

At the Portage Area School District, the health, safety and well-being of our students and staff are our top priorities. With the recently elevated discussion regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the news, we want to take a moment to reinforce preventive safety measures and reference our process and communications.

We all play a role in reducing the likelihood of a coronavirus outbreak in our school district community. We encourage everyone to practice good habits, including:

1. **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
2. **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. **Cover your mouth and nose.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
4. **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
6. **Practice other good health habits.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

At this time, there have only been a small number of confirmed cases of coronavirus in Pennsylvania. As a school district, we are closely monitoring the situation and taking guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There is currently no recommendation to close schools at this time.

Extra attention is being given by our custodial staff to ensure our facilities are cleaned and disinfected each day. Additional workers are being brought in to address desktops, door handles, hand rails, computer mice, faucets, etc. Our busses are being cleaned daily.

We are also requesting the community limit visits to the school buildings, especially those who have a cough or fever.

Thank you for your cooperation in our attempts to slow and/or prevent this illness.

Sincerely,

Eric Zelanko  
Superintendent