Newman Parents & Staff,

We are sending this letter in support of precautions issued by state and federal agencies to communicate information regarding the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) to keep our schools proactive and safe. The World Health Organization (WHO) and U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are two of the sources that are being reviewed for relevant and updated information by our District and Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA is closely monitoring sources and working with other Texas State agencies to guide the school districts of Texas in a timely fashion.

**Risk Assessment**

Outbreaks of novel virus infections among people are always of public health concern. The risk from these outbreaks depends on characteristics of the virus, including how well it spreads between people, the severity of resulting illness, and the medical or other measures available to control the impact of the virus (for example, vaccine or treatment medications). The fact that this disease has caused illness, including illness resulting in death, and sustained person-to-person spread is concerning. These factors meet two of the criteria of a pandemic. As community spread is detected in more and more countries, the world moves closer toward meeting the third criteria, worldwide spread of the new virus.

While there is still much to learn about the unfolding situations in California, Oregon and Washington, preliminary information raises the level of concern about the immediate threat for COVID-19 for certain communities in the United States. The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is very high, to the United States and globally.

At this time, however, most people in the United States will have **little immediate risk** of exposure to this virus. This virus is **NOT** currently spreading widely in the United States. However, it is important to note that current global circumstances suggest it is likely that this virus will cause a pandemic. This is a rapidly evolving situation and the risk assessment will be updated as needed.

**Current risk assessment:**

For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.

People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated though still relatively low risk of exposure.

Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.

Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.

Travelers returning from affected international locations where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of exposure.

**Current Numbers (As of 3/2/2020)**

COVID-19 cases in the U.S.: 43
COVID-19 cases Globally: 90,302
COVID-19 Deaths: 3,087 (6% mortality rate)
COVID-19 Recovered Patients: 45,705

**COVID-19 Impact on Newman International Academy Senior Trip (As of 3/2/2020)**

Ireland: 1 case reported in the Republic of Ireland. The source of the case was travel from Italy.

**Preventive Care**

Based on the most currently available information, health officials are recommending local communities and schools take the same necessary steps to protect against coronavirus that we take to prevent the spread of illnesses such as the flu.

All individuals are encouraged to:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- If you've not already gotten one, a flu shot is encouraged.

While these measures are simple, they work.

**Travel Restrictions and Advice (As of 3/2/2020)**

Currently, the WHO and CDC are not recommending anyone to cancel travel to areas without “widespread sustained transmission of COVID-19.

Currently, both the WHO and CDC are recommending travelers avoid China, Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea.

**Helpful Links**


On this website ([https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)) you can find information and guidance from World Health Organization regarding the current outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that was first reported from Wuhan, China, on 31 December 2019. Please visit this page for daily updates.

**Recommendations**

Extensive news coverage of the new coronavirus outbreak can make the situation seem much worse. While the coronavirus infection is serious, the influenza virus causes far more illness and death worldwide than the coronavirus. Experts also emphasize that this outbreak is significantly less dangerous than previous coronavirus epidemics like SARS and MERS. Our public health infrastructure is more than capable of dealing with the crisis, and U.S. government agencies are allocating all possible resources to contain the virus and prevent widespread infection. Chairman of Newman Safety and Security Committee, Matt Antkowiak is reviewing daily information provided by the WHO, CDC, Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS),
Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding the COVID-19 outbreak and its potential impact on Newman International Academy. At this time, based on the current information available, there will be no changes to the international travel schedules of our Newman campuses. We do ask that those who have flu-like symptoms, not go to school or work and go to the doctor.

The following link is available on our website for standard hygiene precautions provided by our district school nurse:

Respectfully,

District
Newman International Academy

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What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in China, and limited spread among close contacts has been detected in some countries outside China, including the United States. At this time, however, this virus is NOT currently spreading in communities in the United States. Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to China. Risk of infection is dependent on exposure. Close contacts of people who are infected are at greater risk of exposure, for example health care workers and close contacts of people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC continues to closely monitor the situation.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?


How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but now it seems to be spreading from person to person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some diseases are highly contagious (like measles), while other diseases are less so. At this time, it's unclear how easily or sustainably the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading between people. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of
- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Many patients have pneumonia in both lungs.

How can I help protect myself?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. These include
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- 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.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled to China and got sick?

If you were in China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don’t go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19