



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Office of Academics
Department of Specialized Services
6620 W. Capitol Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53216
(414) 438-3648 • mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us

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Dear MPS Families and Staff,

Milwaukee Public Schools values the health and well-being of our students, staff, and families. We work throughout the year to promote healthy schools, and safety is always our priority.

Our school nurses and health staff work alongside school administrators to plan and respond to emerging communicable disease concerns following the guidance of the Milwaukee Health Department and CDC recommendations. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shares more information about coronavirus (COVID-19), we want you to know that we are regularly in contact with the Milwaukee Health Department for specific guidance.

Many people ask how the virus is spread. It is spread through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (through coughing and sneezing) and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. The COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but simple disinfectants can kill it.

A continued theme from public health officials is that flu and respiratory disease season is currently underway, and getting vaccinated for influenza, taking everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals, if prescribed, is recommended. The CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These measures can be found on the page following this letter.

If your child is having symptoms of COVID-19, seek medical care and follow the instructions from the healthcare provider. As with other respiratory infections like the flu, keep your child well rested at home while symptomatic, and avoid going to public places to prevent spreading the illness to others. If your child isn't displaying any symptoms such as a fever or cough—and unless a public health advisory or other relevant warning or official advice has been issued affecting your child's school—it's best to have your child attend school every day.

Milwaukee Public Schools recognizes that this is not a time for fear but is a time for preparation. The health and safety of MPS students and staff are our primary concern. MPS buildings are cleaned often throughout the day. Please remind your child about good hygiene practices while at school.

MPS staff should contact their physician if they are experiencing symptoms.

MPS will continue to work closely with the Milwaukee Health Department and keep the city, schools, and families informed.

Sincerely,

Linda Williams, RN, BSN
Supervisor, Student Health Services



Guidance for Families and Staff

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Human coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that commonly cause mild to moderate illness like the common cold. Almost everyone gets infected with one of these viruses at some point in their lives, and most of the time, the illness lasts for a short amount of time.

A new human coronavirus, called the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), was discovered in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. COVID–19 is contagious, but officials have not determined how easily it spreads from person to person. Public health officials are actively investigating this virus.

People with confirmed cases of this coronavirus report illnesses ranging from mild to severe. Symptoms are similar to the flu and can include the following:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Body aches
- Tiredness
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Pneumonia

No vaccine currently exists to prevent COVID–19 infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Here are some ways you can keep your family healthy and help prevent the spread of viruses.

- 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 into the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in your home.
- Ensure that your child's school has current parent contact information

Contact your school nurse or school administrator for further information.