



MEMO

Date: Thursday, March 4, 2020

Topic: **COVID-19 / coronavirus**

On January 28, Park West School Division distributed a letter to parents related to flu precautions. Today we want to update you on additional precautions specific to the coronavirus or COVID-19.

Global and national efforts to minimize the transmission COVID-19 (coronavirus) are ongoing. The federal government has released recommendations for public schools. Within these recommendations, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) notes that there is currently no widespread transmission of COVID-19 in Canada; therefore, PHAC recommends that schools take standard respiratory illness precautions, the same precautions that are recommended every year for cold and influenza season. The recommendations may be found at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/guidance-schools-childcare-programs.html>

Park West has an administrative procedure for Communicable Diseases AP701 that makes recommendations regarding ways in which we can minimize transmission. We have a collective responsibility, at both home and school, to help prevent the spread of communicable illnesses. While youth who are generally in good health seem to be more resilient to the effects of the virus, they may become carriers who can transmit it to others either directly or indirectly.

Below are some measures that we will take or promote as a school division to further minimize risk. They will be fully implemented by Monday, March 9 to allow for delivery of cleaning materials.

1. Increasing our cleaning/disinfecting protocols within schools, focusing on common “high touch” surfaces such as doorknobs, faucets, etc. This will also occur on school buses daily.
2. If students are displaying symptoms of illness, parents/guardians are asked to keep students home and possibly seek medical attention. Staff that are ill are asked to do the same.
3. Students need to be diligent with good hygiene practices, including regular hand washing and practicing the correct way to cover their nose and mouth when coughing/sneezing.
4. Minimizing hand-to-face contact, especially in the areas of the mucous membranes (eyes, nose, and mouth).
5. Students should also be discouraged from sharing food or drink at school.

We will continue to monitor the situation and communicate with you as needed on an ongoing basis. Thank you.