



March 2, 2020

PO Box 1840 • 725 NE Highland Rd.
La Center, WA 98629
Tel 360.263.2131 • Fax 360.263.1140

Dear La Center School District Families,

As you are likely aware, people in areas around the world are experiencing the respiratory illness COVID-19, caused by the novel coronavirus. While the number of cases of the virus in the United States and other countries is growing, the immediate risk of the virus to the general public is considered to be low.

We are approaching this concern educationally as outlined in the bulleted list below. Simple reminders about proper handwashing technique and covering when coughing will go far in curbing the impact of coronavirus and flu. Emergency preparedness is essential for families regardless of the emergency or disaster we face. This is a great opportunity to discuss contingency plans with your family for potential outbreaks or other disasters like earthquakes, fires or floods.

The most important actions that we can take currently, given the circumstances related to the coronavirus, are listed in bullet point form at the bottom of this letter. Our staff is working to educate our students in all grade levels to practice these safeguards.

With that said, this situation is evolving every day and I want to share information about where to find factual resources about the coronavirus. The [Washington State Department of Health \(DOH\)](#) has created a novel coronavirus COVID-19 website that has information and resources for the community. A fact sheet, which is available in 11 languages, as well as a page dedicated to schools is on this website. The site also includes workplace recommendations and links to [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) resources and information](#). Both the DOH and CDC websites are updated regularly.

We are in communication with local public health officials to stay abreast of any changes or developments in this area and will share these updates as needed.

Reminders about how to prevent COVID-19 and other illness at school

According to the Department of Health, schools do not need to take any special precautions beyond what is normally recommended to prevent the spread of viruses in schools. The entire community can reduce the risk of getting and spreading viral respiratory infections, including the flu and the common cold, through these simple steps, which will also help to prevent COVID-19:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash hands with soap and water frequently and for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose. Help young children do the same.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and clean hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (if soap and water are not readily available).
- Get a flu shot during the flu season.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely, Dave Holmes, Superintendent