

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office Student Support Services

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William O. George III, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Patrick Rinella
District Director of Student Support Services

Letter Regarding Student Attendance

Dear school community members,

The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) that recently surfaced out of China, has been found within the US, but not within our community. Be assured that the virus is being closely monitored by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and health departments. As student and staff health and safety are top priorities for the District, we will continue to work closely with the state health department regarding updates, directions and protocols.

While regular attendance directly impacts student achievement, it is important for parents to keep children home from school if they are ill with symptoms of any communicable disease. If you choose to keep your child home, please notify the school of the presenting symptoms. The staff will document an internal notation for consideration as an administratively excused absence for students exceeding 16 absences or in loss of credit in one or more courses at the high school level.

Deciding when your child is too sick to go to school can be difficult. Please use the guidelines below.

- Fever – 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Remember that a child must be fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
- Fever with Cough – a fever of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit plus a cough could indicate a virus that needs attention from a medical provider. Please call your healthcare provider.
- Shortness of Breath – difficulty breathing especially if it affects talking or walking, feeling of tightness in the chest, wheezing, blue/dusky color around lips or beds of nails. This could be serious, please call your healthcare provider or 911.
- Eyes – thick with mucus, pus draining, pink eye. With pink eye you may see white or yellow discharge, matted eyelids after sleep, eye pain and/or redness.
- Chronic Cough and/or green nasal discharge – These conditions may be contagious and require treatment.
- Sore throat – especially with fever or swollen glands in the neck. With Strep throat, the child may return to school after 24 hours on antibiotics.
- Diarrhea – three or more watery stools in a 24 hour period
- Vomiting – two or more times in a 24 hour period

If a student has recently returned from overseas travel or has been in contact with someone who is infected or suspected of being infected with the virus, the school's health office should be notified.

Prevention is always key when it comes to communicable diseases. So, what can you do to help decrease the risk of getting infected with Novel Coronavirus?

- Wash your hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizer should be used if soap and water is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home while you are sick and avoid contact with others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- If you are traveling overseas (to China, but also to other places) follow the CDC's guidance at [CDC Travel](#).

Sincerely,

Patrick Rinella