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MATTHEW HELGERSON
Superintendent of Schools
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– SENT VIA EMAIL –

March 3, 2020

Dear JPS Families and Staff,

We have received a few questions expressing concerns about COVID-19, the “coronavirus,” and want to provide you with information about our process and procedures regarding health issues such as this.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collaboratively take the lead on decisions regarding school closures or other impacts on schools that could result from outbreaks of contagious conditions. They monitor local and national health concerns and their connection with major health organizations means they have access to more relevant and up-to-date information than individual school districts do.

We are in the prevention stage of managing for a potential outbreak of coronavirus and have standards and protocols already in place as it is influenza season. Key district leadership have met and are continuing to discuss and prepare in the event that a district-wide response is needed. The surface disinfectant cleaners used in our school buildings are effective against the family of viruses that include coronavirus.

Additionally, the district has ordered additional hand sanitizer and dispensers from our cleaning product provider, Hillyard and we’re working in-house with our industrial technology classes to build portable stations. These “stations” will be dispersed around all of our school buildings and we will focus on having students and staff “foam in and foam out” in a similar manner that can be found in health care facilities. Hand washing posters will be posted throughout our building. The posters will look like this one linked [here](#).

The most significant things you can do to protect yourself and your family from contagious conditions are the same preventative practices that we promote every year during cold and flu season:

- Wash your hands
- Cover a cough
- Stay home when you are sick
- Keep kids home from school or activities when they are sick

OUR MISSION

Inspire a caring community to ignite learning, innovation, and success for all!

Be assured that we will follow any recommendations from MDE and/or MDH regarding the coronavirus or any other contagious condition. You will receive communication from us via the same channels we use when weather causes school or program closures -- email, text, phone, social media, and websites. Information about how to access assignments would also be shared if Digital Learning Days are declared.

It is important that you and your family also plan how you would manage childcare, work and activities should schools or workplaces need to close. [This report from NPR](#) offers some good ideas and perspectives on how you might plan for your family. Also for your information, here is a brief presentation by the [World Health Organization](#) that provides background on the coronavirus. Here is a 4 minute [Coronavirus video](#) from "BrainPOP" which will be used with middle and high school students in our classrooms. This simple [hand washing video](#) will be used with students in grades PreK-4.

We know this is on your minds and is the top of the news every night. We will provide an update if we anticipate an impact on our schools, students, or staff.

Sincerely,

Matthew Helgerson
Superintendent

Laura Menden
Licensed School Nurse

Nicole Langheim
Licensed School Nurse