

[Template letter for schools]

Many people have questions about the outbreak of a respiratory illness caused by a new coronavirus called COVID-19, especially how it may affect schools. We are writing to assure you that district and school leaders are reviewing emergency management plans to prepare for the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

As of March 4, there are no identified cases in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are closely monitoring the situation and regularly providing guidance. We are working closely with state and local agencies to stay up-to-date on the best ways to keep students and staff safe. We will continue to update our plans and provide you with more information as it becomes available. If you have questions about infectious diseases, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-5414.

We are in the prevention stage of helping manage the spread of COVID-19. The most important things we can all do are recommended to prevent the spread of any illness:

- Protect yourself and others by washing your hands often with soap and water; covering your cough and sneeze; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- If you or your child are sick, stay home from school and activities.
- Do not return to school or work until you are feeling better and a fever is gone for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home. Keep enough food, regular prescription drugs, and other necessities on hand in case you need to stay home and are not able to go out easily.
- Frequently clean all commonly touched work surfaces, work areas, and equipment (e.g., telephones, doorknobs, lunch areas, countertops, copiers, etc.).

To learn more about COVID-19, visit:

- [Minnesota Department of Health Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Website](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>)
- [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>)

Thank you for working with us to keep our community informed and safe.