

## LONGWOOD CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

The New York State Department of Health is reporting high levels of influenza throughout the State. Additionally, parents/guardians may have concerns about the outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). We want to take this opportunity to communicate health information and standard district protocols and to address possible parent/guardian concerns.

To date, there is no identified risk of 2019-nCoV to the Longwood School community, and there have been 11 confirmed cases of the virus in New York State. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and receive regular updates from the CDC and the Department of Health.

As we have done every winter during flu season, the district has enacted precautionary cleaning protocols. For example, at the end of each day, all door knobs, desks, computer keyboards, and other frequently shared items are cleaned. We will continue our cleaning protocols and health data tracking throughout the flu season.

The New York State Department of Health (DOH) recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses, including 2019-nCoV:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- Routinely clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces.

Additionally, the following information has been provided to us by the NYS Department of Health:

**What do we know?**

Since this virus is very new, health authorities continue to carefully watch how this virus spreads. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working hard to learn as much as possible about this new virus, so that we can better understand how it spreads and causes illness. The CDC considers this virus to be a serious public health concern. Based on current information the CDC recommends avoiding travel to China.

**How Does 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus Spread?**

Health experts believe the virus probably spreads from animals to humans and from person to person. It's not clear yet how easily the virus spreads from person-to-person.

The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov) is not currently a concern for the general public and is not actively circulating among New Yorkers at this time. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or social events, and there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.

**What are the symptoms?**

Information to date suggests that 2019-nCoV causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

The district will continue to closely monitor the situation and obtain updates about the diagnosis and management of cases of coronavirus, as applicable.

Together, we can keep our community healthy and safe.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael R. Loneragan  
Superintendent of Schools