

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus

### About this virus

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause symptoms of colds. However, this is a “novel” virus, originating in China in late 2019 (hence the name, 2019 Novel Coronavirus). Until recently, this particular strain of coronavirus circulated among animals only. Now it appears to have spread to humans, and can be spread between humans. The abbreviated term for this virus is: *COVID-19*

### Current Understanding of Virus

- Symptoms most commonly include: fever with cough or shortness of breath; Some people have fewer or no symptoms at all. Headache, sore throat, and runny nose also occur with this virus.
- Spread is most likely from droplets (cough and sneezing)
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers this a serious public health threat, but with health risk from this virus to be low at this time.
- It is not yet known whether people carrying the virus, but have no symptoms, can spread the virus to others.
- Symptoms of *2019-nCoV* may appear in as few as 2 days, or as long as 14 days, after exposure.
- Most people with this infection will recover on their own. There is no specific treatment for novel coronavirus infection yet.
- For patients who are more severely ill, hospitals can provide supportive care.

### What are Schools Doing?

School Districts follow CDC guidance, as well the guidance from public health departments at the State and County levels to keep our student and staff populations safe and healthy.

#### Current District Policy

1. All children and staff members with respiratory symptoms and fever (>100.4 F / >38C) should remain home (from school and other activities) until they had no fever for 24 hours, without fever medication.
2. A student or staff member who has been to any part of China within the past two weeks (since February 3, 2020) should be excluded from school for 14 days, beginning the day after they left China. [Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan are not considered part of mainland China for this guidance, at this time.]
3. Students should not be excluded from school or any school activities based on race, country of origin.
4. A student or staff member who has been in close contact with a person with a laboratory-confirmed case of 2019 novel coronavirus over past two weeks should be excluded from school until cleared by the local public health department.
5. If a student or staff member who has been to China within the past 14 days presents at school with fever or cough or shortness of breath, then the person staffing the school health office will:
  - a. Until the person leaves school, place a surgical mask on that student or staff member if it is tolerated. If possible, keep that person isolated (students must still be visible and supervised by a staff member); otherwise try to keep a 3 to 5 foot distance between that student (or staff member) and others.
  - b. Notify the District’s central office and lead nurse.
  - c. Coordinate among district staff, to determine which school staff member will notify the local public health department for directions on whether the student should be transported via the parent or otherwise to a medical facility for investigation and/or treatment.

6. Students (and all individuals) who have visited China within the past two weeks should be advised to call their doctors for instructions *if they have fever with either cough or shortness of breath*. Healthy members of that household are not required to stay away from school.
7. If any student or staff member at school is suspected to have the virus (i.e., becomes a County Health Department “patient under investigation”; or “PUI”) for the *Novel Coronavirus*, the school district will work with public health authorities who will collaborate with that student’s or staff member’s own physician to guide any further restrictions and public notifications.
8. As a reminder, all student and staff health information is confidential and cannot be shared with other students or with school site staff. Confidential health information can be shared only with School District health team leaders and with the County Public Health Department.
9. Any disease notification letters sent from school to the general school community and to schools’ parent community will always be cleared first with the District’s health leaders, and be done in consultation with the Public Health Department.

### **Basic Prevention of Virus Spread**

1. Make sure all family members are up-to-date with their flu shots.
2. Promote basic hygiene:
  - a. Any coughing or sneezing should be directed into ones sleeve, rather than into hands or the air.
  - b. Wash hands after using and handling used tissues, after blowing nose, before/after eating, and after toilet use.
  - c. Wash for 20 seconds with soap, rub between fingers and under nails; and then rinse and dry. (May use alcohol (60%+) hand gel if sinks are not readily available.)
  - d. Avoid rubbing your own eyes, nose and mouth.
  - e. Do not share utensils, cups etc.
  - f. Stay home when sick.
  - g. Avoid contact with those who are sick.
3. *Wearing of face masks by students and staff members.* Wearing of masks in public is not currently being recommended for Americans by the CDC nor by our local public health department. It will be discouraged in schools. Handwashing is considered the best protection from infectious diseases.

### **School District Plans if Coronavirus is Spreading Locally**

School district health team and administration already work collaboratively with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Department (our public health department). School district will follow all directives to reduce exposure in school. It is the public health department that decides on: quarantines, school closures, and exclusion policy, not the School District.

### **Travel**

Many students may travel with their families during the Spring Break. The following website should be checked before traveling: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

### **Resources**

Information on this virus and how to control its spread may change in the following days and weeks. This District will update the information, as it becomes available. Follow the District website as well as the following resources for up-to-date, accurate information:

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

**California Department of Public Health:**

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

**San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (Public Health)**

[https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/community\\_epidemiology/dc/2019-nCoV.html](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/community_epidemiology/dc/2019-nCoV.html)