



April 7th, 2020

Greetings Banks School District Families,

We are reaching out to parents and guardians of all our students to make sure children are staying healthy in body and mind during the school closure. We know how hard it is for children (and parents) to be stuck at home. For children, being away from school, friends and teachers means that they may be removed from their social supports and routines that make life feel safe and predictable.

During this school closure, we want to be sure children are safe and healthy. However, some children may be experiencing stress or distress.

Signs of distress include:

- Increased irritability or outbursts of anger.
- Significant changes in sleeping and eating habits (more or less than normal).
- Significant changes in energy and activity levels.
- Showing signs of anxiety, fear, panic, and nonstop worry (crying, hyperventilation, nightmares, talking about fears).
- Wanting to be alone most of the time (more than usual).
- Trouble remembering things.
- Finding it hard to have fun or feel happy. Not doing the things they enjoyed doing in the past (assuming it is something they can still do during social distancing).
- Signs of self-harm* (cut marks on arms, legs, torso; or sharp items found in their room)
- Talking/writing about suicide, death, or not wanting to be here anymore*.
- Signs of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or illegal drug use*.

**child needs immediate mental health help*

If you have noticed any of these signs of distress in your child and you are concerned about their mental health or wellbeing, our counselors are able to help. Banks School District counselors are available to work with students and/or parents through email, over the phone, or video conferencing through Google Hangouts. Please reach out to your child's School Counselor or Student Support Specialist if you need assistance.

If at any time your child needs immediate mental health help, call the Washington County Crisis Line at **503-291-9111**. This line is available 24/7 to provide resources and support during a mental health crisis.

We also know these can be trying times for families in many other ways. If your family is in need of services, such as food or housing assistance. [Please visit the Banks School District Website here for local resources.](#)

Finally, we know there are questions about forecasting for next school year for incoming 6th-12 grade students. Both the middle school and the high school are adjusting the forecasting process so that it can be completed online or on paper from home. We will have more information on forecasting in late April or early May.

Please feel free to reach out to your child's counselor if you need support or assistance. We are here to help!

Take care and stay safe,
Banks School District Counseling Department

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