

The Warrensburg R-VI School District has received inquiries about the novel (new) coronavirus, COVID-19. Keeping students and staff healthy is a top priority for the Warrensburg R-VI School District, and the district has policies, procedures, and guidelines in place to prevent the spread of illnesses and viruses. As we are all aware, COVID-19 is of concern across our country and the world. These concerns and conversations regarding the virus continue to increase as the mainstream media broadly reports on the issue.

We would like to share some of the facts related to COVID-19 in Missouri, share initial details regarding the District's response and precautions related to this situation, ask that parents replicate these precautions at home and while in all public places, and ask that based on the facts of the situation, parents join our team in remaining objective and balanced.

COVID-19 is a virus strain that has spread in people since December 2019 and has caused severe illness and pneumonia. Symptoms are similar to the flu – cough, fever, shortness of breath, and difficulty breathing.

While there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in Missouri at this time, we are closely monitoring the outbreak and reviewing information from the Johnson County Health Department, the Missouri Department of Health, and the CDC.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is regularly in communication with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and is relaying information in order to keep school districts informed. DHSS continues to prepare, as they have daily since late January, for any/all outcomes related to COVID-19.

Earlier this month, DHSS posted a COVID-19 related document with general information about preventing the spread of illness. DHSS recommends the same preventative measures for COVID-19 as they do to reduce the spread of the flu. You can also find a general COVID-19 related fact sheet on the DHSS website

(<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/novel-coronavirus-factsheet.pdf>).

At this time, the District continues to closely monitor this situation. Prior to the COVID-10 situation, our custodial team was already in their standard routine of regular and/or responsive deep cleaning practices as this is the time of year we routinely see increases in illnesses, common colds, and flu. These are efforts which are taken every winter in an effort to combat the spread of colds, flu, and all other viruses.

Our staff regularly reminds students of the importance of simple precautions that prevent the spread of disease, which now includes COVID-19, with the main practices being:

- Wash hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.

- Stay home while you are sick and avoid close contact with others.
- Do not return to school or work until you have been fever-free for 24 hours, without medication.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

At this time, school nurses will continue to monitor and track student and staff illnesses, to include both the influenza and the COVID-19 situations. We will remain in contact with local and state health departments for new information. We will share additional information or guidance we receive from county, state, and federal health professionals.

Here are some links to helpful and informative websites:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/schools-coronavirus.pdf>

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/novel-coronavirus-factsheet.pdf>

If we all work together and follow these important guidelines, we can keep our students, staff, and community healthy.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school district at (660) 747-7823 if you have additional questions.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott W. Patrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "S".

Scott Patrick

District Superintendent