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McHenry County Department of Health

Memo

To: McHenry County Schools

From: Susan Karras, MBA, BSN, RN
Director, Public Health Nursing

Rachel Mintle, MPH
Emergency Preparedness Facilitator

Date: February 27, 2020

Re: **Coronavirus (COVID-19) School Preparedness Guidance**

The risk continues to remain low for COVID-19 in McHenry County. MCDH is monitoring this fluid situation very closely and receiving regular updates from IDPH and CDC. We will continue to push out any new or updated guidance as it becomes available. New and updated guidance can also be found at www.mcdh.info. Please direct staff and parents to our MCDH website for the most up to date information. If a case of COVID-19 is identified in your school or community, MCDH, in cooperation with IDPH and the CDC, will provide specific guidance and messaging at that time.

MCDH encourages all schools to follow their usual protocol for notification of parents/guardians of whose students are ill at school. Reinforce with staff and students to stay home when ill, cover cough, wash hands frequently and disinfect high touch surfaces. Report illnesses through our electronic school syndromic surveillance system at <https://www.mchenrycountyil.gov/county-government/departments-a-i/health-department/school-nurse-website/weekly-school-illness-report>.

In support of the CDC's recent statements regarding preparedness, MCDH recommends reviewing your district's pandemic flu response plan. Many of the same preparedness principles can be applied to the current COVID-19 situation. The link to the most current guidelines for schools can be found on our website. The CDC has indicated that revised guidance will be forthcoming to help plan and prepare specifically for COVID-19. Once this guidance is available we will communicate this to you.

The CDC has a developed school planning resource entitled "Get Your School Ready for Pandemic Flu", and can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/gr-pan-flu-ed-set.pdf>. Pay special attention to the sections on planning before a pandemic. This may provide additional guidance if your pandemic response plan needs updated, or if you do not have a plan.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call MCDH at 815-334-4500.



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