

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Zeeland Christian School, as well as schools across the region, has been receiving questions from families regarding spring break travel plans and how they might impact their student's ability to return to school once schools re-open.

At this time, Zeeland Christian School, along with the Ottawa County Department of Public Health, strongly recommend that families consider [CDC advisories](#) as they relate to personal travel. The following considerations may be found on [their website](#):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

Things to consider before travel:

- **Is COVID-19 spreading in the area where you're going?**
If COVID-19 is spreading at your destination, but not where you live, you may be more likely to get infected if you travel there than if you stay home. If you have questions about your destination, you should check your destination's local health department website for more information.
- **Will you or your travel companion(s) be in close contact with others during your trip?**
Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like coronavirus may increase in crowded settings, particularly closed-in settings with little air circulation. This may include settings such as conferences, public events (like concerts and sporting events), religious gatherings, public spaces (like movie theatres and shopping malls), and public transportation (like buses, metro, trains).
- **Are you or your travel companion(s) more likely to get severe illness if you get COVID-19?**
People at higher risk for severe disease are [older adults and people of any age with serious chronic medical conditions](#) (such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes). CDC recommends that [travelers at higher risk for COVID-19 complications](#) avoid all cruise travel and nonessential air travel.
- **Do you have a plan for taking time off from work or school, in case you are told to stay home for 14 days for self-monitoring or if you get sick with COVID-19?**
If you have close contact with someone with COVID-19 during travel, you may be asked to stay home to self-monitor and avoid contact with others for up to 14 days after travel. If you become sick with COVID-19, you may be unable to go to work or school until you're considered noninfectious. You will be asked to avoid contact with others (including being in public places) during this period of infectiousness.
- **Do you live with someone who is older or has a serious, chronic medical condition?**
If you get sick with COVID-19 upon your return from travel, your household contacts may be at risk of infection. Household contacts who are [older adults or persons of any age with severe chronic medical conditions](#) are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- **Is COVID-19 spreading where I live when I return from travel?**
Consider the risk of passing COVID-19 to others during travel, particularly if you will be in close contact with people who are [older adults or have severe chronic health](#)

[conditions](#). These people are at higher risk of getting very sick. If your symptoms are mild or you don't have a fever, you may not realize you are infectious.

Following these guidelines is particularly important for those who may have compromised immune systems that make exposure to COVID-19 a higher risk. While this may not describe you or your family, carrying the virus may have a significant impact on other school families and community members. We are taking direction regarding school attendance from our local health department and the CDC.

Please know we are doing our absolute best to promote the health and safety of our students, school families, and staff and continue to monitor updates from the CDC and our local health officials as we navigate challenging questions raised about international and domestic travel.

We ask for your patience, flexibility, and understanding during this unprecedented time.

Stay healthy,

Tim McAboy

Head of School

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul A. Heidel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul A. Heidel, MD, MPH
Medical Director

Ottawa County Department of Public Health