

# SKSD to curtail most ancillary school activities, monitor COVID-19 situation

Superintendent Winter sends letter to student families and staff

By Bob Smith

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PORT ORCHARD — South Kitsap School District students, families and staff members received a letter from Superintendent Tim Winter Thursday that provided an update on the district's plans to contain the effects of COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus.

Winter said the school district has canceled, suspended and altered plans in place for various activities over the foreseeable future. The letter did not address an immediate consideration of school closures.

Here is Winter's letter:

Dear South Kitsap School District families and staff,

There are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in South Kitsap School District and we plan to keep schools open as long as possible. Today, Gov. Jay Inslee announced community strategies to lower the risk of exposure and slow the spread of COVID-19.

South Kitsap School District is enacting several safety measures to reduce risks to our learning community. We recognize that these precautions may create hardships, so please know we did not make these decisions lightly. We believe these steps will help reduce exposure to COVID-19 by limiting the number of people coming in and out of our buildings. These steps align with precautions being implemented by our neighboring districts and continue to support normal school day operations.

The following measures are effective starting March 13, 2020, until further notice (at a minimum through April 3, 2020):

## **Facility Use by Community Groups – Suspended**

In order to maximize our resources toward the cleaning of our schools, we will be canceling external rentals and use of our district facilities. This includes field use, gym use, theatre use and other facilities. It is important

to allow our custodians to focus on the recommended cleaning and disinfecting, and to conserve district cleaning supplies. Special thanks for our dedicated custodians and their diligence in the weeks ahead!

### **Field Trips – Suspended**

This includes local day trips and out-of-state travel, as well as guest speakers.

### **All Games, Concerts, Dances, Plays, and Evening Events – Canceled or Postponed**

We know how much our community loves to enjoy our students' many talents. In an effort to reduce possible exposure to visitors attending our events, we feel this is an important precaution. Information nights may be rescheduled or modified. Schools will communicate to their families about canceled or postponed school activities; watch for updates on school websites.

### **After School Practices and Club Activities – Suspended**

### **Travel by South Kitsap School District Staff – Suspended**

All out-of-district work-related trips by SKSD staff will be suspended unless authorized as essential by executive administration.

### **Volunteers in Schools – Suspended**

We are grateful for our volunteers. However, in an effort to limit the number of people coming in and out of our buildings, we need to suspend volunteering in our schools.

### **Before school and after school child care – Will Continue**

### **Parent and Guardian Normal School Business/Pick Up-Drop Off – Will Continue**

Parents and guardians who have meetings scheduled or who need to come to the front office, or pick up or drop off a student, may still do so. However, we encourage parents and guardians to communicate by email or phone when possible, in an effort to reduce people coming in and out of our school buildings.

### **School conferences – Altered**

Phone conferences will be offered instead of in-person meetings. Schools will send out information to families to coordinate conferences.

Thank you for sharing your concerns and suggestions. This is a challenging time and we value the partnership of our entire community. We will continue to monitor developments related to COVID-19 and work closely with the Kitsap Public Health District. We are doing our best to keep you informed in a situation that is changing quickly. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tim Winter

Superintendent

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