



March 10, 2020

Dear Families of Gwinnett County Public Schools' Students and Staff Members,

The reported spread of COVID-19 in the United States continues to be a concern for us all. As predicted, this remains a very fluid situation and Gwinnett County Public Schools continues its work to ensure it has the best information and is prepared to take appropriate actions based on the guidance received from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Georgia Department of Public Health, the Gwinnett County Health Department and the Georgia Department of Education.

At this time, our health partners indicate the overall risk to the general public remains low and there has been no guidance indicating a need to cancel school in Gwinnett. Should there be a confirmed case in Gwinnett involving a student or staff member, the school district would receive and follow updated guidance on what actions it would need to take.

That said, we understand that reports and rumors about potential cases in the metro-Atlanta area prompt uneasiness, concerns, and questions. Unfortunately, there are a lot of rumors and misinformation circulating. At times like this, it is important to rely on our health partners for information and guidance on what steps to take to minimize the spread of illness. With that in mind, families are encouraged to refer to the [CDC website](#) or the [Gwinnett County Health Department website](#) for the latest information regarding this illness and to the [GCPS website](#) for updated information regarding GCPS' response.

Our school district's response continues to focus on minimizing the risk to students, employees, and families while keeping disruptions to instruction to a minimum. In addition, we are committed to keeping our stakeholders informed about the steps GCPS is taking to address COVID-19 concerns.

- As has been shared previously, we continue to educate about **the importance of frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and the need to stay home if one is ill.**
- In addition, our custodians have reviewed **proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures and are paying particular attention to high-touch surfaces** (like doorknobs, faucet handles, etc.). If there should be a suspected case at a local school, GCPS would follow the Health Department's guidance regarding additional cleaning measures.
- **GCPS continues to monitor travel advisories and will update its enrollment/attendance procedures according to the CDC guidance.** At this time, that guidance only affects those returning from travel outside the United States from identified Level 3 areas experiencing widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19. (As of March 10, 2020, this includes China, Iran, South Korea, and Italy.)
- We continue to receive **daily updates from the Gwinnett County Health Department**, and they would communicate with us about any suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. At that point, the district would receive guidance on what county health professionals felt was best to do.
- GCPS has **updated guidance to schools regarding student field trips and school-related travel and work-related travel by employees.** (Find this information and other updates on the district's webpage about COVID-19.)

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The Mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools
is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

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- GCPS is surveying students and their families to **determine the level of online access in preparation for Digital Learning Day (DLD) options**. In addition, teachers are reviewing DLD procedures with students just as we do when there is the possibility of a DLD due to inclement weather.

GCPS is committed to working with our health partners to monitor this situation and will provide updates as often as necessary. This is an uncertain time and we thank our stakeholders in advance for working with us to keep all of our students and staff healthy and safe.

Helping Families Stay Healthy

Below are everyday actions you and your family can take to stay healthy.

- **Sneeze and cough into your elbow or cover with a tissue.** In other words, keep germs off your hands. Put used tissues in a wastebasket and then wash your hands.
- **Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds**, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread that way.
- **Don't share personal items**, including toothbrushes, towels, cups/glasses, utensils, etc.
- **Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched**, using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe following the instructions on the label.
- **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **If your children get sick, please keep them home from school** and limit contact with others. If your child is ill and has recently traveled to an area affected by COVID-19, or has been around someone who has been infected with COVID-19, contact your child's healthcare provider immediately.
- **Remember, any student or staff member who experiences flu-like symptoms cannot be at school. Individuals must be fever-free without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**