



Washington Township Schools

~ A Community of 21st-Century Learners ~

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February 26, 2020

Dear WTS Parents and Faculty,

I am communicating with you today on the topic of the COVID-19 disease resulting from the *new coronavirus* that has been receiving widespread media attention, especially this week. The virus, first detected in Wuhan City, China, has been identified in 37 locations internationally, including here in the United States. According to the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC), person-to-person spread of COVID-19 has occurred among close contacts of returned travelers from Wuhan City. The CDC reports that the virus is NOT currently spreading in the United States. As of yesterday, there have been 53 cases nationally. Symptoms of the virus can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Preliminary data suggest that older adults and persons with underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems might be at greater risk for severe illness.

When diseases, new or otherwise, begin to appear in countries across the globe, the United States' *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* works diligently to contain the spread of illnesses as well as mitigate their potential impacts. In addition, the Federal government works closely with State and Local health partners to maintain the health and safety of the citizenry. Here in the U.S., Federal agencies are currently taking steps to detect and minimize introductions of this particular coronavirus.

As with any respiratory-type illness, there are personal safeguards we can all take to reduce the likelihood of contracting illnesses such as the current coronavirus. Here's what we can all do to protect ourselves and our families:

- ✚ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ✚ Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- ✚ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ✚ Do not share items that come in contact with the mouth, nose and eyes.
- ✚ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ✚ Be sure to keep sick children at home to prevent the spread of illness in the school community and allow children the opportunity to rest and recover. This applies to adults as well!
- ✚ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Here in your Washington Township Schools our school nurses closely monitor illnesses and work in partnership with our Local Health Department throughout the school year. In addition, our Custodial Teams work hard to ensure that our schools receive thorough cleanings with more detailed cleaning efforts taking place during the winter months. Most certainly, I will provide updates to our school family on this new coronavirus should it become necessary.

Thank you for taking a few moments to read this school-home communication and for your constant care and support of the children and their schools. For more information on this new coronavirus, please visit the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> .

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey S. Mohre, Superintendent of Schools