

*“When you do the things in the present that you can see, you are shaping the future that you are yet to see” – Idowu Koyenihan*

We have been inundated with information recently about COVID-19, also called Coronavirus. (COVID-19 is the newest of the Coronaviruses to date). This information is to serve as a standing protocol in school, with the understanding that learning about any new communicable disease is an ever growing, learning, changing practice. It is also a general protocol, which I urge you to take seriously, not for COVID-19 alone, but for communicable diseases in general. Lessening the spread of contagion takes a community effort, and this issue has been an unfortunate, but excellent wake up call.

The information below is from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). “Additional notations” including notes about developing practices are from Dr. Cindy Acker. They reflect our updated communicable disease (including sick information) policy and the CDC projected recommendation regarding school closure. Sick and closure information is in blue:

### **How to minimize the risk of spread of infection from viruses (from the CDC)**

1. Flu Shots: There are varying views regarding whether to get annual influenza immunizations. The CDC has encouraged annual flu shots for some time. What is critical at this juncture, is to stay as healthy as possible, strengthening the immune system as much as possible. We encourage people to revisit their views about flu shots, and evaluate your personal pros and cons weighted toward being strongly healthy.
2. *As a practice:* avoid close contact with people who are sick. This means removing yourself from situations where people are clearly not internally conscious about their need to be separated from people when they are ill. Make that choice for yourself.
3. *As a practice:* avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
4. *As a practice:* Stay home when you are sick. This includes parents, faculty and staff. For parents, if you are ill, and your child is beginning to feel under the weather, keep them home.

Additional information: Our policy is that children, staff and faculty with fever, remain home until they are fever free, unmedicated for 24 hours. As an added protection to others, we advise you to remain home with any major symptoms until they have disappeared for 24 hours. If COVID-19 becomes more widespread in the United States, it is possible that the CDC may impose requirements that involve isolation time.

5. *As a practice:* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Added information: Wash your hands after sneezing, even in a tissue.

Added information: When you do not have a tissue, sneeze into the crook of your arm, rather than using your hand.

6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Added information: Cleaning removes dirt; Disinfecting seeks to kill germs

Added information: Commonly used coffee establishments generally do not disinfect between customers – bring and use your own sanitizer for table surfaces.

7. Follow CDC's recommendations for using a face mask:

1. CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
2. Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of face masks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

Added information: Facemasks used recently for smoke can help provide protection from the small microscopic particles in **smoke** that **can** damage the lungs. However, face masks do not protect the non-infected person from the general infection from another 'host'. A face mask helps to limit the droplets from infection coming from the infected individual. Since a virus has several forms of transmission, handwashing, sanitation and attention are the best safeguards.

8. *As a practice:* Wash your hands often with soap and water *for at least 20 seconds*, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (check labels).

There is a link to effective handwashing on the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

9. Added information: Make clearer health conscious decisions regarding direct contact. When possible avoid using fingers to touch surfaces like walk signal buttons, public door handles or public bathroom doorknobs. Discontinue using your cellphone in public bathrooms.

10. Stay abreast and follow travel limitations imposed by your workplace or the CDC. *If, and when we are advised to limit public events at school or school attendance, we will notify you. The CDC has said "These measures might be critical to avert widespread COVID-19 transmission in U.S. communities." That is not the case at present. While we do not anticipate that as an eventuality, we will be prepared.*

In the late 1980's, AIDS became a frightening disease, driven by then unknown variables and confusion. In Alameda County, that issue faced teachers and principals, when a child was denied entrance into several preschools. I was president of the Alameda County chapter of one of the state preschool associations at the time, and in order to avert a lawsuit, I received training about HIV Disease. With the assistance of our insurance company, Uren & Myers, I held one of the first comprehensive conferences on HIV and Communicable Diseases in Alameda County.

The outcome of the conference in 1980, was a training protocol for teachers, which is now followed across the United States. The conference emphasis was that if we work hard to protect ourselves from *any* communicable disease, we do not need to panic about another one. I have been able to tell recently that in our school, we have taken those policies for granted, so

we are retraining staff to be more vigilant in our practices. Our janitors and staff sanitize hard surfaces, and a volunteer has offered to shampoo carpets at the campus every three weeks. We are working with physicians and other agencies to stay clearly informed. Please join us in this health work and call us on our practices if you see that we are falling short. This is for the safety of us all. Please refer to this basic information below, about viruses and COVI-19 in particular, including the # of cases of recovery.

In Health,

*Dr. Cindy Acker*

### How viruses are spread

One cannot contract a virus unless you come in contact with an agent of infection. “The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus, “says the CDC (and this is standard for *any* virus). Typical modes of transmission for viruses like this are through the air (airborne), common vehicle (eg: sharing a drink with an infected person), contact (direct and indirect) and droplet. So, transmission occurs when the agent (active virus) leaves its host (the infected human for example) and travels through an entry place into another host. What is critical for this or any transmission of a contagious disease, is to do our part to minimize spread of infection.

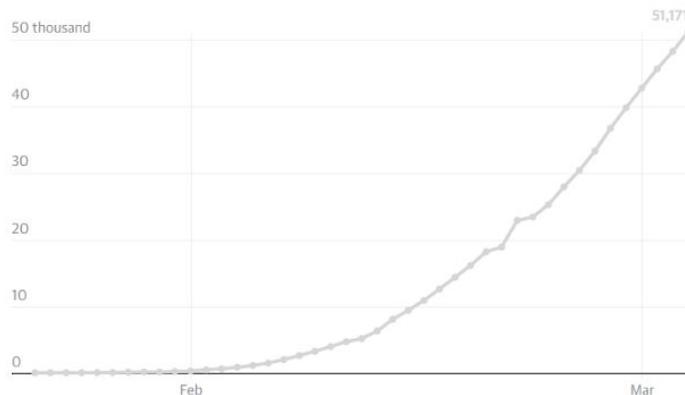
### Geographical Spread of COVID-19/Percentage of Recovery

The link below indicates by date, how COVID-19 has spread across countries, but it also indicates a fact not widely expressed – that although people are dying, there are people who **recover** (51,171 as of 3-5-20) in the typical ~14-day flu cycle:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2020/feb/26/coronavirus-map-how-covid-19-is-spreading-across-the-world>

#### Recovered cases from the coronavirus

Data correct at 12:59pm, 4 March



Source: Johns Hopkins CSSE Note: The CSSE states that its numbers rely upon publicly available data from multiple sources, which do not always agree

## References

Here is information for you to refer to and follow. For additional information about COVID-19, I encourage you to refer to the CDC's Weekly updates

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

Marin County Public Health <https://www.marinhhs.org/coronavirus>

California Public Health Department

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

Question and Answers from the CDC

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