



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

February 28, 2020

Superintendent's Message: Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Update

Dear parents, guardians and staff,

We are continuing to provide you with the latest information about the coronavirus (2019-nCoV), which is causing concern globally and in our communities. We first posted information on all school [websites](#) on Feb. 8th with information and resources.

As of today, the risk for contracting the coronavirus remains low in Los Angeles. Currently, there is only one known case in Los Angeles County. There are currently no circumstances necessitating school closures in LA County. However, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) did advise that it expects more cases in the United States and that communities should be prepared for a further, possibly generalized, spread.

SMMUSD district officials and health services members continue to be in contact with doctors and officials from the LACDPH, CDC, Los Angeles Office of Education (LACOE) and local leaders. The district follows the directives of the LACDPH and uses the recommended tools in the case of a communicable disease outbreak. The situation is rapidly evolving and adjustments are made based on the CDC and LACDPH recommendations.

Our team has participated in teleconferences and direct calls with LACDPH and other county and state agencies. We are very pleased with the communications, support, and guidance we have received from LACDPH, the California Department of Education (CDE), LACOE and other local and state agencies, and we are confident these resources will continue to support and advise us.

Right now, our priority is on maintaining illness prevention practices. As a reminder, if your child is sick, please keep them home from school. Sick staff members are also asked to stay home.

To help prevent the spread of illness, follow these important tips:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- 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



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SMMUSD has implemented its Best Management Practices cleaning protocol as part of our prevention measures. Our district coordinating nurse is conducting trainings for custodial and district office staff.

School nurses are conducting trainings for staff and students in the coming week, which address illness prevention and the nature of coronavirus and intervention procedures. Hand washing is the key message to students and information will be provided that is age appropriate.

Parents and staff have asked about face masks. According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), face masks are most useful for preventing disease spread when they are worn by people who have symptoms. This is why people are asked to wear a mask at doctors' offices and hospitals if they are coughing or sneezing. Based on this recommendation, at this time, the school nurse will use their professional discretion in determining if it is appropriate to mask a student. Nurses are identifying isolation spaces on each campus and goggles, gowns and disinfectant are being stocked appropriately at all sites and district offices.

Our top priority is the health and safety of our students and staff, and we take this responsibility very seriously. We are optimistic and hopeful that our students, staff, families, and communities will avoid this illness, but if that should change, we are ready, with our agency partners, to address it. Please see additional resources below.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent

Resources:

[Coronavirus FAQ's \(English\)](#)

[Coronavirus FAQ's \(Spanish\)](#)

Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools (LACOE) Dr. Debra Duardo addresses coronavirus:

[Video #1](#)

[Video #2](#)

[Just for kids: A comic exploring of the new coronavirus](#)