



OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Michelle Rodriguez
Superintendent of Schools

January 28, 2020

Re: Novel Coronavirus Communication

Dear PVUSD Staff and Families,

The health and safety of our students and staff are our number one priority. As the flu season has been complicated by recent reports of a novel (new) coronavirus, we want to provide you information and protect our community's health. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Common symptoms in an infected person include a fever, cough, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. Although there have been reported cases of novel coronavirus globally, to date, **there have been no reported coronavirus cases in Santa Cruz county; currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have said the risk of local transmission is low.**

The county of Santa Cruz's Public Health Division has communicated with Pajaro Valley Unified School District and provided the attached resources for us to share with our families and staff: County of Santa Cruz letter to Schools, and Novel Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions. These resources will be shared via PeachJar with our families, housed on our main website, and shared via social media.

PVUSD encourages all students, parents, and staff to take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases, including common illnesses like colds and flu. PVUSD will continue to collaborate with the County's Public Health Division, which will provide updated information about the diagnosis and management of cases of this new coronavirus, as applicable, in an effort to identify and contain any future cases. A key precaution noted is that people who have traveled to Wuhan, China since December 1, 2019, could have been exposed to the virus. Seek medical care if you traveled to Wuhan and develop a fever and/or respiratory symptoms within 14 days of your return. At this time, the Department of Public Health does not recommend exclusion of individuals who have traveled internationally, unless they are symptomatic, at which time they should seek a medical evaluation.

Note that a sign will be posted in front of the school's health office that notify students and staff what to look for in terms of illness and what to do if they have been to China.

The school nurses, health assistants, office managers, and site administration will work together as we continue to monitor the developing situation and inform you of any additional public health recommendations.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michelle Rodriguez".

Michelle Rodriguez, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Attachments:

1. County of Santa Cruz letter to Schools
2. Novel Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 EMLINE AVE., SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061
TELEPHONE: (831) 454-4000 FAX: (831) 454-4770 TDD: Call 711

Public Health Division

Dear Administrators, Teachers, Staff, and Parents:

The CDC and state and local public health departments are closely monitoring developments regarding an outbreak caused by a novel (new) coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. The first case in the United States was announced on January 21, 2020 in the State of Washington. On January 26, 2020 two cases were confirmed in Southern California. Public health departments are working to identify anyone who might be infected to prevent further spread of the outbreak. To date, there are no confirmed cases in Santa Cruz County and residents are at low risk of becoming infected.

When new viruses surface, there can be lots of anxiety and stress. It's important to stay informed. We acknowledge the impact that this outbreak is having on our community, and on those who have friends or relatives who are affected. We are thinking of you.

What you need to know

- In the unusual event that a child or staff member is identified who recently traveled from Wuhan, China, and who has any of these respiratory symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath), he or she should be sent home from school/work, and the school should contact the Communicable Disease Unit at: 831-454-4114 (Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM) and 831-471-1170 (after hours and weekends) for additional guidance.

We encourage all students, parents, and staff to take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases, including common illnesses like colds and flu

- Encourage students and staff to stay home when they are sick.
 - Those who have a fever at school should go home and stay home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
 - Separate sick students and staff from others, ideally in a separate place, until they can be picked up to go home.
- Promote hand hygiene among students and staff through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and availability of soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Teach and encourage proper cough etiquette—cough or sneeze into a tissue, sleeve, or arm (do not use hands).
- Perform routine surface cleaning.
- Consider not attending large gatherings, as this is where cold, flu, and other respiratory viruses often spread.

We will monitor the developing situation and inform you of any additional public health recommendations.

Sincerely,

Gail Newel, MD MPH
Santa Cruz County Health Officer



Novel Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is happening?

There has been an outbreak of a new illness called “novel coronavirus.” While the illness started in China, the situation is quickly changing.

What do we know about novel coronavirus?

People with the virus have been confirmed in a number of countries including China, Vietnam and the United States. Since this virus is very new, health authorities are carefully watching the situation and how this virus spreads. This situation is quickly changing, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Prevention and Controls provides updated information as it becomes available.

What is County of Santa Cruz Public Health doing?

Public health officials are taking action to protect the public. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are closely monitoring the outbreak. This situation is quickly changing, and the CDC will provide updated information as it becomes available.

Is my family at risk of getting novel coronavirus?

At this time, there is low risk to Santa Cruz County residents, unless they recently traveled to Wuhan or were in close contact with someone who was ill who recently traveled in that area.

What should I do now to protect my family?

1. Get your flu shot to protect against flu or symptoms like the ones for the novel coronavirus.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water, rub for at least 20 seconds.
3. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, sleeve or arm. Do not use your hand.
4. Stay home if you are sick with a fever, cough, shortness of breath and are feeling tired.
5. Try staying away from large groups of people.
6. For people who are traveling to Wuhan: www.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/novel-coronavirus

Should we avoid going to public events?

Please remember that flu and other respiratory viruses are very common right now, and large group gatherings are places where viruses can spread. Remember, if you are not feeling well or are experiencing cold, flu or other symptoms, stay home to avoid spreading germs.

What happens if someone has traveled to China and they are now sick?

In the unusual event that a child or staff member is identified who recently traveled from Wuhan, China and has symptoms of respiratory illness, they should be sent home from school/work and the school should immediately contact Public Health.

What are symptoms of novel coronavirus?

Symptoms may include fever, fatigue, cough, runny nose or shortness of breath. Some people may have pneumonia or more serious illness.

I'm sick. How do I know if it is coronavirus or something else, like the flu?

If you have traveled to Wuhan, China in the last 14 days or have been in close contact with someone who has been there and have cold or flu symptoms, please contact your doctor.

How is novel coronavirus spread? Are my children and family at risk?

It is unclear how easily or frequently the virus may spread from person to person, so it's important to practice good hygiene (cover your cough and sneeze, and wash hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer). We are still learning about this new virus.

Should we cancel travel plans to Asian countries?

At this time, the CDC has issued a Level 3 travel advisory, recommending to avoid all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China. Please check the CDC website for current advisories to other countries: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

I'm feeling stressed and overwhelmed, who can I talk to?

An anonymous crisis line is available 24 hours, 7 days a week including holidays at 1-800-704-0900 (Mental Health Services) and/or SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline 24 hours at 1-800-985-5990 or text TALKWITHUS to 66746 (Press 2 for Spanish).