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March 3, 2020

SUPERINTENDENT  
John E. Deasy, Ph.D.

Dear SUSD families and community,

Stockton Unified continues to closely monitor COVID-19 (coronavirus) in partnership with the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE), the San Joaquin County Public Health Services, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). At this time, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in San Joaquin County.

Attached are frequently asked questions for families regarding COVID-19 as it pertains to SUSD schools. You may also contact your school nurse for additional questions or concerns. The district will continue to keep our students, staff, and families informed as we receive guidance from public health officials.

It is important to take steps to be prepared, but we want to reassure our community that the current risk to our county is low and there is no cause for panic.

The district is prepared with an Infectious Disease Emergency Response Plan in the event that an outbreak occurs. To remain proactive in this rapidly changing situation, the district has activated the lowest level of the emergency response plan. This means that key departments are on standby and we have increased surveillance of flu-like symptoms in our students and staff.

*For the most up-to-date information from health officials on COVID-19, please visit the [San Joaquin County Public Health](#), the [California Department of Public Health](#), and [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) websites. District updates will be posted on the Stockton Unified School District website and shared via district communication tools, including the Stockton Unified mobile app.*



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## **Frequently Asked Questions for Families**

### **What is SUSD doing to protect student and staff health?**

SUSD has been closely monitoring the news of COVID-19 (coronavirus). To remain proactive in this rapidly changing situation, the district has activated the lowest level of its emergency response plan. This means that key departments are on standby and we have increased surveillance of flu-like symptoms in our students and staff. Other practices the district has rolled out include:

- Electronic thermometers have been purchased for each school site. They will be distributed throughout the month of March.
- Posters about the importance of handwashing and covering one's cough will be distributed to schools in English and Spanish.
- The district has updated its emergency response plan should any outbreaks occur.
- The district is collaborating with the San Joaquin County Office of Education and San Joaquin County Public Health Services to receive up-to-date and accurate information regarding COVID-19.
- Standard cleaning procedures have been reinforced throughout the district.

### **Does the district have a plan in place?**

Yes. Our prior experiences with H1N1 and the seasonal flu have prepared us for COVID-19. The district has an emergency response plan for all infectious diseases. In order to remain proactive with the changing events, the district has activated the lowest level of its emergency response plan. This means that key departments are on standby and regularly meeting to evaluate the rapidly changing situation. The district has also increased surveillance of flu-like symptoms in our students and staff. The district is also collaborating with the San Joaquin County Office of Education and San Joaquin County Public Health Services to receive up-to-date and accurate information regarding COVID-19.

### **When should families keep their child home from school?**

You should keep your student home from school if they exhibit the following symptoms:

- Fever more than 100.4 degrees with a cough and/or sore throat
- Shortness of breath

If you need additional clarification or have any questions, please contact your school nurse.

### **When should families notify the school that their child is ill?**

Families should follow current procedure and report student absence/illness to their child's school as soon as possible. If your child is ill with the symptoms above, please notify the school office immediately.

## **Will any school events or field trips be cancelled because of COVID-19?**

All school events and approved field trips are being reviewed weekly by the SUSD Educational Services Department to ensure our students and staff health remain safe and do not travel to areas where there are known or suspected outbreaks. Any international field trips scheduled will also be cancelled. Schools and families will be notified should their child's field trip be cancelled.

## **Should me and my child wear face masks to protect ourselves from COVID-19?**

No. The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. Hand washing is the best method of prevention.

## **What is Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that are common among animals and humans. In rare cases, animal coronaviruses can be transmitted from animals to humans. This novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is a newly discovered coronavirus that has not been previously detected in animals or humans. The source of this virus is not yet known.

## **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Typically, human coronaviruses cause mild-to-moderate respiratory illness. Symptoms are very similar to the flu, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

In some cases, COVID-19 can cause more severe respiratory illness.

## **How does the virus spread?**

The virus spreads like the flu—it's airborne and spreads from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Surfaces contaminated with the virus.

## **Can the virus live on surfaces?**

Yes it can, for an unspecified amount of time. SUSD is taking precautions by ensuring staff is following our cleaning protocol for commonly touched surfaces.

## **What is the treatment for COVID-19?**

Most people with illnesses due to common coronavirus infections recover on their own; there are no specific treatments for coronavirus infections. For patients who are severely ill, hospitals can provide supportive care. We are continuing to learn more about this novel coronavirus and treatment may change over time.

## **Me or my student have high-risk health concerns. What should I do?**

There is currently limited information available by the CDC regarding COVID-19 and individuals with pre-existing health conditions. Families should continue the same steps they currently use when protecting themselves from any illness and contact their primary care provider for any additional recommended precautions they should be taking. Schools will work with families, as they always have, when students are not able to attend school because of health issues.

## **What can the public do to limit the spread of COVID-19?**

The California Department of Public Health recommends the following steps to prevent the spread of all respiratory viruses:

- Washing hands with soap and water.
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick are all ways to reduce the risk of infection with a number of different viruses.
- Staying away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.

## **How is the state testing for COVID-19?**

The California Department of Public Health announced on [February 28, 2020](#), that new CDC test kits used to detect Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) are now available in California can be used to do diagnostic testing in the community. This means California public health officials will get test results sooner, so that any patients will get the best care.

*For the most up-to-date information from health officials on COVID-19, please visit the [San Joaquin County Public Health](#), the [California Department of Public Health](#), and [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) websites. District updates will be posted on the Stockton Unified School District website.*