

Boozhoo Circle of Life Academy Parents/Guardians, Students, and Staff,

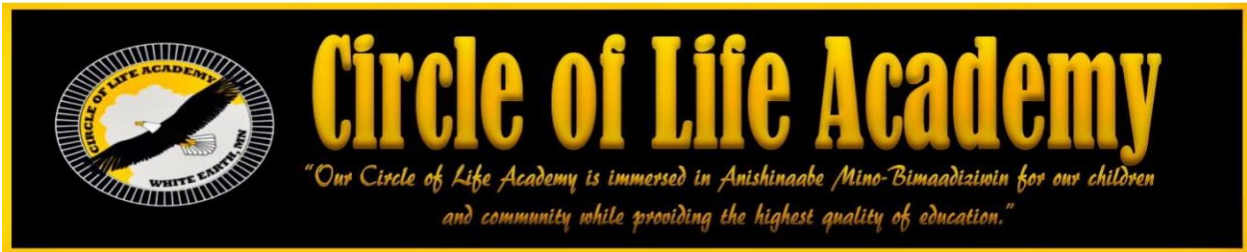
I am writing you with a heavy heart, but one full of hope. As you may know, on Sunday, March 15th, Governor Walz directed public school districts to cancel classes starting Wednesday, March 18th, to focus staff on developing a distance learning plan, should the need arrive for public school districts to close for an extended period due to COVID-19. As Circle of Life Academy is a tribally controlled school, our ultimate directive for COVID-19 comes from our tribe. Today, Wednesday, March 18th I received tribal approval to follow the Governor Walz directives.

It is important to note that information about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is evolving. Refer to the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) for the latest updates. We are monitoring information from these agencies on a continuing basis.

Circle of Life Academy (i.e., COLA) has an important role to play in slowing the spread of this and other diseases and to help ensure students and staff have a safe and healthy learning and working environments.

In addition to continuing to promote covering a cough, proper handwashing, staying home when sick and routine cleaning, COLA is taking the following precautions:

1. **Effective immediately and until further notice, COLA is closed to students* and all activities are canceled** to help slow the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). This closure for students* will continue until further notice, as per White Earth Reservation Business Committee's Emergency Operation Center directive and Governor Tim Walz's announcement on Sunday, March 15. (Executive Order 20-02)
2. **All school-sponsored gatherings, planned field trips, and district-sponsored out-of-area travel** have been postponed or canceled until further notice.
3. **COLA Staff are directed to return to work on Monday, March 23, 2020**, to begin work on distance learning plans, to begin delivery to students on March 30, 2020. Equitable, quality distance learning will be necessary in order to maintain continuity in education for our children during this event. You are encouraged to partner with other educators, programs and families at COLA or in your home district to devise innovative, engaging and viable lessons for your students.
4. **COLA Staff must utilize PTO** if ill or for any absence during the school day.



5. **A plan for removing and picking up personal items** is being formulated at this time. COLA will notify those who need to do so when that plan is in place.
6. **If a student has medication or health office supplies at school, we remind families to** please contact the main office at 218-983-4180 to arrange pick-up or send to the home.
7. **COLA maintenance and custodial staff** have increased disinfecting procedures, but we are asking that families refrain from coming to campus until further notice.
8. **Tribal leadership and COLA administration are evaluating** delivery of nutritional, mental health and special education support during the school closure.
9. **Please watch for updates** via COLA email, Honeywell Text Alert System, the White Earth Nation Website and COLA Facebook Page. This information will change over time.
10. **Be safe** and know we will continue to do our best for COLA students, families and staff.

* Healthy students ages 5 through 12 of emergency response personnel, such as police officers, nurses, physicians, etc., will be allowed to attend school during this shut-down, on a case-by-case basis. Please contact COLA to enquire about availability and safety parameters.

Please note that COLA cannot test for the flu or COVID-19.

Contact information for specific questions:

White Earth Tribal Center: (218) - 983 - 3285

COLA Front Desk: (218) - 983 - 4180

I want to thank our parents/guardians, staff and community for being so responsive and caring during this difficult and unprecedented time. I/we appreciate your support and need it more than ever.

Sincerely and chi-miigwech,

Jenna Leadbetter
School Superintendent