

COVID-19 Questions and Answers

Does the school district have a plan in place to address a potential COVID-19 virus outbreak in McCook?

Yes, the school has a Pandemic Response Plan in place to provide guidance to district leaders in the event a COVID-19 virus outbreak occurs in McCook.

Have school officials worked with local health care agencies to prepare for COVID-19?

Yes, the school district has met with local health care officials to discuss how to deal effectively with a COVID-19 outbreak in McCook. School leadership has also collaborated with other local educational entities.

What if a student or staff member is in school and is infected with the COVID-19 virus?

If a student or a staff member is identified as having the Covid-19 virus and is on campus immediate action should be taken to isolate the individual from healthy students and staff members. Each building will need a site designated in their building for the purpose of isolation. This space will need to be comfortable for the short period of time they are housed there while waiting for transportation home.

Are schools responsible for screening students for COVID-19?

No, the schools are not responsible for screening students; however, we may ask questions that can provide indicators to the type of infection and individual has. It is important to note that the majority of illnesses are not COVID -19. Local health care officials are responsible for the identification of illnesses.

Who is responsible for keeping the school clean?

While it is the primary responsibility for our custodial staff to keep the schools clean, all staff members are expected to help reduce the chance of infection by doing routine cleaning in their classrooms. All staff members can help clean frequently touched objects such as door knobs, light switches, counter tops, etc... District administration should make sure that disposable wipes are made available to classrooms to help with routine cleaning.

How will the school keep stakeholders informed?

McCook Public Schools will use a variety of methods to keep staff and patrons informed: email, notes home, district website, automated callers, social media, local media sources such as radio and newspaper, and signage. Our automated caller will likely be used to share information with parents and students, and it will also be used to guide or give notice to parents and students informing them where information can be obtained.

Will schools dismiss if a student or staff member is identified as having the COVID-19 virus?

While every scenario is different, it is very possible that the school may shut down due to a positive identification of COVID-19 among the staff or students. This closure could be a single building or may include the entire district. Local health officials would be consulted before making such a decision. During a closure, all school facilities would receive a thorough cleaning with the proper cleaning supplies. And parents would be strongly encouraged to keep their students home to prevent the social gathering of students. The congregation or social gathering of students increases the likelihood of spreading an infection.

Would food services be terminated if the schools were to shut down?

The school would work hard to devise a plan to safely provide school meals to students; however, the conditions related to the local outbreak may make foodservice impossible or ill advised. The school would notify parents if food service were to continue; along with directions on how to safely pick up food for their children.

Will the school still hold school events?

The school would likely cancel all events if an outbreak takes place in McCook. The congregation of large groups of people during a time of known infection is ill advised. Holding events has the potential to exacerbate the problem.

Would instruction and learning stop if the schools shut down?

Depending upon the circumstances it may become necessary to continue the educational process even with the buildings closed. If the school decides to engage in alternative approaches to learning, such as eLearning, employing technology to extend the classroom, parents and students would be notified concerning the process and lessons and how the students work is to be credited to them. Teachers have already been asked to consider the approach they would use if the schools needed to employ alternative educational approaches.

Will the school provide information on the COVID-19 virus and preventative measures they should take to avoid the spread of the illness?

Yes, in fact the school has already posted information on the district website. If you wish to learn about the virus or how to prevent its spread you should go to the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.

