March 10, 2020

Dear Newport Families and Community:

There is nationwide concern regarding the outbreak of the coronavirus (CO-VID-19). Please know that we share these same concerns and are taking precautionary measures to protect students and staff the best we can.

All schools deal with outbreaks of illness on a regular basis, and even though the coronavirus is new, the same procedures we use during flu outbreaks can be of use during this time also.

Health officials encourage everyone to stay informed and to follow the best practice guidelines for staying healthy:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before eating and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, and especially after going to the bathroom. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand-sanitizers.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

We have taken several measures to help combat the spread of germs throughout the district. Here are just a few:

- You will notice an increased awareness on handwashing in our schools; according to the CDC 1 in 5 respiratory infections such as a cold or flu can be prevented just by proper handwashing.
- All teachers have been given large tubs of Clorox disinfecting wipes to use in their classrooms.
- Hand sanitizer has been distributed.
- We are utilizing surface treatment systems such as Clorox 360 machines in each classroom and throughout schools weekly.
  - Busses are being sprayed a minimum of twice weekly with the Clorox 360 machine as well as utilization of the Clorox wipes.
  - Our custodial staff is working diligently to clean doorknobs and wiping down water fountains, etc. more than usual.

For your information, we have included an article from the National Association of School Psychologists regarding talking to your children about the coronavirus.

This is a very fluid issue and we are monitoring it hourly.

Serving the children and families in Newport is an honor for those of us working in the school district. A healthy environment is our top priority. Feel free to contact your child’s principal or my office if you have questions about our efforts to prevent the spread of illness in the district.

Kelly Middleton, Superintendent