From: **New Albany-Plain Local Schools** <news@napls.us>
Date: Tue, Mar 3, 2020 at 4:00 PM
Subject: Preparedness for COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
To: New Albany-Plain Local Schools Recipients <recipients@napls.parentlink.net>

PREPAREDNESS FOR COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) - HELP US KEEP OUR STUDENTS SAFE

Our school district cares about the health and safety of each of our children, just like you.  Today, we met with public health officials to review processes, procedures, and protocols related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The number of cases in the U.S. and the immediate health risk from COVID-19 remains low at this time. **There are NO confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio today.** Yet, the current global circumstances suggest that there is a high possibility this virus may continue to spread and may eventually impact our schools and communities at large. With student safety as a top priority, we are proactively monitoring this situation with health officials.

Our school district continues to receive regular updates from the Franklin County Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), both of whom are actively working with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We are also actively communicating with other school districts, health care organizations, state and local officials and first responders to receive additional updates and proactively review local plans and actions.

In the meantime, our best defense against the spread of respiratory viruses, including the coronavirus and influenza, is prevention and planning. By following the recommendations listed below, together we can reduce illness in our schools:

* **Keep sick children home.** If your child has a fever ≥100.0, seek appropriate medical attention and keep students home until they are fever free for 24 hours. Students must be fever free without fever reducing medication such as Tylenol or Advil, understanding that administering Tylenol or Advil does not make the student non-contagious; it simply removes the symptom of fever. Keeping sick children home prevents the spread of any virus to others. **Any child suspected to be sick while at school will be assessed in our school clinics and if determined to be sick will be sent home.**
* **Help reduce student anxiety for missed instruction and make-up work** by reminding your child that teachers will work with each student to ensure sufficient time for any missed work if out sick from school.
* **Report your child’s absence** and share sickness information with our attendance secretary, school nurses, and clinic aides.
* **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing 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 and wash as soon as you can.  We encourage parents to ask students to recite the entire alphabet or slowly count to 20 as a measure of time to ensure proper hand washing.
* **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
* **Remind your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils.
* **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
* **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth** whenever possible.
* **The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask** to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
* **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu every year as recommended by health officials.  There is presently no vaccine for COVID-19.

**We ask that if your child awakens feeling unwell in any way that you keep them home for observation to determine if further symptoms will develop.  This will be especially important for travelers returning from spring recess in the coming weeks.**

Desks, tables and common surfaces in our schools are disinfected regularly to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. We have asked all staff members to assist students in regularly using sanitizing wipes in our classrooms and regularly washing their hands too.  We have asked for additional diligence in our sanitizing efforts by our custodians, teachers, and other staff members.

Several parents have asked for resources and guidance from officials on how to engage your child(ren) in conversations at home.  To assist you, we have linked resources provided by health experts below for your ready reference.

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications%0D/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-%28coronavirus%29-a-parent-resource)
*A new type of coronavirus, abbreviated COVID-19, is causing an outbreak of respiratory (lung) disease.* [more](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-%28coronavirus%29-a-parent-resource)

Please contact any school administrator, nurse, or clinic aide with any questions. Thank you for entrusting the care of your children with us. We take our responsibility very seriously, and assure you that we will continue to monitor COVID-19 with health officials, implement planned safety protocols, and provide updates to our families.  Until then, we have added resources to our school district website which may be found [here](https://www.napls.us/Page/4774).

Thank you,

Michael Sawyers                     Brian Weikert
Superintendent                        School Nurse
sawyers.1@napls.us               weikert.1@napls.us