



**RE: COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) update**

Dear NLPS families:

Yesterday, the Minister of Health Adrian Dix and Provincial Health (PHO) Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry provided an [update](#) on COVID-19. To date, there are 13 confirmed cases in B.C., the latest being an 80 year-old woman in care at Vancouver General Hospital. Island Health continues to report that the risk for infection is still low with no confirmed cases of the virus in its territory.

Of significance, yesterday's announcement included advice for schools and travel. Schools are directed to increase cleaning and hand hygiene while educating students on respiratory etiquette and supporting students who may be away for long periods due to sickness. As for travel, the PHO advises that those travelling in the near future should monitor the Government of Canada's travel site for up-to-date travel health [advisories](#). Dr. Henry also suggests that travelers returning from Iran and China to self-isolate for 14 days upon their return home to Canada. All other travelers should monitor themselves and their children closely and look for any symptoms. If any arise, call 8-1-1.

As you can imagine, concerns surrounding COVID-19 are at an unprecedented level even though the risk for B.C. citizens are low. As a result, the district's Pandemic Response Committee has been meeting since January to discuss a variety of topics and scenarios. The following update was shared with staff today:

- The district's pandemic response plan is in place and adheres to the PHO and BCCDC guidelines.
- Supplemental cleaning is already occurring in the schools.
- The committee has allocated funds for the purchase of additional cleaning supplies and a second fogging machine. Hand sanitizer units will be installed in every school.
- The committee is also discussing upcoming student trips. Safety, risk, travel and health advisories are determining factors for approval. This is being monitored daily and could change as additional information is considered.

*What can you do?*

Share with your child the importance of proper hygiene. Follow these steps as you would the common cold or flu:

- Proper hand-washing for at least 20 seconds using soap and water.
- Alcohol-based hand rubs to clean hands if they are not visibly soiled.
- Do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow.

- Stay at home when you are sick.

For more information on COVID-19:

- CBC Kids along with the PHO produced a kid-centric Q and A video about COVID-19: <https://www.cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/watch-coronavirus-facts-versus-fiction>
- Ministry of Health response plans: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/pandemic-influenza>
- Novel Coronavirus Q&A from HealthLinkBC: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus>
- BC Centre for Disease Control: [http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-\(novel\)](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-(novel))
- Government of Canada - Novel Coronavirus in China Travel Health Notice: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/210>

For past provincial updates, NLPS has posted links to the health announcements on the district's [website](#).

If at any point, you have health concerns, please call your healthcare provider at 8-1-1.

Sincerely,



Scott Saywell  
Superintendent/CEO