

March 4, 2020

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The school system has been working closely with local public health officials to plan and prepare for the possibility of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) within your school community. To date, there have **not** been any cases identified in Indiana; however, this letter provides general information and prevention recommendations to raise awareness of COVID-19 and everyday actions everyone can take to prevent the spread of illness.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends **everyday preventive measures** to control the spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Staying home when sick and avoiding close contact with sick people
- Frequent, proper handwashing using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoiding touching your mouth, nose or eyes with unwashed hands
- Practicing respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or upper sleeve)
- Routinely cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces using usual cleaning/disinfection products according to the product label.

As COVID-19 continues to spread internationally, families may have questions about upcoming travel. The CDC has issued no official recommendations regarding domestic travel at this time. All travelers should practice general preventive measures. Regarding international travel, the CDC recommends avoiding nonessential travel to countries with a CDC level 3 travel health notice. Additionally, anyone returning from travel to countries with a CDC level 3 travel health notice will be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days. Additional information, as well as a list of countries with health advisories, is available at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html).

Families considering international travel should keep in mind that this situation is rapidly evolving. International travel to areas where COVID-19 is spreading may result in delays or possibly quarantine if travel recommendations change while abroad. If you do travel internationally, you will be notified you if any action needs to be taken upon your return to the United States.

More information about COVID-19 is available at <https://www.in.gov/isdh/28470.htm> or [www.cdc.gov/covid-19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid-19).

Sincerely,



Kristina M. Box, MD, FACOG  
State Health Commissioner