

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Germantown Central School District puts a high priority on the health and safety of our students and, with that in mind, we wanted to reach out to you with some basic information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Our staff continues to clean and disinfect all high-touch and high-traffic areas throughout our school to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses.

The New York State Department of Health recommends the following ways to minimize the spread of all respiratory viruses, including COVID-19:

- 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 as a last resort if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home when you or your child 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.

We also encourage students to not share drinking vessels, food or utensils. Please do not send students into school with homemade food for bake sales or class parties (this does not include homemade lunch).

We assure you that GCS is closely monitoring the situation and is following guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the Columbia County Department of Health, and the New York State Education Department.

According to the CDC, symptoms of the virus commonly include fever, cough and shortness of breath. Those infected may have no symptoms at all. The virus is likely to spread from cough and sneeze droplets or close contact with an infected individual.

There are currently no vaccines available for this virus. With that said, there is no need to cancel school or social events at this time, and there is no need for students or staff to wear surgical masks at school.

If the District becomes aware that a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, we will notify staff and parents/guardians immediately. If you or a family member begin showing symptoms of a respiratory illness, contact your primary healthcare provider.

New York has established a Coronavirus Hotline, which can provide additional information. Call 1-888-364-3065 with questions or concerns about travel and symptoms.

More information on the Coronavirus can be located at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>