



THE EDUCATION CENTRE - AURORA

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January 27, 2020

Dear families,

Attached please find important information from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, regarding the novel coronavirus. We know that many of our families may have questions and be feeling anxious. Please be assured that student and staff health and safety is our top priority and we will continue to take the advice of York Region Public Health and Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

At this time, the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health and York Region Public Health have advised that **additional protocols at schools are not necessary** and that risk to Ontarians remains low. It is important that we work together to ensure children are feeling safe and that misinformation is not being spread that elevates concern.

As always, during this peak flu season, you can help us reinforce messaging of healthy practices:

- get a yearly influenza vaccination, available from clinics and pharmacies (for flu only);
- wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze;
- if you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm; and
- if you or your family members are ill, stay home.

Please do not send your child to school with medical masks. If your child is ill, please keep them home. Public health agencies are not recommending the wearing of medical masks, and doing so heightens anxiety, and may in fact increase risk of infection in your child.

Events like this can cause feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. Be patient with yourself and those close to you. Take care of yourself. Eat healthy, drink plenty of water, and get enough rest. If you are feeling overwhelmed, consider taking a break from the news and social media. Provide children with age-appropriate factual information. Please reach out to the school if support is needed.

The Federal Ministry of Health, the Provincial Ministry of Health, York Region Public Health and school boards are taking news of novel coronavirus very seriously and will take all necessary precautions. Communication and collaboration between different levels of government and agencies is ongoing and we will continue to provide updates as they become available.

If you have questions or concerns about your health, please contact York Region Public Health or your healthcare practitioner.

For up to date information, please visit [www.york.ca/coronavirus](http://www.york.ca/coronavirus), [www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus) or [www.canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus).

Sincerely,

*Louise Sirisko*

Director of Education

York Region District School Board