

# SOUTHERN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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<http://www.southernschools.org>

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February 28, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

A new coronavirus called 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first found in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This virus had not been found in humans before. This coronavirus can lead to fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. The coronavirus is not currently a concern for the general public and is not actively circulating among Nebraskans at this time. The risk of getting coronavirus in Nebraska remains low and there is a much higher risk of getting sick with seasonal influenza. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or social events, and there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.

Since no cases have surfaced yet in Nebraska, Southern Public Schools is taking a measured approach and we are working with our county health departments in regards to precautionary steps we should be taking. All ESU 5 superintendents will be meeting with Public Health Solutions in early March to come up with precautionary school emergency plans as it relates to the possible spread of the coronavirus in Nebraska. Here is some information regarding the coronavirus.

## Symptoms

Information to date suggests that coronavirus causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

## Prevention

There are currently no vaccines available to protect against this virus and the CDC recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses, including coronavirus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- 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 mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## Additional Resources

CDC's dedicated Coronavirus Website. **Link:** <https://www.cdc.gov/nCoV>

Public Health Solutions Website. **Link:** <http://phsneb.org>

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Prosocki  
Superintendent