

**Oneonta City School District**

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**Tom Brindley**  
Superintendent

February 28, 2020

To: Parents/Guardians/Staff:

As coverage of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak and the news of 59 (as of today's date) confirmed cases in the United States continues, so do the questions and concerns related to this occurrence. Please know that we, in any health-related case, work closely with the Otsego County Department of Health. We have been assured that officials with the Otsego Department of Health are working closely with the New York State Department of Health as well as the Centers for Disease Control relative to this illness. Please also know that, at the time of this correspondence, there are NO confirmed cases of this illness in the State of New York.

Currently, there is not much in the way of guidance for schools. For this reason, it is important that we work together and take precautions to keep our children and staff healthy. This is a new strain of the coronavirus carrying with it a more severe impact in terms of respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. So new, that even the origin and transmission method of this illness is still not officially certain.

What is not in question is that practicing good hygiene can limit the spread of this as well as other respiratory viruses. Our custodial staff will continue to regularly clean classrooms and common areas as well as clean and disinfect those frequently touched objects such as desks and door handles.

The current recommended precautions to avoid exposure to the virus are the very same precautions that one would take to avoid the flu. As such, please let us all:

- *Stay home when feeling ill. Do not return to work or school until you have been fever-free without the use of fever reducer medication for at least 24 hours.*
- *Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.*
- *Avoid touching our eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.*
- *Avoid close contact with people who are sick.*
- *Cover coughs and sneezes to protect others*
- *See our healthcare providers when not feeling well*
- *Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, including cell phones.*

Symptoms of the coronavirus may cause mild to severe respiratory symptoms such as: cough, fever, difficulty breathing, and pneumonia. As may be a normal course of action, should your child, or you as a staff member, experience the above symptoms please call your healthcare provider.

We will continue to seek guidance and monitor the release of information from county, state, and federal governmental agencies related to this strain of the coronavirus. We will also ask that you please advise the school nurse or principal of the building your child attends/or the building you work in, if you plan to leave the United States and visit any of the currently identified areas of concern.

You, as did we, may have many questions. The below web-based resources may be helpful:

NYS Department of Health – Frequently Asked Questions (COVID-19)

[https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/docs/faqs\\_monitoring.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/docs/faqs_monitoring.pdf)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (COVID-19)

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

Thank you for your cooperation and collaboration in order to keep our entire school community healthy.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Brindley