



# Sweet Springs R-VII Schools

600 East Marshall \* Sweet Springs, MO 65351

[sweetsprings.k12.mo.us](http://sweetsprings.k12.mo.us)

Lori Price  
Superintendent  
Phone: 660-335-4860  
Fax: 660-335-4378

Tara Merrick  
Process Coordinator  
Phone: 660-335-4860  
Fax: 660-335-4378

Josh Hume  
High School Principal  
Phone: 660-335-6341  
Fax: 660-335-6379

Melanie Miller  
Elementary Principal  
Phone: 660-335-6348  
Fax: 660-335-4388

March 14, 2020

Sweet Springs R-VII Families & Staff:

In regards to COVID-19, our district is currently using the guidance of the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to assist in all decisions. As many of you know this situation is continuously changing across the nation. Currently, in the State of Missouri, all decisions about schools are being made locally. **Our district is NOT closing school at this time.**

The Sweet Springs R-VII School District is committed to the health and safety of students. With growing concerns, along with further guidance from state and local health officials and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Sweet Springs R-VII School District, and all I-70 Conference Schools, have made the following determinations for the safety of our students, staff members, and patrons:

**All non-critical gatherings are postponed or cancelled from Monday, March 16 - Friday, March 27th.**

**These gatherings include:**

- Winter Sports Banquet for March 16th- Postponed- date TBD
- Student Field Trips out of the District - **Cancelled**
- All extracurricular student contests and competitions (Academic, Fine Arts, and Athletic) - **Cancelled**
- All out of district professional development for staff- **Cancelled**
- Community Resource Exposition Night for March 24th- **Cancelled**
- Senior trip to California- Due to the number of cases and closures on the west coast, it is simply not worth the risk for our students, senior parents, and staff members to go at this time. - **Postponed, with the hopes of rescheduling - TBD**
- Home & School Carnival for March 27 - Postponed- date TBD
- Book Fair - TBD

Activities that only involve Sweet Springs students, such as practices and clubs, will continue as scheduled. We are trying to eliminate opportunities of our students entering other communities as well as opening our doors to visitors from outside communities. (Students will still be permitted to attend Vo-Tech classes at this time.)

District administration will gather again to discuss scheduling of activities beyond March 27. When additional information becomes available, or changes are made to the above items, families will be notified again.

**Self-Quarantine**

Sweet Springs students or staff who have traveled to [these areas](#), or have members of their household who are returning from these areas, should self-quarantine and not return to school for 14 days following their return to the United States and obtain medical clearance before returning to school. If you have traveled domestically to any of the containment zones in **Washington State, New York, or Massachusetts, you need to follow the same self-quarantine guidelines.**

Our schools will work with any students who will need to self-quarantine after Spring Break to support their ongoing learning. If you are traveling to an area and have a child or family member who will need to self-quarantine, you must

contact Lori Price at [lprice@sweetsprings.k12.mo.us](mailto:lprice@sweetsprings.k12.mo.us) so we can begin putting plans in place to support learning. Also, please be aware of the possibility that additional areas could be added to the CDC's Travel Advisory at any time. Families who are traveling should keep a close eye on this list.

### **Knowing When to Stay Home**

As we work together to navigate the uncertainty and anxiety that are part of this rapidly changing situation, we must also take personal responsibility for the decisions we make for ourselves and our families. That could mean, whether you are a student or a staff member, staying home if you are sick. The health of our students, their families and our staff is our top priority. We will work with students and staff on a case by case basis to determine the appropriate level of support needed from school. **Attendance policies will be amended for anyone with the Flu, COVID-19, or any long-term illness. We urge students and staff to stay home when ill.** In addition, foster grandparents and staff with high risk underlying health issues are asked to use their best judgement. The district is committed to working with these individuals.

I realize that the uncertainty of how this may progress in our area, coupled with the constant media exposure, can create a lot of fear and anxiety for everyone's families. While the days and weeks ahead may be trying times for our community, I am confident we will work through this together in a way that sustains learning in our District, while also keeping our students and staff healthy and safe.

Additionally, we urge all families to continue the practice of maintaining habits necessary to stay healthy, especially during any cold/flu season.

Steps you can take to prevent the spread of flu and the common cold are:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Stay home while you are sick
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing
- Students should be kept home until they are fever free (100.4 or less) for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces, especially when someone is ill
- Not sharing drinks, water bottles, eating utensils, or cell phones with others

For more information about the symptoms, treatment, and prevention of COVID-19, go to [www.cdc.gov/covid19](http://www.cdc.gov/covid19).

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is always our first priority. Our buildings will continue to undergo rigorous disinfection through daily cleaning to prevent the spread of germs. Our faculty and staff will disinfect frequently-touched surfaces in their classes and around the school throughout the day. Students and staff will be reminded to wash their hands thoroughly and often. As always, parents have ultimate decision-making on what they feel is needed for their family. If you feel your child needs to stay home, please contact the building administrator to make alternative arrangements.

Please be assured that we will continue to share updated information with our Sweet Springs family going forward. Thank you for your help in keeping our community healthy.

Respectfully,

Lori Price, Superintendent  
Sweet Springs R-VII Schools