



Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools

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March 12, 2020

Dear Community,

On March 10, the Governor announced the first two cases of the novel coronavirus in Michigan. While both cases are downstate, we are all concerned about the health of our community. I want to assure you that Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools is doing everything possible to plan for and prevent the spread of coronavirus and other communicable diseases, including routinely cleaning and disinfecting classrooms and shared spaces in our buildings and on our buses. We work with local health departments to adhere to the Michigan Public Health and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for the prevention, control and containment of communicable diseases in schools.

As time goes on, we will have more to communicate about specific events, contingency plans, and activities/trips, but I wanted to take a moment to reassure staff, students and parents alike that we are on top of this issue doing everything we can to ensure our schools take every precaution possible.

The District requires students who are sick to stay home. Students should be healthy for 24 hours before returning to school. We need parent and community support to make this happen. The District also encourages all sick employees to stay home.

Any potential decision to close schools due to communicable disease outbreaks shall be made by the Superintendent, in consultation with the Otsego, Montmorency, and Oscoda County District Health Departments and the State of Michigan.

AS A DISTRICT, WE ARE:

- Reminding students and encouraging frequent hand washing with soap and warm water, as this is the number one way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the flu and many other viruses. Also reminding students not to share food or drink.
- Encouraging the use of hand sanitizers in classrooms and cafeterias.
- Focusing cleaning on all touch points (light switches, doorknobs, water fountains, etc.) with EPA approved cleaners for fighting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Additionally, school buses are cleaned daily with an EPA approved disinfectant approved to fight COVID-19.
- Closely watching attendance and daily illness reports within our school. We are also actively monitoring any school-sponsored trips to determine whether those should be postponed or canceled. No decisions have been made at this time, but we are following alerts from the State Department, World Health Organization and CDC and will cancel, if necessary, to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

As always, encourage your student(s) to practice hand hygiene at home and school. Best practices for helping prevent the spread of disease and illness include:

- Stay home when you are sick. If possible, stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Use a tissue to cover coughs and sneezes, then dispose of the tissue. When a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds. Washing hands often under clean, running water can help prevent the spread of germs.

For more information on the coronavirus, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website and/or the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website. Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools will continue to follow the guidelines of the CDC, MDHHS, and all local Health Departments surrounding communicable diseases.

We have a team monitoring information as it comes in and continue to work on our plans to make adjustments to our schedules and school as recommended and necessary.

I have attached a link to a short video that has been widely distributed that describes some of the basic facts of coronavirus. [Get the Facts on Coronavirus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIL5m5XznNY&feature=youtu.be)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIL5m5XznNY&feature=youtu.be>)

I have also attached a link to the Center for Disease Control information. [CDC Coronavirus FAQ](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools-faq.html>)

Sincerely,

Katy Xenakis-Makowski