

Dear WCSO Parents Guardians and Staff,

This communication will provide information on two very important topics. The first being the latest update from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) on **School Closures** and second, a **Health and Safety Alert**.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

Yesterday, PDE announced that all schools in the commonwealth will remain closed through at least April 6 as a result of the COVID-19 response efforts. The closure order could be extended beyond April 6 if necessary to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19. As per the State's current plan, if it is determined that students can return to school, administrators, teachers and other staff will be given two days to prepare classrooms, set up cafeterias, schedule transportation and arrange other business operations. Students would return on the third day, which would be April 9. **As of today, no changes to our school calendar have been recommended, therefore students would return to school on Tuesday, April 14.**

Due to the extended closure, WCSO administrators and staff have been making plans for a more structured learning environment with Extended Learning Opportunities for all students. Additional information about this will be communicated later this week from your child's building principal. In the meantime, our teachers are continuing to reach out to our students through a variety of communication channels.

Thank you for your continued patience as we work through this unprecedented event. We realize that many families are struggling to make sense of this pandemic, processing the loss of jobs, and worrying about loved ones who are susceptible to the virus or for those who are sick. We have a strong and caring community, a staff that is second to none, and we will get through this together.

For your convenience, updates and resources concerning COVID-19 can be found on the District's website at <https://www.whitehallcoplay.org>.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ALERT

Regarding the health and safety of our school community, the district received notification on March 23rd from a parent that a student in our district has tested positive for COVID-19. The district has not received any confirmation from either the county or state departments of health of this occurrence. The child first exhibited symptoms on March 12th and students were not in school on that day and have not been in school since that date. The child has been quarantined since March 12th. **For confidentiality reasons I am not permitted to release any other information other than what is in this letter.**

Unfortunately, there will likely be more positive cases identified in our community in the future. The Department of Health (DOH) does not require the district to notify the school community, when a student or staff member tests positive, however, out of an abundance of caution and a strong motivation to keep our community as healthy as possible in the midst of this pandemic, I felt it was important for you to be aware of this information.

Please see the attached link with CDC guidelines for information regarding COVID-19 to assist you in monitoring your family members' health and well being. COVID-19 has definitely impacted this district and we are requesting that everyone be especially vigilant of their family's symptoms so that we can flatten the curve and get back to the business of education as quickly as possible.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Sincerely,

Dr. Lorie D. Hackett
Superintendent of Schools
Whitehall-Coplay School District