



March 12, 2020

Dear River Charter School Parents, Guardians and Staff,

County School Districts and Charter Schools are currently working closely with County Public Health, and following recommendations for schools that are based upon information and data specific to our County. The status and mitigation of COVID-19 is ongoing and evolves daily. Our Schools are committed to keeping families and staff informed and engaged in illness prevention strategies to keep our school communities as healthy as possible. We are working to respond to this health risk proactively and as a unified community.

Social Distancing Considerations

The recent recommendations from County Public Health, and the California Department of Public Health are specific to social distancing practices intended to minimize or slow the spread of the COVID-19, especially for our community members who are considered high risk, (individuals that have chronic health conditions and who are older than 60 years of age).

Using Data to Inform Decisions

The United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) shared data in a press conference this week stating that:

- less than 2% of COVID-19 infected people in China are 19 years or younger
- 80% of COVID-19 infected individuals presented with mild to moderate symptoms

Current data suggests that **school-age children are not a high-risk group**, however, schools are taking proactive actions to mitigate risk for students, staff and all members of our communities. We recognize and support the unique needs of every family. Parents and guardians, who have high risk individuals in their home, may want to consider not participating in school events.

County Public Health recommendations for schools

- Strongly recommends that students and staff not attend school if they are sick. If you have a child with chronic health conditions, consult your doctor about school attendance.
- School closures are generally not recommended; however, in certain cases where there is COVID-19 exposure, schools and school district officials will consult with Public Health and the County Office of Education regarding appropriate next steps.

What are recommendations for large gatherings?

The primary method by which this disease is transmitted involves respiratory droplets from infected individuals. Not all events increase the risk for this type of transmission. For those that do, Public Health recommends postponing or canceling crowded gatherings and community events where large numbers of people, particularly strangers, are within arm's length of one another. According to the California Department of Public Health, a large gathering refers to 250 people or more.

Therefore, River Charter Schools will be canceling school events, such as rallies, dances, performances, etc., and field trips until further notice. Regular daily schedules and routines including lunch and recess will continue as normal.

River Charter Schools will:

- Instruct participants or event staff to not attend events if they have any respiratory symptoms (cough, cold) or fever
- Provide handwashing capabilities, hand sanitizers and tissues whenever possible
- Clean frequently-touched surface areas
- Work to provide well-ventilated areas and create physical space to minimize close contact as much as possible

River Charter Schools will continue to collaborate closely with public health officials and the County Office of Education and may adapt illness mitigation strategies in response to the circumstances specific to our local communities. We will continue to inform, engage, and empower families with factual information and actions we can all take to safeguard the health and wellness of members of our school community.

Sincerely, Steve Lewis, Superintendent