

March 3, 2020

Dear Families,

Over the weekend, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene confirmed the first case of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in New York City. While we all hoped this moment would not come, it was something the City has meticulously prepared for. At this time, it is important to listen to facts and not respond to fear. Despite our first confirmed case, New Yorkers remain at low risk for contracting the virus.

The health and safety of all of our students continues to be our first priority. As we monitor the situation, we are enhancing certain protocols and providing additional resources, including:

- Providing CDC-approved cleaning agents to every school
- Ensuring all bathrooms are continuously stocked with soap and paper towels, and encouraging students and staff to wash hands frequently
- Ensuring principals and school nurses have the resources and guidance needed to detect and report symptoms exhibited at school, and provide help for any affected individuals

Working in close partnership with the Health Department, we will continue to update our protocols as the situation evolves, and communicate about any possible impact to parents and our school communities. We will keep all of our latest information on our website at schools.nyc.gov/coronavirus.

There are no plans to close schools at this time. This is an extreme measure that can be disruptive to day-to-day life, and the decision to implement will only be taken at the direction of public health experts. As a reminder, it is critical that all New Yorkers continue to practice general viral infection prevention measures including:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve
- Wash your hands regularly
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Get your flu shot – it's never too late
- Stay home if you're feeling sick. Call your doctor and let them know your symptoms and travel history.

We are in direct and regular communication with principals to ensure they have the latest information and to answer any questions that may arise. Additionally, we remind all families that they can receive regular updates on this topic and many others by signing up for an NYC Schools Account. Please visit <https://mystudent.nyc/> to create an account and to update your emergency contact information.

Please read the [Frequently Asked Questions sheet](#) attached to this letter for more information, or visit nyc.gov/coronavirus at any time for important updates. The health and safety of our students continues to be our chief priority, and we will follow all guidance and take all appropriate measures accordingly.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education