

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – March 15, 2020 Update

Dear Franklin City Public Schools Families:

Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Today, due to the continued spread of COVID-19, Governor Northam has ordered all K-12 schools close for a minimum of two weeks. With the possibility of COVID-19 impacting Hampton Roads, we want to make sure that Franklin City Public Schools is fully prepared. However, COVID-19 affects our school community. At this time, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our schools, and we are complying with the Governors' orders by taking preventative measures to close schools for ten days and conduct deep dive cleaning of all of our facilities. Any changes during the school closure will be communicated through our Reverse 911 call system, [our website](#), and our official social media channels. Also, we will continue to update our COVID-19 FAQ page at <https://www.fcpsva.org> as new information becomes available.

School Closure Schedule – Updated March 15

Monday, March 16th, will be a half day schedule for teachers and staff. There will be **no school** for students. Parents and guardians can pick up instructional packets on Monday from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. During those hours, if students want to have lunch, a prepared take home meal will be available at **all 3 schools on Monday only**. On Tuesday, March 17 through March 27, lunches will be available for any FCPS student at S. P. Morton Elementary School only. This is the official site for feeding for any student that would like to receive lunch. If additional closure days are required, the information will be disseminated utilizing our website, Reverse 911, and all social media outlets.

Pre-K to 12th Grade Instruction

Students in 6th – 12th grade will be assigned work that can be accessed utilizing their FCPS assigned electronic devices or personal devices. If a student does not have an assigned laptop or personal computer in grades Pre-K to 12th, students will receive instructional work packets. The instructional packets will support the retention of information while our students are out of school. Teachers will be available by email to help any instructional questions students may have regarding assignments. Instructional work packets will also be available on our school website for your convenience.

SOL Testing

SOL testing will be rescheduled when students return. New testing dates will be communicated when confirmed by testing coordinators.

After School Activities and Field Trips

While there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within our schools, we are committed to protecting the health and safety of our entire community. Using [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance](#) (see Page 4), we are following best mitigation strategies for an area considered to have a “minimal to moderate” chance of impact by COVID-19. Because of this guidance, coupled with the recent request from the Governor's office that localities limit large public gatherings, as of March 12th, we are canceling all afterschool extracurricular and evening activities until further notice including instructional support programs (for example, tutoring). This includes all athletics, school performances, dances, etc. Additionally, all field trips have now been canceled until further notice.

Volunteers and Visitors

We value and appreciate the many volunteers who contribute their time and effort to support student learning in our schools. In the interest of both our volunteer and student health, we are suspending volunteer opportunities until further notice.

We look forward to welcoming them back into our classrooms when we are able. Similarly, no school visitors, other than those attending for official school business, will be permitted during the school day.

Student Attendance – Updated March 15

Students who are ill must stay home. Doctor's notes are not necessary for approved absences at this time. We understand some parents and students are concerned about attendance-based recognition and awards. Because we do not want to encourage sick students to come to school, we will not be counting any absences after March 1, 2020, toward these awards.

What You Can Do to Prepare

We strongly encourage you to review your plans for a possible long-term closure of your child's school and consider the following:

- **Internet access** --- If you do not have access to the internet at home, please utilize community hubs such as the city library and local businesses.
- **Medication** --- If your child takes medication during the regular school day, please get in touch with the school nurse so arrangements can be made to ensure the medication is available for pickup or at home.
- **Food services** --- If you rely on the school to provide breakfast and lunch for your child, please know that there are several services available to assist you should the school be closed for an extended period. [A comprehensive list of those sources is available here.](#) However, during the initial school closure (March 17 – 27), lunch and snacks will be provided at S.P. Morton Elementary School from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, to any FCPS student. FCPS is also working with the city on this issue, and more updates will be available soon.
- **Child care** --- Please begin to make contingency plans for child care in the event of an extended school closure.

Again, we reiterate that there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our schools at this time. Please know that we are working to maintain the safety and well-being of our students and staff. We will continue to update our FAQ page at www.fcpsva.org as new information becomes available.

Thank you for your support,

Dr. Tamara Sterling

Dr. Tamara Sterling
Superintendent