



Message from ODE on COVID 19

Important Information about the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and Schools

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, presumptive cases of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus have been found in Oregon and these cases have had some contact with schools in the state. We understand that this news is worrisome to everyone and that extra attention is going to be paid to schools all over the state.

Our public health officials tell us that the history of this disease indicates that few are likely to need medical care. People without symptoms need not seek care or be tested. Those who become ill should call their physicians to see whether they need to be seen. Their physicians, in consultation with public health officials, will determine appropriate care, and whether testing is needed.

Our students are depending on us to make sure they are safe and to pass along the proper information about the disease and how best to prevent it from spreading. There are some simple, everyday, low-tech steps you can take to reduce your chances of exposure and to protect others—and fortunately, they're the same things you do to prevent flu, the common cold and other respiratory illnesses:

- * Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- * Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- * Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue (or sleeve) and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- * Clean and disinfect surfaces that are often touched
- * Stay home if you're sick.
- * Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- * Take care of your health overall. Staying current on your vaccinations, including flu vaccine, eating well and exercising all help your body stay resilient
- * Consult the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) travel website](#) for any travel advisories and steps to protect yourself if you plan to travel outside of the US.

If you have general questions about COVID-19, you can call the state's general information number 211, or visit the OHA's website at healthoregon.org/coronavirus for the latest on the outbreak and investigation, and tips on ways you can protect yourself. [The Oregon Department of Education has resources](#), including a Frequently Asked Questions page, on its website. They have also sent out messages on

[February 27](#) and [February 29](#) that show their commitment to keeping us up-to-date. You can also visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for the latest on the national and international developments, as well as additional resources for staying healthy.

To prevent stigma and discrimination, use only the guidance described by your [local and state public health authorities](#). Do not make determinations of risk based on race, ethnicity, or country of origin, and be sure to maintain confidentiality of people with confirmed COVID-19 infection. We have a responsibility to prevent and respond to any acts of bullying or harassment of students based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, or disability can be considered race- or disability-based harassment that violates federal civil rights laws.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Oregon Department of Education