



EXCELLENCE ★ INNOVATION

Superintendent: Matt Doyle, Ed.D.

Board Members: Rich Alderson, Martha Alvarado, Debbie Morton, Rosemary Smithfield and Cipriano Vargas

February 26, 2020

Esteemed Parents, Students, Staff and Community Members,

I will be posting periodic *News Alerts focusing on Health* to the website to provide up to date information about the Novel Coronavirus (now called COVID-19) and the proactive steps the Vista Unified staff is taking to ensure the safety of all students and adults.

As of February 21, the County health officials report there are only two known cases of coronavirus in San Diego County. Both individuals were on repatriation flights (2/5/20 and 2/7/20) from Wuhan, China and are under federal quarantine at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

You may be aware that the disease has spread to other countries and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued new travel warnings with increased concern for South Korea, Japan, and Italy. Travel warnings for China have not changed, and the CDC has lowered their level of concern for travel to Hong Kong and Taiwan. Additional details about these warnings can be found on the [CDC website](#).

The CDC also recently shared that the coronavirus almost certainly will begin spreading in communities in the United States, and Americans should begin preparations now. We are working with county school and health officials to establish protocols for schools in the event that coronavirus does spread in San Diego. More information will be shared as this plan develops. In the meantime, current information about the coronavirus is available on the [CDC](#) and [County of San Diego/Health and Human Services](#) websites.

As a precaution, our custodial teams have modified their daily cleaning schedule to thoroughly disinfect classroom surfaces (tables, desks, door handles, phones, cabinets, light switches, etc.). We have also been working with our district nurse team to ramp-up our communications with staff and parents about steps that we all can take to stay healthy during this season. Working with the Vista Unified lead nurse, Keri Miller, we have outlined below some proactive steps to take to stay healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. Do not send your child to school with a fever of 100° F or more. Children must be fever free for at least 24 hours without using fever reducing medications before returning to school.

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- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If a tissue is not available use your elbow/sleeve to avoid contaminating your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Individuals with chronic health issues and/or individuals experiencing severe symptoms such as high fever or difficulty breathing should be evaluated by a medical professional.
- Get vaccinated every year.
- Additionally, the California Department of Public Health does not recommend the use of face masks for general prevention and says that handwashing provides better protection from infectious diseases.

Our partners at the San Diego County Office of Education have created a periodic [community health update](#) to keep parents and community members informed with up to date information related to the novel coronavirus. We will be posting these updates on the Vista Unified website.

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is monitoring the novel coronavirus and has information available on [its website](#). The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health also has [FAQs available](#) in English, Spanish, and Chinese. At this time, according to the HHSA, “residents of San Diego County are at low risk of becoming infected with the novel coronavirus, unless they have recently traveled to Wuhan, China or have come in close contact with someone who was ill who recently traveled to that area.” For a more thorough report from HHSA on the current status of the novel coronavirus, refer to the letter from Dr. Wilma J. Wooten, Public Health Officer & Director, Public Health Services (click [HERE](#) to view the letter).

The Vista Unified staff will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as necessary. If you have questions about these topics, please contact Student Support Services at 760-726-2170 ex 92180. Thank you for taking the time to read this update. We very much appreciate your support and cooperation related to this important health matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matt Doyle
Superintendent of Schools
Vista Unified School District

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