

It is important to remember the importance of proper hygiene, including handwashing, as well as staying home when sick to try to **stop the spread** of ALL illnesses, including Influenza and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-2019). While there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Decatur County, the first positive case was confirmed in Marion County on March 6.

The health and safety of our students and staff remain our top priority. Decatur County Community Schools is working closely with the Decatur County Health Department and Emergency Management to monitor the situation. As with all illnesses, handwashing is the most effective way to stop the spread. Please remind your students to wash their hands thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds) and to practice good hygiene. Our custodial staff diligently cleans and disinfects surfaces throughout each school building on a daily basis.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Symptoms

COVID-19 is a virus that causes respiratory illness. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in people and many species of animals. The symptoms of COVID-19 appear to be similar to the seasonal influenza. These symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure and may be mild to severe, just like influenza.

How COVID-19 Spreads

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

The virus can also spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Precautionary Measures

Good hygiene practices are the best way to prevent the spread of any kind of illness:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve, rather than your hands, if a tissue is not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- If you develop flu-like symptoms, **call** your healthcare provider to determine next steps for care.

- Parents are reminded **not** to give aspirin to children with flu symptoms to alleviate fever, as it can put the child at risk for Reye's Syndrome, a potentially fatal disease.

We have added steps and increased the frequency of our already-thorough cleaning processes. Custodians will work to sanitize public surfaces, throughout the day, instead of just at the conclusion of the day. We are also increasing the frequency of cleaning in our classrooms, lunchrooms, and school buses.

What happens if DCCS has to close school?

- If DCCS must close schools, we would utilize two waiver days, then continue with eLearning days for the duration of the closure period.
- We will follow the guidance of state and local health officials to determine the length of the closure, which potentially could be 9-14 days.

Will field trips and other travel continue?

- DCCS is asking principals to work with teachers to cancel or reschedule any field trips planned for the next few weeks. However, there may be a situation where a field trip may continue, if deemed appropriate by the building and district administration.
- We are asking all staff members to cancel any "non-essential" travel that is work-related until further notice is provided.

What is the plan for extra-curricular activities?

- At this time, we plan to continue with extra-curricular activities as scheduled. We want to honor our commitment to our students who have worked hard to prepare for these events and competitions.
- We recognize some parents may prefer their students not attend due to concerns about the virus. In those cases, parents should communicate directly with the coach or sponsor and students will be excused from the activity without penalty.
- For our guests who plan to attend the event, we welcome you. DCCS has increased the frequency of our already-thorough cleaning processes. However, we ask that anyone who is included in the special populations identified by the [CDC as high-risk](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html) (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html) or immune-compromised take precautions to protect themselves, including not attending the event.

What should I tell my student who is worried about COVID-19?

We are seeing students who are feeling anxious about COVID-19. They are looking to adults for guidance on how to react. We can reassure them that the school and their family are working hard to help them stay healthy and stop the spread of germs. The National Association of School Psychologists has developed a document for parents (available below and at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1emrK6jPfgEJC-07bXH4Wtyk8oznY6Wn/view?usp=sharing>) with some tips for parents, including:

- Remain calm and reassuring.

- Monitor your child's television viewing and social media.
- Be honest and accurate.
- Know the symptoms of COVID-19.
- Review and model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should I reconsider my Spring Break travel plans?

As COVID-19 continues to spread internationally, families may have questions about upcoming travel. The CDC has issued no official recommendations regarding domestic travel at this time. All travelers should practice general preventive measures. Regarding international travel, the CDC recommends avoiding nonessential travel to countries with a CDC level 3 travel health notice. Additionally, anyone returning from travel to countries with a CDC level 3 travel health notice will be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days. Additional information, as well as a list of countries with health advisories, is available at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html).

Families considering international travel should keep in mind that this situation is rapidly evolving. International travel to areas where COVID-19 is spreading may result in delays or possibly quarantine if travel recommendations change while abroad. If you do travel internationally, you will be notified you if any action needs to be taken upon your return to the United States. (Source: *Indiana State Department of Health*)

What is Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-2019)?

Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19 is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. Coronavirus Disease 2019 is a new disease never seen before in humans. It is different from other human coronaviruses that cause the common cold.

(Source: *CDC*)

What's the risk of getting COVID-19?

While CDC considers this a very serious public health threat, based on current information, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low at this time. This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation and CDC will continue to provide updated information [on its website](#) as it becomes available. (Source: *CDC*)

How do I protect myself and my family?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, the CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- 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 using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

(Source: CDC)

What does DCCS do to stop the spread of germs?

The health and safety of our students and staff remain our top priority. We have added steps and increased the frequency of our already-thorough cleaning processes. Custodians will work to sanitize public surfaces, throughout the day. We are also increasing the frequency of cleaning in our classrooms, lunchrooms, and school buses.

What would happen for students and employees if DCCS has to close school?

In the event that DCCS has to close schools for a considerable amount of time, the district would consider eLearning and other options. We are reviewing local, state, and federal rules in regard to our employees and their opportunity to work in the event we close school. We are investigating all options available to allow us to continue to provide education for the children of our community and employment for all of our employees.

Will field trips and other travel continue?

DCCS is asking principals to work with teachers to cancel or reschedule any field trips planned for the next few weeks. However, there may be a situation where a field trip may continue, if deemed appropriate by the building and district administration.

We are asking all staff members to cancel any “non-essential” travel that is work-related until further notice is provided.

Are there restrictions or changes to extra-curricular activities?

At this time, we plan to continue with extra-curricular activities as scheduled. We want to honor our commitment to our students who have worked hard to prepare for these events and competitions.

We recognize some parents may prefer their students not attend due to concerns about the virus. In those cases, parents should communicate directly with the coach or sponsor and students will be excused from the activity without penalty.

For our guests who plan to attend the event, we welcome you. DCCS has increased the frequency of our already-thorough cleaning processes. However, we ask that anyone who is included in the special populations identified by the [CDC as high-risk](#) or immune-compromised take precautions to protect themselves, including not attending the event.

What should I tell my student who is worried about COVID-19?

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- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Monitor your child's television viewing and social media.
- Be honest and accurate.
- Know the symptoms of COVID-19.
- Review and model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection.

Should I have my child wear a facemask to school?

The CDC, Indiana State Health Department, and US Surgeon General do not recommend people who are healthy wear facemasks. DCCS is following those recommendations.

Facemasks are recommended for use by sick people to prevent them from getting others sick. If your child is sick, he/she should remain home.

If your child's doctor recommends a facemask to protect your child due to a compromised immune system, please provide a copy of the doctor's recommendation to the school clinic.

Have a question not answered on this page? Please email us:

LINKS TO MORE INFORMATION

CDC: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Spanish-CDC: Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index-sp.html>

CDC: Stop the spread of germs

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OPgFEAS_iHQ39FNW-6EcNFDVDEIINama/view?usp=sharing

CDC: Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

CDC: CDC Protects and Prepares Communities

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LGnuvaD_Rs3Zya38Cy_TIBLo3gdnqZC3/view?usp=sharing

CDC: Information for Travelers Regarding Coronavirus-2019

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

CDC: What you need to know about Coronavirus

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18moYfZR2siqcioAvYzEcRKIzpKkM6YIP/view?usp=sharing>

CDC: What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y2hpP3a0v7fds3vrdV2AaSGK1bOIBJMG/view?usp=sharing>

IHSAA Statement on COVID-19 (3.6.20)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GWLLu7Z1oP7SzhrrfefuToljtcPrfJ40/view?usp=sharing>

NASP: Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus) A Parent Resource

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1emrK6jPfgeEJC-07bXH4Wtyk8oznY6Wn/view?usp=sharing>

Riley Hospital: What parents need to know about COVID-19

https://www.rileychildrens.org/connections/what-parents-need-to-know-about-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR36sLXmrMjnXGR6m68U-4Sg_2iVNn7iBx5pxg530flcikeUodOXr1pxWxQ

SAMHSA: Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks

<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Coping-with-Stress-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/sma14-4885>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d914EnpU4Fo&feature=emb_logo