

# Third positive COVID-19 case identified, South Kitsap School District the latest to announce long-term closure

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Bainbridge Island and South Kitsap school districts will be closed at least through April 24 to curb the spread of novel coronavirus.

South Kitsap School District announced Friday morning it will close schools at least through April 24. The news came as Kitsap Public Health District confirmed the county's third positive case of COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by novel coronavirus.

The individual, a person in their 40s from South Kitsap, is in isolation.

"The Kitsap Public Health District is working as quickly as possible to notify people identified as having been in close contact with the affected individual," Kitsap Public Health District Health Officer Dr. Susan Turner said. "Unfortunately, we expect to see more cases of COVID-19 in our county in the coming days and weeks, especially as testing becomes more available."

**More:** [Coronavirus spreads across Washington as new deaths reported \(/story/news/2020/03/13/coronavirus-spreads-across-washington-new-deaths-reported/5043335002/\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2020/03/13/coronavirus-spreads-across-washington-new-deaths-reported/5043335002/)

Bainbridge Island Superintendent Peter Bang-Knudsen [announced late Thursday that the district would join school districts in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties \(/story/news/local/2020/03/12/no-school-closures-yet-kitsap-governor-orders-shutdown-other-counties/5032432002/\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/local/2020/03/12/no-school-closures-yet-kitsap-governor-orders-shutdown-other-counties/5032432002/) that have been ordered by Gov. Jay Inslee to close. In a post on its website Thursday night, the district said Inslee's proclamation included the Bainbridge Island School District, given its proximity to King County.

Two people on Bainbridge Island have tested positive for the virus.

"We are asking all Kitsap residents to stay calm, stay informed and take steps to protect their health and the health of those around them," Turner said. "It is very important to stay home when you are sick and we encourage community members to assist friends and family who may need to stay home."

South Kitsap Superintendent Tim Winter didn't indicate if the South Kitsap case played into the district's decision to close long-term.

"Conditions and responses are evolving rapidly, and districts have announced school closures following state and health agency recommendations," Winter said. "South Kitsap School District has proactively decided to close schools effective Monday, March 16, 2020."

Administration offices will remain open during the closure, the letter to parents stated. School offices will be open through March 20 to allow for families to pick up medication and personal items.

**More:** [Coronavirus update: List of closures, cancellations in Kitsap County for precautions \(/story/news/2020/03/13/coronavirus-kitsap-county-washington-school-district-closures-cancellations/5042003002/\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2020/03/13/coronavirus-kitsap-county-washington-school-district-closures-cancellations/5042003002/)

The districts will provide boxed meals throughout the closure to all students, not only those who qualify financially, at locations to be announced. Teachers have developed learning packets, paper copies of which will be provided to students.

"These are not meant to be a substitute for classroom instruction but will help students practice their skills and learn independently during the closure," Winter said. "Our teachers and administrative team are also working on support for our 12th-grade students to ensure they complete graduation requirements."

Winter said the district is coordinating with Champions, Boys & Girls Club and YMCA Child Watch on childcare options that will be publicized as soon as they become clear.

The district will offer updates via text and email, on its website and social media. There is a phone hotline for community information, 360-874-6499.

Bainbridge schools were closed on Thursday and Friday as staff prepared for the possibility of a long-term closure.

District officials were teleconferencing with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Friday morning and will issue logistical details on meals, childcare and distance learning as they'd available.

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