



BENT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

701 PARK AVENUE
LAS ANIMAS, CO 81054

719-456-0517 tele.
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Monday, November 30, 2020

Mr. Holmes,

As discussed previously, Bent County case numbers are rising rapidly. Our local hospitals are at capacity and are not taking patients currently. Bent County patients are being transported to Pueblo when possible, and then up I-25 from there. Hospitals in Pueblo are also reaching capacity (on and off) and sending patients to Colorado Springs and on. This leaves Bent County highly dependent on resources and hospital bed availability on the front range (who are seeing a surge as well.) What we are trying to avoid at all cost is our hospitals across the state reaching capacity. This would significantly impact mortality rates as we would not have the capacity to care for those who need immediate lifesaving care.

There are currently multiple outbreaks in our area at facilities that employ the majority of residents in our county. Thanksgiving holiday presents an additional risk factor added to the mix as well. I previously advised you and the McClave School Board to switch to virtual learning for the week following Thanksgiving, 11/30 - 12/4. This time between Thursday 11/26 (Thanksgiving) and Monday 12/7 should hopefully allow for some of those who contract COVID-19 to develop symptoms. Thus, ascertaining they must stay home vs. coming back to school on the 12/7, and slow the spread overall. We know that schools are a conduit for COVID transmission, especially in small communities where so much of the community revolves around the schools.

With all of the above information provided to you, you chose to continue in-person learning. Bent County Public Health is charged with the protection of the health of our residents. Therefore, we cannot allow McClave School Board and the assigned superintendent to endanger their lives.

Based upon the forgoing, and pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) 25-1-506 (3)(b)(V), 25-1-506 (3)(b)(V), 25-1-506 (3)(b)(VII) **You are hereby ordered to close in-person learning for the week of 11/30 – 12/4.**

A copy of this order has also been delivered to: Bent County Board of Health, Bent County Commissioners, Sheriff Jake Six, County Attorney Sam Vigil, District Attorney Jim Bullock, and Ann Hause (CDPHE).

Respectfully,

Omer Tamir, MPM
Executive Director | Bent County Public Health
701 Park Ave | Las Animas, CO 81054