hospital staff, healthcare providers, social services, child protection, public health, tax collection, corrections, other public safety, emergency responders, food service/grocery store workers, and other DHS approved areas.*

The Southeast Warren Food Pantry will still be held on March 25th, with adjusted procedures. Patrons will not be allowed to enter the building but will be given a shopping list to order their supplies. The supplies will be delivered to them outside the building.

School Activities postponed during the 4-week closure will be rescheduled if possible. The Jr-Sr High Prom is scheduled for April 18th. We must monitor the virus outbreak in the coming weeks to be able to make a decision about the status of this event. A decision will be made and published as soon as possible.

School Lunches: Southeast Warren can apply through USDA to provide meals for students by drive-through, grab-and-go or other methods during school closures related to the COVID19 outbreak. These meals would be charged to lunch accounts using current eligibility status (free/reduced/full price). Please email luann.ohnemus@se-warren.k12.ia.us if you are interested in receiving meals via this USDA program **by FRIDAY March 20th** so we can determine if we should apply for this program.

It is important to remember that this situation is fluid and plans may change as more information becomes available. Please monitor the district website, Remind app notifications, and social media sources for updates.

Social distancing*, school closures, event cancellations, and other similar efforts are being undertaken to limit the number of exposures and “flatten the curve” on new COVID-19 cases. ***Students should not spend time in friends’ homes and public areas where young people gather.** The district hopes its students and families will commit to avoiding large groups and travel, practicing preventative hygiene measures, and self-quarantining after travel or if symptoms arise. Everyone’s combined effort can limit the impact of this pandemic on our community so we can all return to normal activities as soon as possible.

The district encourages parents to engage in educational activities with their children during this time of school closure. Teachers are encouraged to communicate educational resources to parents and students through Google Classroom, Remind App, and email. Feel free to contact teachers by email for suggested resources.

Our district office will remain staffed when possible. Questions may be directed via email to delane.galvin@se-warren.k12.ia.us john.burrell@se-warren.k12.ia.us or luann.ohnemus@se-warren.k12.ia.us.