

UCPS FAQ about Coronavirus (March 9, 2020)

Union County Public Schools continues to monitor information related to Coronavirus (COVID-19). District leaders are aware that this is an emerging health matter and that circumstances are changing by the hour. This document is intended to help families understand what we know now and explain how UCPS is taking the necessary precautions to keep students and staff safe.

1. **What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?** [Coronavirus disease](#) 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. As of March 9, 2020, there are two cases in North Carolina.
2. **How does COVID-19 spread?** According to the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), the virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>
3. **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?** Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath.
4. **What is Union County Public Schools doing to reduce the spread of Coronavirus?**
 - Senior leaders are staying up to date with information from the Union County Health Department and adhering to emails from the North Carolina Health and Human Services Department and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
 - As of March 9, 2020, all UCPS-sponsored international field trips are cancelled until further notice. In addition, all UCPS-sponsored travel to areas where a state of emergency has been declared are cancelled for students and staff.
 - Reinforcing cleaning protocols for facilities and buses. This includes increasing the time spent cleaning classrooms, bathrooms, desks, door handles, light switches and other surface areas.
 - Equipping schools with hand hygiene materials for students and staff.

- Monitoring absenteeism patterns and travel requests from schools. District leaders are also having ongoing discussions about large-group gatherings and protocol for school closures, should there be impact to our community.
- In partnership with local and state health agencies, developing plans of action and continuing communication with employees and parents, as information is made available.

5. What products are being used to clean schools and facilities? UCPS custodians sanitize and disinfect schools and facilities on a daily basis using Q.T. Plus and Q.T. 3 by Hilliard. These products have been pre-approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use against emerging enveloped viral pathogens and can be used during the 2019 novel Coronavirus Outbreak.

- View entire list of approved products:
<https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>

6. How can I protect myself and my student?

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Families are encouraged to keep children at home if they are sick.

7. Can students bring hand sanitizer to school? Yes, students can bring hand sanitizer to school for personal use. It is not recommended that students share sanitizer products.

8. What should I do if my child or someone in my family is showing flu-like symptoms? Call your doctor. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider immediately.

9. Who should I call if I have questions about Coronavirus? The North Carolina Division of Public Health has established a call line at 1-866-462-3821 to address general questions about Coronavirus from the public.

10. How can I stay up to date with information about Coronavirus?

- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease Fact Sheet](#)
- [Union County Government](#)
- [North Carolina Health and Human Services Department](#)