

Coronavirus: Information for Indianapolis Public Schools Students, Employees and Families

March 6, 2020

IPS Superintendent Aleesia Johnson, in collaboration with the Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners, is implementing proactive measures to minimize risk to students, employees and families relating to the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

As a part of this effort, the district's Cross-Functional Task Force (CTF) — composed of senior district leaders — was established to monitor and oversee the district's ongoing response to COVID-19. The CTF will direct these proactive measures by providing guidance on school attendance, school cleaning, student enrollment, student travel and re-entry, employee travel and re-entry, employee attendance, facility rental and transportation.

IPS remains in close communication with the Marion County Public Health Department and other public health officials to make informed operational decisions. IPS is committed to keeping our students, employees and families safe and informed with the most current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

School Closure

While there have not been any confirmed cases at IPS, the district will follow state and local health department guidelines. If there is a confirmed case, we will report it to the Marion County Health Department and the Indiana State Department of Health and follow their recommendations.

If necessary, school closures will be communicated using the district's standard channels of communication, including phone calls, emails and text messages.

Parents and guardians should verify that their phone numbers and email addresses are correct in PowerSchool and ensure that notification permissions are set to receive messages. You can also update your contact information with help from your school's front office staff.

School Attendance

Students who provide written documentation from their healthcare provider advising them to refrain from attending school due to the Coronavirus will receive an excused absence. Families of these students should coordinate with their school's administration for additional guidance. For all other students, normal school attendance policies remain in effect.

Cleaning of School Facilities and School Buses

The district continues to utilize products confirmed by the manufacturer to kill human Coronavirus and other viruses. IPS will continue to clean and disinfect schools, facilities and school buses in alignment with guidance from the CDC. School leaders have been directed to provide adequate supply of soap and paper towels for student and employee use. If warranted, the district is prepared to deploy additional resources to ensure our schools remain safe.

Enrollment of New Students from High Risk Areas

Prior to enrolling, new families to IPS from countries with travel advisories for the Coronavirus, as identified by the CDC or the US Department of State, should telephone the school for instructions. School officials will work with district and community health officials to determine the appropriate registration and attendance plan for those students. Families arriving from high-risk areas should not visit the school nor district facilities but should interact with school officials by telephone or email.

School-Sponsored Student Travel

Any school-sponsored or district-sponsored travel to locations with [travel advisories](#) for the Coronavirus, as identified by the CDC or the US Department of State, will be cancelled. The district will work with families to pursue refunds, if possible.

Currently, planned school-sponsored or district-sponsored out-of-state travel, which is non-refundable for students, may be allowed if a trip is not to an area of concern as identified by IPS. District administration will review each trip on a case-by-case basis. If a student is not comfortable traveling, those individuals will be excused from the event and every effort will be made to release the student from any financial penalty for non-attendance. There will be no academic consequences for non-attendance on field trips.

Currently planned school-sponsored or district-sponsored out-of-state-travel will be reviewed by the CTF. Trips requiring air travel, events held in closed spaces, or events with 1,000 or more participants will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Until further notice, new requests for international field trips will not be approved. Until further notice, new requests for out-of-state field trips will not be approved.

The district is proceeding with caution regarding in-state travel. All in-state travel will be reviewed by the CTF. Trips requiring air travel, events held in closed spaces, or events with 1,000 or more participants will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The district is proceeding with caution regarding in-county field trips. Events held in closed spaces or events with 1,000 or more participants will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Students who are exhibiting flu-like symptoms will not be permitted to participate in field trips. Parents and guardians should verify that their phone numbers and email addresses are correct in PowerSchool and ensure that notification permissions are set to receive messages.

Spring Break Travel

Parents and guardians should inform their schools if anyone in their household is traveling to areas from countries with [travel advisories](#) — including China, Japan, Iran, Italy — for the Coronavirus, as identified by the CDC or the US Department of State. Families are requested to fill out a [Travel Form](#) only if they are traveling to one of these countries. Upon notification, schools will work with district and community health officials to determine the appropriate action regarding re-entry of those children into the school.

Employee Travel

All previously approved employee out-of-state travel is being reviewed. Until further notice, new out-of-state travel requests will not be approved, except in emergencies or mission critical employee situations as determined by the CTF and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Employees should self report [here](#) if they or anyone in their household has traveled in the past two weeks, or has plans to travel, to countries with advisories for the Coronavirus, as identified by the [CDC](#) or the US Department of State.

Re-entry of Employees

Traveling employees should inform their supervisor by telephone or email if anyone in their household has traveled to areas from countries with travel advisories for the Coronavirus, as identified by the [CDC](#) or the US Department of State. Supervisors should work with the CTF to determine the appropriate action regarding re-entry to the workplace, which may include a month quarantine.

Employee Attendance

Employees not reporting to work due to the Coronavirus must provide written documentation from their healthcare provider. Normal work attendance [policies](#) remain in effect for now.

Facility Rentals

School district facility rental agreements will continue to be honored at this time; however, lessees will be required to hire IPS custodial staff to ensure district protocols for sanitation and disinfection are followed to the level directed by the CDC. Additional costs associated with these procedures will be the responsibility of the lessee. If lessees have recently returned from international travel, we ask that this is disclosed to the IPS Facilities Management Department (FMD). For questions, please contact the IPS FMD.

School and District Sponsored Events

Currently, scheduled events occurring in closed spaces, or events with 1,000 or more participants will be reviewed by the CTF. All other events will be allowed to proceed as planned. Until further notice, new school and district sponsored events occurring in closed spaces, or events with 1,000 or more participants will be reviewed for approval on a case-by-case basis by the CTF. The district supports the event sponsor and school administrators' authority to postpone or cancel events.

Information on the district's COVID-19 webpage will be updated regularly to provide the most up-to-date information. Please visit this page frequently.