

## All Pikes Peak schools will be closed from March 16 to March 27

Dear Pikes Peak and surrounding community,

**Starting Monday, March 16, the following El Paso County and surrounding county school districts [see list below] will close school facilities for a period of 16 days.** This action is an attempt to slow the potential spread of infection. The closure will be from March 16 through March 27. We will reassess the situation as we get closer to that end date, and decide if students and staff should return on Monday, March 30. Superintendents will be calling on the Colorado Department of Education for flexibility on mandatory seat time and state testing requirements.

The decision to close our school districts was extremely difficult, made in consultation with all area Superintendents and out of an abundance of caution for our families. We know that closing our schools will have a significant impact on our families, but we also believe that strong, urgent action must be taken to prevent the spread of this disease and to protect lives.

During the closure, all schools, district facilities, buses will undergo additional deep cleanings with hospital-grade disinfectants. We encourage the community to continue hand washing and follow other [recommendations from the CDC](#) about how to avoid the spread of illness.

Districts will send follow-up communications with additional information to parents that are specific to their local community. Parents should continue to monitor school district communications for updates.

Our goal is always to protect the safety, health and wellness of our students, staff, and families. Our strength as a community is our greatest asset. In making this decision, we are working together to protect each other and slow the progression of COVID-19.

We will continue to remain in contact with public health officials, elected leaders and neighboring school districts and keep parents and media updated with new information as it becomes available. We thank you for your support and partnership in this effort.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Thomas – Colorado Springs School District 11

J. Thomas Gregory – Academy School District 20

Dr. Elizabeth Domangue – Manitou Springs District 14

Dr. Walt Cooper – Cheyenne Mountain School District 12

Kelli Thompson – Elbert 200

Dr. Keith Owen – Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8

Pat Bershinsky – Pikes Peak BOCES

Dwight Barnes – Miami-Yoder JT60

Dr. Wendy Birhanzel and John Rogerson–Harrison District 2

Dr. Grant Schmidt – Hanover School District #28

Dr. KC Somers – Lewis-Palmer School District #38

Tory Richey – Cripple Creek-Victor School District

Nancy Benham – Colorado School for Deaf and Blind

Dave Slothower – Calhan School District

Tim Kistler – Peyton School District

Steve Woolf – Woodland Park School District

Peter Hilts – School District 49

Scott Campbell – Widefield School District 3

Chris Smith – Ellicott 22