



January 28, 2020

Dear SAUSD Community,

You may have heard news reports about a new coronavirus that has caused an outbreak of a respiratory illness and that there has been a confirmed case in Orange County. We understand this may be a source of concern for our community. We want to reassure you that SAUSD has measures in place to monitor for this illness and protect our students. Please read the following important information.

## **Overview**

The first known cases of 2019-nCoV — short for “2019 novel coronavirus” — were reported in December in the Chinese city of Wuhan. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as [MERS](#). A novel coronavirus — often shown as “nCoV” — is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

The Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) says the risk for school children in Orange County is minimal. Internationally the illness has primarily affected adults – elderly patients with pre-existing conditions.

According to the OCHCA, the Coronavirus is spread, similarly to other illnesses like the flu and common cold, through coughing or sneezing by those who already have it. Symptoms can include fever, coughing and difficulty breathing.

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and OCHCA Guidance**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the OCHCA recommends taking these daily precautions for this or any other illness:

## **Travelers Who Are Sick Should Stay Home and Call Health Care Providers**

If you have recently been to Wuhan, China and have developed fever with cough or shortness of breath within 14 days of your travel or have had contact with someone who is suspected to have novel coronavirus stay home and call your health care provider immediately. If you do not have a healthcare provider or if you need to be seen at a hospital, do not go directly to the hospital. Please call the emergency room to get instructions before going in.

## **Stay Home When You Are Sick**

Stay home from work and school and try to avoid errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading the illness to others. “Students and staff with influenza symptoms including a fever, a cough or sore throat should stay home and not attend classes or participate in other group activities for at least 24 hours after the fever resolves without the use of fever-reducing medications,” says Pamela Kahn, Orange County Department of Education’s coordinator of Health and Wellness.

## **Avoid Close Contact**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

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### **Cover Your Mouth and Nose**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Respiratory illnesses are spread by coughing, sneezing or unclean hands.

### **Clean Your Hands**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Here is a three-minute video from the CDC about proper hand washing: <https://youtu.be/eZw4Ga3jg3E>

### **Practice Other Good Health Habits**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food. For more information, visit the Orange County Health Care Agency's website at: [ohealthinfo.com/phs/about/epidasmt/epi/dip/prevention/novel\\_coronavirus](http://ohealthinfo.com/phs/about/epidasmt/epi/dip/prevention/novel_coronavirus)

### **SAUSD Guidelines**

As part of SAUSD's regular practice, students with a fever are already required to stay home; if a student is discovered to have a fever at school, they are sent home immediately.

If your child is sick, please follow these guidelines for when to keep your child home:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or above
- Students must be fever-free **without** fever-reducing medication (such as Tylenol or Motrin) for at least 24 hours before returning to school
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea; Student may return to school 24 hours after last episode
- Uncontrollable cough or wheezing or shortness of breath
- Suspected communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox)
- Suspected infections
- A rash of unknown origin – student may return to school when written authorization is received from the health care provider

### **Next Steps**

SAUSD staff will continue to closely monitor this situation and work with the appropriate agencies. If there were any risk to our students, the OCHCA would contact our district nurse with information and instructions on how to assist the family and prevent the spread of illness. We will provide additional updates as needed.

Please know that the safety of students and staff is our top priority. If we all follow these important guidelines, we can help keep our community healthy. Please share this information with your family and caregivers.

If you have any questions about how our District is preventing against the coronavirus or our wellness practices, please contact Sommer Pedroza, RN, Program Specialist, Health Services or Heidi Cisneros, Director, Pupil Support Services at 714-433-3462.

Sincerely,



Jerry Almendarez  
Superintendent of Schools