

WAITSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 401-100

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Many parts across the world are experiencing an expanding outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This virus can spread from person-to-person and the number of cases detected in the United States and many other countries is growing. Waitsburg School District wants to share its preparedness, prevention and information plans with our school families.

The Washington Department of Health states that the general American public is unlikely to be exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 at this time, so the immediate risk is considered low. The risk of exposure for people who live in the communities in Washington state with reported spread of the virus is still relatively low.

Schools do not need to take any special precautions beyond what is normally recommended to prevent the spread of viruses in schools. You can help students and staff reduce their risk for getting and spreading viral respiratory infections, including the flu and the common cold, by encouraging them to take simple steps which will also prevent COVID-19. These include:

- Staying home when they are sick.
- Frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after they blow their nose. Help young children do the same. If hands are visibly dirty, use soap and water to clean hands.
- If soap and water are not readily available, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Advising persons to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Following the school's routine cleaning and disinfection program. Emphasizing to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

- Covering coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash and cleaning hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (if soap and water are not readily available).
- Providing adequate supplies for good hygiene, including clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

In addition, the district's custodial and maintenance programs continue to emphasize and implement best practices cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing methods.

District officials are working with with Walla Walla County Health Officials to review safety response plans should COVID-19 arise locally. If this were to occur, the district's emergency response plan includes following the direction and guidance of local and state health officials and will immediately communicate our response plan with parents and the greater community.

More information about COVID-19 can be accessed at the links below, by calling the Washington State Department of Health at 1-800-525-0127, or our local Walla Walla Department of Community Health at 509-524-2650.

[Washington State Department of Health](#)

[U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)