



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information from the Lowell Public Schools

Updated March 11, 2020

As a district, we continue to closely monitor developments with the Coronavirus (now known as COVID-19), and we continue to follow guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and the Lowell Health Department.

We understand many members of the Lowell Public Schools community may have questions or concerns in regards to COVID-19, so we want to keep you updated throughout this situation. The safety - including the health - of our students and staff is our top concern.

LATEST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES FROM THE LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

- **RISK REMAINS LOW:** The immediate risk to Lowell residents still remains low, and there are still no confirmed cases in the city, according to the Lowell Health Department.
- **SCHOOL IS OPEN:** At this time, there is no recommendation from state or local agencies to close school. We are still following normal school routines. The Lowell Public Schools are still open. We will continue to monitor the situation, and review attendance policies and the possibility of closing school if the need should arise. We will notify you if the status changes.
- **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL CANCELED:** We are following the recommendations of Governor Baker and DESE and are canceling any out-of-state domestic school-related travel and any school-organized international trips for student groups.
- **SCHOOL EVENTS STILL BEING HELD:** School activities and events will continue to be held, for now, but DESE recommends that older community members and those at increased risk of illness avoid large school gatherings.
- **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK:** It is important to stress that if you or your child is sick, or if you or your child are showing symptoms associated with COVID-19 (such as a fever, cough, or shortness of breath), please stay home.
- **SHOULD STUDENTS OR STAFF BE WEARING MASKS?** Healthy people should not be wearing masks in an attempt to prevent themselves from getting infected from any virus, according to the Lowell Health Department.
- **WHAT IS BEING DONE TO DISINFECT THE SCHOOLS?** As part of the ongoing preventative efforts taken by the Lowell Public Schools to combat the spread of seasonal illnesses, additional disinfecting treatments, such as deploying disinfecting fogging/sprayer machines, have been added and will continue to be scheduled in all schools. Custodians have treated highly exposed areas in our school buildings like stairwell railings, door knobs, light switches, restroom fixtures and paper towel dispensers during both the daytime and



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evening shifts. Extra precaution is also taken when there is a special event at one of our schools. For instance, after the polling locations were closed following the presidential primary, those schools received additional disinfecting of all polling areas, entries, connecting hallways, restrooms, school and health offices.

- **CHILDREN ARE AT LOW RISK:** Children and young people are at an especially low risk of health complications from COVID-19, Governor Baker stressed in a press conference on March 10.

INFORMATION FROM THE LOWELL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Coronaviruses are respiratory viruses and are generally spread from person-to-person, when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to the flu.

The symptoms of this infection include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

Protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose, and eyes with unwashed hands
- Cover your coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve (not with your hands)
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect surface area frequently
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick

These are the same recommendations that we would encourage you to practice in order to stay healthy during any flu or respiratory virus.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We encourage you to review the CDC website for virus information, situation updates, and prevention and treatment methods at www.cdc.gov/nCov. There is also information available from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, which can be found at www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus. BrainPOP offers resources for children at <https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>.

If you need this document translated, please click on the translate tab at the top right corner of the Lowell Public Schools website and select a language. If you have any additional questions or concerns on this matter, please call the [Lowell Health Department](http://www.lowellps.org/health) at 978-674-4010, or contact your school's nurse.