



EXCELLENCE ★ INNOVATION

Superintendent: Matt Doyle, Ed.D.

Board Members: Rich Alderson, Martha Alvarado, Debbie Morton, Rosemary Smithfield and Cipriano Vargas

Community Health Alert

March 4, 2020

Esteemed Parents, Students, Staff and Community Members,

This is the second **Community Health Alert** regarding information about the coronavirus (now named COVID-19) and the proactive steps the Vista Unified staff is taking to ensure the safety of all students and adults.

There continues to be no known cases of coronavirus in San Diego County. We understand that many parents and families are concerned about the potential spread of the virus in our schools and have asked at what point we would consider closing our site. Our charge under state law is to stay open as long as our site remains safe for students and staff. State and federal law empower the local public health officer with broad authority to take all actions needed to control the spread of an infectious disease, including orders to close schools. In our county, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency has this authority and is the lead agency in managing the county's response to this threat.

We have been assured by public health officials that school closures are unwarranted at this time and could create unintended consequences that would hurt their efforts to protect our community.

We will remain in close contact with public health officials throughout the duration of this threat and comply with all of their guidance. Our focus continues to be on prevention and preparation. We have an inventory of needed supplies, our staff is trained on cleaning and disinfecting classrooms, and our nurses are experts in watching for symptoms and providing guidance to families.

You can support us by following these standard precautionary measures:

- *Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap is not available;*
- *Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth and avoid close contact with people who are sick;*
- *Stay home when sick and call your school to report fever and respiratory symptoms;*
- *Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;*
- *Individuals with chronic health issues and/or individuals experiencing severe symptoms should be evaluated by a medical professional.*

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We also want to share that on March 4, local health officials updated their guidelines for when a student should remain home. If your child has respiratory symptoms and fever of $>100\text{ F}$ / $>37.8\text{ C}$ (lowered from 100.4 F), they should remain home from school and other activities until they have no fever for 24 hours, without fever medication. In addition, if your child has severe productive coughs (i.e., spewing respiratory droplets) that are not typical for them, they should stay home.

The Vista Unified School District will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as necessary. If you have questions about these topics, please contact Student Support Services at 760-726-2170 ex 92180. We thank you for your cooperation and support.

We will also be launching a Health & Safety webpage in the coming days that will serve as the hub for providing daily updates on the status of our district response to protect students and staff. A link to this webpage will be prominently posted to the main webpage: www.vistausd.org

Sincerely,

Dr. Matt Doyle
Superintendent of Schools
Vista Unified School District

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