

March 9, 2020

Dear Lebanon Families,

The cold and flu season has recently been affecting our district, including cases of both Influenza Type A and Type B. Our schools are experiencing a high number of absences, with parents and guardians reporting that their children are ill with flu-like symptoms, confirmed flu cases, as well as other common illnesses.

In addition, the flu season has been complicated by a new coronavirus, which public health officials call COVID-19. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with common symptoms similar to the flu. Officials say the risk to the general public is currently low, especially to children. Less than 2% of individuals infected have been under the age of 19. At this time, there are no restrictions on domestic travel or activities with large groups of people. To learn more about COVID-19, how it spreads, and other developing information, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) website](#).

In Lebanon, as we do every flu season, we are doing everything possible to protect the health of our students and staff. We take additional precautions to clean and sanitize all surfaces, and we work with students and staff to encourage them to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly, and to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or an elbow. The Lebanon School District is fortunate to have experienced health experts on staff including registered nurses in every school.

Important tips for families:

- It is very important to keep your child home if he/she is experiencing flu-like symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, body aches, headaches, diarrhea, vomiting), and keep them home until they are fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- Remind your children and family members to always cover their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Proper handwashing is crucial in preventing the spread of germs. This means washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after touching your face, blowing your nose, using the restroom, and before you eat.
- Remind your children to avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects such as tables, door knobs, bathroom handles, cell phones, remotes, etc.

We are keeping in daily contact with local health officials, who have the latest information from the CDC, as we monitor the situation. We will let you know if there are any developments that affect our schools. The Lebanon School District has an action plan in place if needed, and we are collaborating with the Laclede County Health Department, MoDHSS, and CDC, and will follow guidance from these agencies.

Thank you for all your help in keeping students healthy during this cold and flu season!