



### **COVID - 19, aka “Coronavirus”**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The media coverage of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) may have increased both your awareness and concerns about this new virus. Please know that the Riverside School District has processes and procedures in place that follow the guidelines from the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Our processes and procedures respond to, manage and stop the spread of infectious illnesses that could impact our students, staff and schools. We have a direct point-of-contact with the Pennsylvania Department of Health who helps guide our efforts whenever we have a health issue or concern. We also receive updates directly from the Department of Health and the CDC on health-related issues, along with guidelines to keep our schools as healthy and safe as possible for our students and staff. We also coordinate with the health experts on the appropriate steps we should take when it comes to parent and public notification, cleaning and sanitizing our schools, and any other measures to reduce or contain the spread of any communicable and/or infectious illnesses.

In specific, our custodians have implemented the CDC’s recommendation for flu season and pandemic flu situations. There is a focus toward continuously sanitizing frequently touched surfaces and objects to include, but not limited to, desk and table tops, doorknobs and push bars, light switches, water fountains, and all bathroom surfaces.

During this heightened awareness period, there will be a leniency toward absenteeism. Please keep your child home as per your doctor’s orders if they are experiencing any type of virus or other respiratory disease. We will provide you with additional information and will update our website as we move forward at [www.riversidesd.com](http://www.riversidesd.com).

Sincerely,



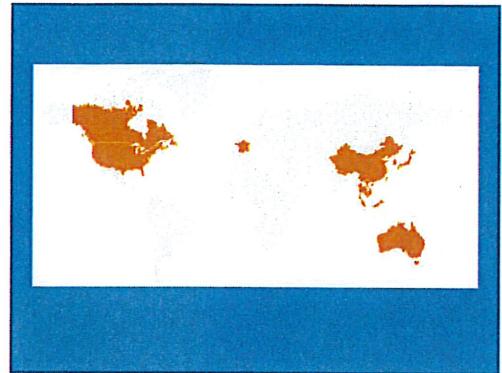
Mr. Paul M. Brennan  
Superintendent of Schools

## BACKGROUND

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common throughout the world. These viruses, at times, can evolve and infect people, then spread through human to human contact. Human coronaviruses spread just like the flu or a cold—through the air by coughing or sneezing; through close personal contact, like touching or shaking hands; by touching an object or surface with the viruses on it; and occasionally, through fecal contamination. This has occurred previously with the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreaks.

## WHO DOES THE ISSUE IMPACT?

People most at-risk to contracting a coronavirus are those who have traveled to places where the virus is occurring. In the case of the novel coronavirus, that location is the Wuhan area of China.



## WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The department frequently exercises and prepares for a potential infectious disease outbreak. We have been monitoring the coronavirus outbreak in China using information from our federal and local partners and are preparing our response teams in case of an outbreak here. We have talked with clinicians about the potential spread of the coronavirus into the United States and specifically, Pennsylvania, and also on how to ship lab specimens of potential coronavirus cases.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms of the 2019-nCoV can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Reported illnesses have ranged from people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Cover** any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, do not use your hands!
- **Clean** surfaces frequently, such as countertops, light switches, cell phones and other frequently touched areas.
- **Contain-** if you are sick, stay home until you are feeling better.

## RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

The latest information on the coronavirus in the U.S. and worldwide can be found on the [CDC website](#)

Additional information from the CDC on what to do if you are sick can be found [here](#)

# Take Action to Help Slow the Spread of Flu and Illness

CDC has developed recommended actions for preventing the spread of flu in household settings. Practice everyday preventive actions at all times. Plan for additional community NPI actions that may be recommended by public health officials, if a flu pandemic occurs. The **Before**, **During**, and **After** sections of this guide offer suggested strategies to help you plan for and implement these recommendations.

## EVERYDAY PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

**Everyone should always practice good personal health habits to help prevent flu.**



**Stay home when you are sick.** Stay home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines.



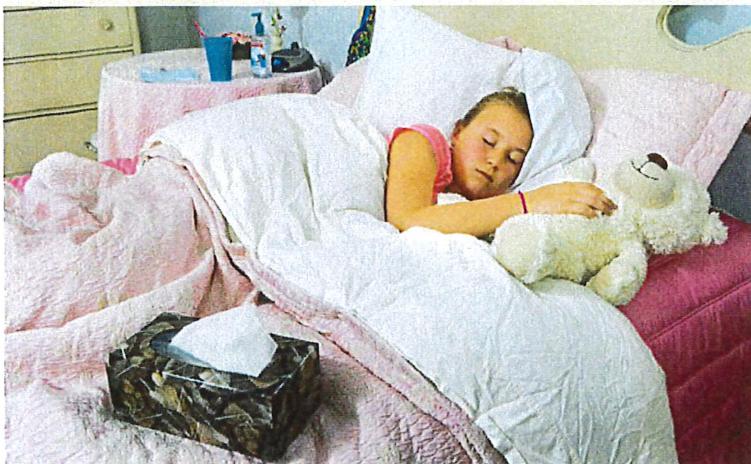
**Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.**



**Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.** Use at least a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.



**Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.**



## NPIs RESERVED FOR A FLU PANDEMIC

**Everyone should be prepared to take these additional actions, if recommended by public health officials.\***



**Avoid close contact with others.**  
Keep a distance of at least 3 feet.



**Stay home if someone in your house is sick.**



**Create a separate room for sick household members.**



**Use a facemask, at home or out in public.**



**Avoid sharing personal items.**



**Postpone or cancel your attendance at large events.**

\*These additional actions might be recommended for severe, very severe, or extreme flu pandemics.





## What are the symptoms of flu?

- Fever\***
- Cough**
- Sore throat**
- Runny or stuffy nose**
- Body aches**
- Headache**
- Chills**
- Fatigue**
- Sometimes vomiting and diarrhea**

\*Signs of fever include chills, feeling very warm, flushed appearance, or sweating.



## When should you seek emergency care?



### Emergency symptoms for CHILDREN:\*

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing**
- Bluish skin color**
- Not drinking enough fluids**
- Not waking up or not interacting**
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held**
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with a fever and a worse cough**
- Fever with a rash**

\*Additional emergency signs for infants include being unable to eat, no tears when crying, and significantly fewer wet diapers than normal.



### Emergency symptoms for ADULTS:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen**
- Sudden dizziness**
- Confusion**
- Severe or persistent vomiting**
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with a fever and a worse cough**



## Good health habits start at home.

Teach children to correctly practice good personal health habits at all times. Young children may need your help doing this! Tell them about the importance of not sharing personal items, such as water bottles, lip gloss, or food.



## CDC Fact Sheet: Do Your Part to Slow the Spread of Flu

<http://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/communication/pdf/do-your-part-slow-spread-flu-factsheet.pdf>

*Note: The following sections include CDC's recommended actions for preventing the spread of pandemic flu and suggested strategies for implementing these recommendations.*