



WORCESTER CENTRAL SCHOOL

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Dear Worcester School Community,

I wanted to share with you important information we received from the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Education Department regarding the new Coronavirus. This new virus called 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first found in the Wuhan, Hubei Province of China. The following information is provided to better understand this important issue.

Will the virus impact Worcester Central School?

The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov) is not currently a concern for the general public and is not actively circulating among New Yorkers at this time. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or social events, and there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.

What do we know?

Since this virus is very new, health authorities continue to carefully watch how this virus spreads. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working hard to learn as much as possible about this new virus, to better understand how it spreads and causes illness. The CDC considers this virus to be a serious public health concern and recommends avoiding travel to China. (Updated travel information related to 2019-nCoV can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china>).

How does 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus spread?

Health experts believe the virus probably spreads from animals to humans and from person to person. It's not clear yet how easily the virus spreads from person-to-person.

How is the virus prevented?

While there are currently no vaccines available to protect against this virus, the New York State Department of Health (DOH) recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of **all respiratory viruses**, including 2019-nCoV:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or

sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash.

- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- CDC recommends that travelers avoid all travel to China.

What are the symptoms of the Coronavirus?

Information to date suggests that 2019-nCoV causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

This is an emerging and rapidly changing situation. If you have additional questions please contact your local department of health or the NYS DOH Novel Coronavirus hotline at **1-888-364-3065**. You can also visit the following websites for more information:

CDC's dedicated 2019-nCoV website at <https://www.cdc.gov/nCoV>

NYSDOH's dedicated 2019-nCoV website at <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

NYSDOH directory of local health departments https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/

New York State Center for School Health website at www.schoolhealthny.com

We will be sure to pass on any additional information as it becomes available.

Respectfully,



Tim Gonzales
Superintendent