

Spokeswoman Laura Rumpler sent the following letter to parents in the Coeur d'Alene School District re: the district's approach to the Ebola outbreak in Africa:

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Our district is dedicated to addressing local concerns about the possible spread of Ebola in the United States, a virus that has created significant worldwide fear. While no active cases of the Ebola virus have been reported in Idaho or in our region, we have received questions from parents about Ebola and want to be proactive in sharing information.

The risk of an Ebola case appearing in North Idaho is extremely low, according to experts from Panhandle Health District and local emergency management offices. In any health and safety situation, we will remain vigilant about awareness and communicating with families.

Our district currently is aware of students and community members who are traveling nationally and internationally. We have asked relevant questions and are working with Panhandle Health on any potential changes to the low risk level our community currently holds. You may hear information about students or staff traveling, including riding the New York subway to trips to non-impacted areas of Africa. Experts are stating these individuals are not at risk of contracting Ebola.

We ask for your assistance in keeping the level of anxiety down for both students and adults by not spreading misinformation. In stressful situations there can be inaccurate information shared which increases nervousness. If members of your family are traveling anywhere near affected areas, please contact your school nurse or school principal, as we want to work with you to help keep everyone informed and safe.

Rest assured, if the district becomes aware of any changes to our community's risk level or if we know about any student or staff member whose travel or activities are determined to put them at risk of exposure to Ebola, we will communicate quickly and effectively to all families across our district and take measures to assist in maintaining health and safety for all our students and staff.

Below is a link to our district's website where you can find more information and tips about talking with your children about Ebola and useful links to additional resources from the Centers for Disease Control.

Laura Rumpler/Coeur d'Alene School District