



Lakewood Board of Education

200 Ramsey Avenue, Lakewood, NJ 08701

Main Office: (732) 364-2400 Fax: (732) 905-3687

Laura A. Winters, Superintendent of Schools

February 26, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

COVID-2019, coronavirus, is a respiratory infection caused by a novel (new) virus that arose from the area of Wuhan, China in December of 2019. The coronavirus can lead to fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. 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.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

How COVID-19 Spreads:

Current understanding about how the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses.

Person-to-person spread

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects

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.**



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When does spread happen?

- ♦ People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- ♦ Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

How efficiently does the virus spread?

How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. Another factor is whether the spread continues over multiple generations of people (if spread is sustained). The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in Hubei province and other parts of China. In the United States, spread from person-to-person has occurred only among a few close contacts and has not spread any further to date.

There is still more to be learned

COVID-19 is an emerging disease and there is more to learn about its transmissibility, severity, and other features and what will happen in the United States. New information will further inform the [risk assessment](#).

Prevention and Treatment

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- ♦ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ♦ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- ♦ Stay home when you are sick.
- ♦ Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- ♦ Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- ♦ Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.



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- CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
- Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- ◆ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

What preventative measures is the Lakewood School District currently taking?

1. All classroom teachers have spray bottles with disinfectant, which allow them to wipe down surfaces throughout the school day.
2. 4 additional custodians have been requested from Sodexo to assist with surface cleaning.
2. Students are being reminded to wash their hands with soap and water after using the restrooms, and before eating.
3. Dispensers with hand sanitizers were purchased and are being displayed throughout the schools for students and staff to utilize.
4. Face masks have been purchased and will be issued by request.
5. Online learning programs are being researched; in case of a health outbreak. More information to follow.



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I encourage you to keep up-to-date about this emerging, rapidly changing virus.

If you have any questions, you can call the Department of Health at 1-800-222-1222

Additional Resources:

New Jersey State Department of Health - <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>

Respectfully,

Laura A. Winters

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Superintendent of Schools

c:

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