

Dear Superintendents, AEA Chiefs, and Principals:

I know that you all are following closely the expanding global outbreak of a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus, or COVID-19. For the general public, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is low. However, multiple cases have now been reported in Iowa.

Governor Reynolds recently signed a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency, activating the disaster response and recovery aspects of the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's Iowa Emergency Response Plan, and fully activated the State Emergency Operations Center. The proclamation authorizes state agencies to utilize resources including personnel, equipment and facilities to perform activities necessary to prevent, contain and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 virus.

The Department of Education is participating in the State Emergency Operations Center and closely monitoring the situation. The safety of those we serve is of utmost importance.

I want to assure you that the Department of Education will be leading efforts to coordinate directly with school districts to provide clear guidance and support for Coronavirus planning and decision making for schools.

It is important to note that the Iowa Department of Public Health is not currently advising any school closures. In coordination with the Department of Public Health, we are finalizing identification of key decision points needed to contain and mitigate COVID-19 and included in these decision points will be triggers and metrics on how we will recommend if school closures are necessary.

[Center for Disease Control Website](#)

[Iowa Department of Public Health Website](#)