



Building Bridges for today's students to cross into tomorrow's world with equity, innovation and optimism

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James J. Montesano, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

March 3, 2020

Dear Nyack Schools Community,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a warning to expect a growing number of 2019 Novel Coronavirus cases in the United States, saying it remains unclear how severe the health threat will be - but, that a sustained transmission of the virus is possible. As a result, federal and state health officials have advised schools, governments, businesses and communities to prepare for potential outbreaks.

Nyack Public Schools remain in contact with the Rockland County Department of Health, the New York State Health Department and the New York State Education Department, and will continue to monitor the situation to ensure plans are in place and protocols are followed to keep all students and staff members safe and updated with the latest information.

As part of the Nyack Public School's efforts to ensure campuses and facilities are safe and healthy, our District has trained nursing professionals who routinely monitor individuals who exhibit fever, cough and shortness of breath, and will follow appropriate assessment and monitoring protocols for students and staff who report feeling ill.

While Nyack Public Schools and CDC continue to closely monitor the potential spread of Coronavirus, students and staff are encouraged to follow basic hand and cough hygiene measures to prevent colds, flu and Coronavirus.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to a virus. CDC recommends everyday preventive measures to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- 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 that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick and remain home until fever-free for 24 hours ***without fever-reducing medication.***
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

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Nyack Public Schools along with our neighboring school districts, will continue to follow protocols and guidance from local, state and federal agencies, as the health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority. To support these efforts, hand sanitizers are installed in each of our classrooms throughout the District. Custodial crews will be regularly disinfecting student desk surfaces and sanitizing doorknobs and handles. We trust this unified communication across Rockland County will best serve our community with accurate, timely and consistent information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J. Montesano', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James J. Montesano, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Nyack Public Schools

JJM:ld

Attachment (see below)

Due to increased concern in the community about the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Rockland BOCES has developed this guide so that parents and guardians have accurate information regarding the illness, how to protect your child and what to do if you suspect a possible case.

Coronavirus is a new respiratory illness that originated in Wuhan, China. It is being closely monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Reported illnesses of COVID-19 have ranged from infected individuals with little or no symptoms to individuals who are critically ill.

■ WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CORONAVIRUS:

The symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

Having these symptoms alone does not mean that someone has the virus. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days following exposure. According to the CDC, the greatest risk of infection is to individuals who may have traveled to China.

There are currently no specific treatments for COVID-19. However, preventive measures are similar to other respiratory viruses, such as seasonal flu.

■ WHAT ARE SEASONAL FLU SYMPTOMS?

Seasonal flu symptoms may include a cough, sore throat, fever, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headaches, chills, feeling tired and may include vomiting and diarrhea. Some people with the flu may not experience all these symptoms.

■ WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS THESE SYMPTOMS?

- Contact your pediatrician or medical professional
- Don't wait for symptoms to worsen!
- Parents/guardians are advised to keep children home when sick. **Do not return to school until your child is fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.**

■ HOW CAN I PROTECT MY CHILD?

- According to the CDC, proper handwashing with soap and water is one of the best ways to prevent illness.
- Demonstrate proper handwashing for 20 seconds. Visit [cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html) to watch a video on proper handwashing.
- Demonstrate to your children how to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. They should throw away the tissue after each use and wash hands. If a tissue is not available, **THEY SHOULD NOT USE THEIR HANDS.** They should cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve.
- Children should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If possible, avoid people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

■ TIPS ON FRAMING THE “CORONAVIRUS CHAT” WITH YOUR CHILD

- Monitor the information your child is receiving
- Explain what's going on at their developmental level
- Put the outbreak in perspective
- Give children a sense of personal action (i.e. teaching children how to wash hands regularly and sneeze into tissue/elbow provides a sense of control over their bodies)
- Use the opportunity to explain why it's important to stay home if you feel sick

VISIT [CDC.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov) FOR THE LATEST CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION.