March 3, 2020

Dear GISD Families,

We are all hearing about the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the news and the spread of this virus is concerning. While there have been no confirmed cases of this virus in Michigan or Genesee County to date of this letter, there are actions that can be taken at home and in our schools as we work to keep our community healthy.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. **The CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** (about the length of time it takes to sing the ABC’s). They suggest individuals avoid touching their face with unwashed hands and avoid close contact with those who are sick. Using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available is also effective.

If your child presents with a fever or any of the common symptoms ([https://bit.ly/2PKgyNd](https://bit.ly/2PKgyNd)) associated with COVID-19, please keep them home and contact your family physician for guidance. These include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. **The best way to prevent the spread of any illness - including even the common cold - is to keep sick children home.**

The incubation period for COVID-19 is estimated to be between 2 and 14 days. Currently, there is no vaccine to protect or cure against COVID-19. The Genesee County Health Department recommends students, parents and staff take every day preventative actions to stop the spread of germs. These preventative actions can help reduce the spread of many germs/viruses and prevent respiratory illnesses like flu, RSV, etc. People can protect themselves and others from illness by the following:

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Stay home when sick. CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- Get a flu shot every year. It is not too late to get your flu shot.

At GISD, we are taking extra measures to keep our facilities and buses as clean as possible. New Clorox Total 360 Electrostatic Spraying machines are being utilized at night to sanitize and disinfect areas to keep facilities healthier for students and staff. We also have increased the availability of cleaning wipes and hand sanitizer dispensers as well as hand washing reminders for everyone. We have also added resources to our website under “Coronavirus Resources.”

As always, if you have questions, please feel free to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa A. Hagel, Superintendent