



# Mount Sinai Union Free School District

118 North Country Road  
Mount Sinai, New York 11766  
(631)870-2550  
(631) 473-0905 (Fax)

**Maureen Poerio**  
District Clerk/Executive Assistant

**Gordon Brosdal**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Lynne Kirchenko**  
District Treasurer

February 28, 2020

Dear Mount Sinai Community,

I am certain that you already know the 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first found in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This coronavirus can lead to fever, cough, and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. There are thousands of diagnosed cases in China and new cases are being diagnosed in a number of other countries, including the United States.

According to the latest information that I have from the New York State Department of Education and the New York State Department of Health, at this time, there are no cases in New York State. The State states that the risk to residents and students is low. At this time of the year, there are many possible causes for respiratory illness. 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 to school.

Governor Cuomo recently announced that there were additional negative results for the novel coronavirus in New York State. Samples of 23 New Yorkers have been sent to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for testing. Of those, 22 have come back negative. One sample from New York City is still pending; there are no samples pending in New York State outside of New York City.

According to the Governor, "We are continuing to take every necessary precaution to protect New Yorkers from this virus... I urge everyone to continue to take commonsense precautions, such as regular hand washing and avoiding close contact with people who are sick."

There are currently no vaccines available to protect against this virus. The New York State Department of Health 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 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.

Stephen Koeppe, Vice President  
Anne Marie Henninger, Trustee  
Edward Law, Trustee

**Board of Education**  
Robert P. Sweeney, President

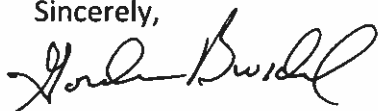
Lisa Pfeffer, Trustee  
Robert Pignatello, Trustee  
Peter Van Middeltem, Trustee

Viruses are relatively fragile, so standard practices, such as cleaning with soap and water, can help remove and kill them. Therefore, special sanitizing processes are already taking place in our schools. The principals have met with the custodians in all three buildings to direct them to thoroughly clean student desktops and classroom door handles nightly. The elementary school has ordered hand-washing kits for all teachers. It is an interactive lesson with "Glow Germs" that the children have to wash off their hands. Teachers will receive a brief lesson plan to direct the students through the lessons of personal hygiene. School personnel have met with the nighttime custodial crew to communicate our expectations regarding the scrubbing of often-touched surfaces. Signs are being posted by bathrooms that emphasize healthy habits. In addition, all of our school nurses are on high alert for any student or staff member who exhibits flu like symptoms. The district is monitoring student and staff attendance and the reason for the absence.

I noted earlier, that as I write, there are no confirmed cases of the coronavirus in New York State. That certainly does not mean we should not remain vigilant. I am already in discussion with district administrators about being prepared for the worst case scenario and the coronavirus becomes pandemic in New York. We are having discussions around when and if schools would be closed and the methods by which education on the elementary and secondary levels could continue. Should this scenario occur, technology and on-line instruction will be paramount. These possible on-line practices are currently being discussed, such as Google Classroom.

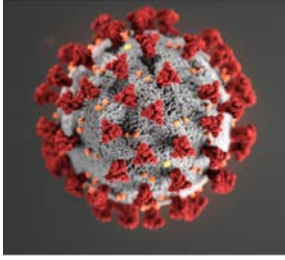
I have included other information for the community as well. Please feel free to click on the websites or peruse the provided documents. It is my most sincere hope that the State remains coronavirus free, but I think that may be overly optimistic. I also have faith in modern science and hope that this highly contagious virus can be stopped.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Brosdal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Gordon Brosdal  
Superintendent

# 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) information sheet



Coronavirus is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Symptoms include fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. Thousands of cases have been confirmed in China and new cases have been diagnosed in a number of countries, including the U.S.

## How it spreads

- Probably through coughs and sneezes, especially when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- Droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby or be inhaled into the lungs.
- The disease may spread by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes with unwashed hands.
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure. At this time, diagnostic testing for coronavirus can be conducted only by the CDC.

## Preventing the spread of coronavirus

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

### Steps school districts can take

School districts that believe there is a threat of coronavirus can do the following:

- Divide students into smaller instructional groups
- Prohibit symptomatic students from attending school
- Close school buildings
- Use internet-based distance learning in lieu of holding classes
- Postpone/cancel field trips
- Limit mass gatherings of students

### Steps individuals can take

Students, staff and school visitors can take the following precautions if they have symptoms of the virus or know someone who has symptoms:

- Stay home, except to get medical care
- Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing or taxis

- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home
- Wear a facemask, if you have symptoms
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and discard used tissues in a lined trash can.



- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing personal household items, such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day, including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Monitor symptoms and seek medical attention if they worsen

**Check the CDC website regularly for more information.**

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
NYS Health Department*