



Coronavirus: What WCSD Families Need to Know

As you may know, a number of countries are experiencing outbreaks of respiratory illness caused by a new “coronavirus” (COVID-19). This virus emerged in China in December 2019 and can be spread from person to person, when infected persons cough, sneeze, or touch surfaces after coughing or sneezing into their hands.

It may take 2 to 14 days for a newly infected person to show signs of becoming ill.

Currently, the immediate risk to the general public in Nevada and the United States is low. It’s important that you have accurate information about the spread of this disease, who is at risk, and what the symptoms are.

The Washoe County School District (WCSD) is working with local and state health officials who are monitoring the situation in our county and across Nevada. Below is a list of questions and answers you may find helpful:

How can I protect my family?

The best guidance is to take the same precautions recommended during **flu season**:

- **To prevent widespread illness, we recommend that your child stay home from school if experiencing symptoms of cold, flu or other illness. Those symptoms may include:**
 - **Fever greater than 100.4 degrees, headache, vomiting (even once), diarrhea, fatigue, weakness, muscle aches, chills, discomfort, cough, difficulty breathing**
- If your child is ill and is told to stay home by a doctor or school staff member, keep your child home for at least 24 hours after fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and remind your children to do it also.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water. If those aren’t available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Get a flu vaccine
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

What is WCSD doing to reduce the spread of illness?

- WCSD is working with the Washoe County Health District and state health officials to monitor the situation county- and statewide. We are communicating regularly with these agencies to ensure we have the most updated information about any health concerns.
- Custodians are spending extra time cleaning and disinfecting classrooms, offices, cubbies, and surfaces throughout our buildings.
- Transportation employees are conducting deep cleaning efforts on school buses.

- Nutrition Services staff members are using sanitizing solutions throughout cafeterias including tables, chairs, benches, serving lines, and door handles. All cafeterias provide hand sanitizer for students and staff.
- Using information and guidance from local, state, and federal health authorities, WCSD is developing a plan to be used if coronavirus impacts our area.

How is the coronavirus infection spread?

Experts believe that the COVID-19 primarily spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets from a cough or sneeze can travel up to about six feet. Another person can become infected if these droplets enter their mouth, nose, or eyes directly or through their contaminated hands. If an infected person coughs or sneezes into their hands and then touches surfaces like phones, doorknobs, tables, or toys, those items can be contaminated.

Who should seek medical evaluation for COVID-19?

Students, staff members, or volunteers who are:

- Ill with a fever, cough, or experiencing difficulty breathing **AND** have traveled to China in the past 14 days **OR**
- Ill with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing **AND** have been identified by a healthcare provider as a recent close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, or had recent close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID-19 infection

What can I do to prevent COVID-19 infections in my school?

School staff members work hard to keep schools clean and safe. You can help reduce the risk of getting and spreading any viral infection—including the flu and common cold—by following the simple steps below:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- **Stay home when if you get sick and avoid close contact with others**
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands

In addition, schools should follow their regular cleaning and disinfection program:

- Contact your custodian, school nurse, or school admin staff if students are ill and your classroom needs additional cleaning and disinfection
- Clean all surfaces in your room or office every day: tables, desks, countertops, sinks, door handles, faucets, railings, bathrooms, and clinics. Use alcohol wipes to clean computer keyboards.