Dear Parent/Guardian,

A new coronavirus called 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first found in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. This virus had not been found in humans before. This coronavirus can lead to fever, cough and trouble breathing or shortness of breath. There are thousands of diagnosed cases in China and new cases being diagnosed in a number of countries including the United States.

What do we know?

Since this virus is very new, health authorities continue to carefully watch how this virus spreads. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working hard to learn as much as possible about this new virus, so that we can better understand how it spreads and causes illness. The CDC considers this virus to be a serious public health concern. Based on current information the CDC recommends avoiding travel to China. Updated travel information related to 2019-nCoV can be found at https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/warning/novel-coronavirus-china

How Does 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus Spread?

Health experts believe the virus probably spreads from animals to humans and from person to person. It's not clear yet how easily the virus spreads from person-to-person.
The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov) is not currently a concern for the general public and is not actively circulating among New Yorkers at this time. Therefore, there is no need to cancel school or social events, and there is no need for students or school staff to wear surgical masks at school.

Prevention

There are currently no vaccines available to protect against this virus. The New York State Department of Health (DOH) recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses, including 2019-nCoV:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. If you use a tissue, throw it in the trash.
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- CDC recommends that travelers avoid all travel to China.

Symptoms

Information to date suggests that 2019-nCoV causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

Are visitors from China being screened?

Yes, as of February 2nd new screening protocols are conducted for individuals entering the US from China at designated airports.

PreK-12 schools may have students who attend school and have traveled to various areas in Asia, including China. Students should not be excluded from school or any school activities based on race, country of origin, or recent travel (or a family member's recent travel), including to any part of China. Schools may only exclude a student if a local health department informs the school that a student must comply with a quarantine order or the student is symptomatic of a communicable or infectious disease pursuant to Education Law §906.

Important Health Information for Those Who Have Recently Traveled to Wuhan, Hubei Province, China and Experience Symptoms

If you recently traveled to Wuhan, China and feel sick with fever, cough or trouble breathing; OR you develop symptoms within 14 days of traveling there, you should:

- Seek medical care right away. Call ahead and tell them about your travel and symptoms.
- Avoid contact with others.
- Stay home, except for seeking medical care.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Contact your local health department.

This is an emerging, rapidly changing situation. For questions please contact your local department of health or the NYS DOH Novel Coronavirus hotline at **1-888-364-3065.**

We encourage you to keep up to date about 2019-nCoV, its treatment and prevention by visiting the following websites:

Additional Resources

CDC's dedicated 2019-nCoV website at https://www.cdc.gov/nCoV.

NYSDOH's dedicated 2019-nCoV website at
https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/

NYSDOH directory of local health departments
https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/

New York State Center for School Health website at www.schoolhealthny.com