

Brookfield R-III School District

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Teach, Learn, Grow...Every Day.

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March 4, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We understand that the Novel Coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, is causing much anxiety in our country and the world. Although, there are no documented cases of the virus yet in the state of Missouri, and we are not anticipating that it will become an issue in our community or our school, it is still important to know some basic facts about the illness to hopefully accomplish two things: 1) learn personal measures that can be taken to avoid COVID-19 and other infectious diseases such as influenza, and 2) understand how the virus is spread and the symptoms associated with it.

What Is Known

- The virus causing COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified and causes a respiratory illness ranging from mild cold-like illness to severe pneumonia.
- Most (81%) of people diagnosed with COVID-19 in China had mild disease, including most children.
- Similar to influenza, the people who are most likely to have severe disease and complications from COVID-19 are older individuals (>60 years old) and those with other medical conditions like heart and lung disease or diabetes.
- There is no vaccine or treatment currently available for COVID-19 but the National Institute of Health is evaluating treatments and is developing a vaccine already.

How The Virus Spreads

- COVID-19 is believed to spread primarily in the same way the common cold or flu spreads- through respiratory droplets that are produced when someone coughs or sneezes.
- People who are most at risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 are those who have been in close contact (within about 6 feet) with someone who has the disease.
- People are thought to be the most contagious when they are the most symptomatic (the sickest).

- Some spread of the virus might be possible before a person has symptoms; there have been reports of this with COVID-19, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

What You Can Do Now

- Keep children home when they are sick
 - Students (parents/guardians) who are ill, especially with acute respiratory symptoms (not allergies or chronic conditions), should stay home.
- Teach your children to always cover their cough and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Remind them to wash their hands with soap and water (or use hand sanitizer) after they touch their face, use the restroom and before they eat.
- Tell children to avoid touching their mouth and nose since that is how germs get into the body.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects (everyday household disinfectants are fine)
 - Enhance cleaning of high touch surfaces like door knobs, toilet handles, and sink handles

Here are a couple of links to learn even more about the virus and a helpful video about proper handwashing that can help prevention of all kinds of infectious diseases, including coronavirus and influenza.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/cdctv/healthyliving/hygiene/what-you-need-know-about-handwashing.html>