

3/2/2020

Facts and Proactive Preparedness for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Dear St. Francis de Sales Parish School Community,

As many of you aware, there is current widespread media coverage of the global spread of a novel virus, COVID-19, commonly referred to as the Coronavirus. This letter is intended to serve three functions: to provide basic facts about the virus, to share with you the applicable proactive and preventative plans and policies in place for the safety of our school community, and to invite your partnership.

Information about COVID-19

1. COVID-19 was first identified in Wuhan City in China in December of 2019. The list of nations reporting infections of COVID-19 has steadily grown and includes the United States.
2. Most reported infections in the United States are from those who have travelled to mainland China.
3. There are two CDC confirmed cases in Illinois (City of Chicago) and an additional reported case in suburban Cook County. At the time of this writing there are no reported or confirmed cases in Lake County.
4. Symptoms of coronaviruses include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
5. Coronaviruses are transmitted by:
 - a. the air by coughing and sneezing
 - b. close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
 - c. touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands
 - d. rarely, fecal contamination
6. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) lists that the most effective prevention tips are:
 - a. wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - b. avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
 - c. avoid close contact with people who are sick
7. **The immediate risks of COVID-19 in our area are low** (lower than for the flu, as a point of comparison).
8. *Additional information can be found at: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

Proactive and Preventative Plans and Policies

1. Currently the school administration is following news and official information from the IDPH and CDC in order to be well prepared to respond if the virus spreads to Lake Zurich or adjacent neighborhoods. The school will implement available guidelines and recommendations of the IDPH and CDC.
2. The same wellness policies that protect the health of adults and children in our school year-round also help prevent the spread of illnesses like the flu during flu season and COVID-19. Those policies include:
 - a. sending students with a fever home immediately and not allowing students to return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours
 - b. increased cleaning and sanitation of classrooms and other areas where students that are sick have been
 - c. teaching hygiene that prevents transmission of communicable disease in homerooms and health classes
 - d. communicating to families of students who had contact with a person with a confirmed case of communicable disease

School and family partnership

1. The school administration commits to quickly notifying the school community via all available communication channels the existence of any confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the school community as well as the school's response plan.
2. Parents can participate in keeping our community healthy by:
 - a. Keeping children with a fever home from school until they are fever free for at least 24 hours
 - b. Keeping children with severe or persistent coughs home from school, even if a fever is not present
 - c. Notifying the school of a confirmed case of a communicable disease
 - d. If your child has travelled to mainland China, keep them home for 14 days upon return and monitor health prior to returning to school

For questions about COVID-19 you can visit the [IDPH website](#) or call 1-800-889-3931. For questions about school policies or the school's preparedness contact me via phone at 847-726-4826.

In your service,



Principal Kyle Schmitt

Additional Resources: [January \(older\) fact sheet from IDPH](#), [CDC Fact Sheet](#), [Most recent WHO Sitrep](#)