



## SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

33 Mechanic Street, Fair Haven, VT 05743

Phone: 802.265.4905 Fax: 802.265.2498

[slatevalleyunified.org](http://slatevalleyunified.org)

Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Superintendent

Kristin H. Benway, Director of Special Services

Cheryl Scarzello, Director of Finance

Casey O'Meara, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Christopher G. Cole, Director of Operations

February 27, 2020

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Over February break one of our High School staff members traveled to an area outside of the United States that has been impacted by the Coronavirus. As of today the Vermont Department of Health is recommending that this staff member begin voluntary quarantine from today through March 9th. Our staff member has complied with this recommendation. It is important to note that our staff member has zero symptoms and we have no indication that they were exposed to the virus. This is purely being done out of an abundance of caution.

As a school district we are partnering with the Center for Disease Control and Vermont Department of Health and will keep you informed of any updates. As I stated in my letter yesterday, part of our planning is to continue to encourage and instruct prevention habits that minimize the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often-especially when you touch public surfaces (bathroom handles, pens/pencils, money, gas pumps, door knobs, shopping carts, etc.) or use hand sanitizer.
- Clean your cell phone and keyboard regularly.
- Use a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze then wash your hands or use hand sanitizer. If you don't have a tissue, then cough or sneeze into your bent elbow.
- Keep your hands away from your mouth and nose, especially if you haven't recently washed your hands.
- Wash your hands before eating.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home/keep your child home if you/they are sick with a fever and respiratory illness and call your doctor.
- Drink plenty of water and get good rest which helps your body fight illness.
- Routinely clean surfaces in your home.
- If you are or are caring for infants, elderly or chronically ill at home, be sure to practice the above and minimize public outings.
- Get your flu shot-it's not too late.
- Avoid all travel to China and check on other travel you are planning, to minimize your risk.

We are also keeping in close contact with the CDC and Vermont Department of Health for updates and will update information on our websites as soon as we can. Visitors from China are being screened as they enter the United States at designated airports. The Department of Health will notify schools if a student will need to be excluded from school. School nurses will be assessing symptoms and sending students for evaluation by their medical provider as testing has to be coordinated through them.

Symptoms are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Recent travel to affected area

Maintenance has also increased cleansing of surfaces in all of our buildings to reduce the likelihood of the transmission of illnesses. I am also providing links to the CDC website and Vermont Department of Health website that will be providing updates. You can view these frequently and print resources:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus>

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

As things change, there will be updates placed on the school websites. I wish we had more control over the spread of this illness, but excellent personal prevention habits and early detection seem to be the most effective strategy. We have guidelines regarding school closure but do not anticipate that will be necessary. At this time this virus is still considered low risk to the general public.

By following these guidelines, we hope to minimize the impact this virus may have on you, our schools and our communities.

Sincerely,

Brooke Farrell