March 12, 2020

Dear The Willow School Families,

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation is evolving quickly. As we learn more, I am writing to provide updates about what we know, and the steps we are taking to minimize the risk in our school.

At this time, our school does NOT have any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19. However, with Tuesday’s announcement of the first confirmed “contact” case and now 13 Presumptive Positive Cases in Montgomery County and nearby counties, we have escalated our school response.

In addition to our normal daily handwashing, cleaning and sanitizing procedures, we are cleaning and sanitizing toys more frequently, washing hands more often, wiping tabletops after each use, and sanitizing the furniture every day with our ENVIROX Cleaner/Degreaser/Sanitizer (see attach).

We also ask for your assistance during this national health crises. Our normal wellness policy as communicated in our Parent Handbook remains in effect. In addition, if your child shows any of these symptoms noted below, either mild or not, we are asking that you keep him/her home until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours and accompanied with a note from the doctor. By keeping your child home, you will help stop the spread of the virus. See attached for more information on COVID-19.

Symptoms of the COVID-19 can include:
- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Here are the important steps we are taking and are asking you to also take based on guidance from the PA Department of Public Health (PADPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Preventive hygiene practices - the most important things we can all continue to do
  - wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds regularly (sing Happy Birthday twice)
  - use your elbow or a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, then wash your hands afterward
  - avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
  - stay home if you are sick

- Hand sanitizer - is placed in school lobby, offices, and School Age Classrooms. Please encourage your school aged child(ren) to first wash their hands and at minimum use these hand sanitizers at The Willow School and at their Elementary Schools throughout the school day.
● **Cleaning practices** - Each day, we wipe down all high-touch surfaces such as door handles, door knobs, water fountains, student tables tops and cots. The school has a regular cleaning team on Wednesdays and Fridays that support regular cleaning of bathrooms and classrooms.

● **Cleaning of The Willow School bus** – Wipe downs of seats, railings and interior window bumper cushions on every school bus will occur after morning and afternoon routes each day.

● **Learning and care giving**: While there are currently no plans to close The Willow School due to the Coronavirus, we will monitor the Norristown Area School District’s plans along with the advice of the Department of Human Services, and revise our decision to remain open should the need arise. **Therefore, I urge you all to make back-up care arrangements** and plans now as hundreds of academics institutions of higher learning and major companies have closed with no date as to when they will reopen.

● **Travel-related self-reporting and self-isolation** - parents and guardians of students returning from coronavirus Level 2 or higher countries are asked to complete this [Self-Reporting Form](#) and inform school staff of the student’s status. Students and staff returning from Level 2 or higher countries must self-isolate for 14 days before returning to school or work, even if they are not exhibiting symptoms associated with the coronavirus. If returning travelers from affected countries develop fever, cough, or trouble breathing, they should call their medical provider and report their symptoms and travel history.

Please know that the actions we are taking — guided by the advice of the PADPH as well as other city, state and U.S. public health agencies — are focused on ensuring the health and safety of our entire school community, as we collectively work to respond to the challenges created by COVID-19.

If you have additional questions/concerns, please speak with the Director, Carol Hughes.

My best,

Kym Ramsey,
Owner
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others circulating among animals, including camels, cats and bats.

The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

**What are the symptoms of coronavirus?**

Symptoms of the COVID-19 can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Reported illnesses have ranged from people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying.

**How can the coronavirus spread?**

Human coronaviruses spread just like the flu or a cold:

- Through the air by coughing or sneezing;
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it;
- Occasionally, fecal contamination.

**How can I help protect myself?**

Prevention:

- Cover coughs or sneezes with your elbow. **Do not use your hands!**
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Clean surfaces frequently, including countertops, light switches, cell phones, remotes, and other frequently touched items.
- Contain: if you are sick, stay home until you are feeling better.

In addition, it is recommended that Pennsylvanians take time to prepare now. [View the PA Emergency Preparedness Guide](https://www.commonwealthofpa.gov/health/emergency-preparedness-guides).
Excerpt from The Willow School’s Wellness Policy below for your review and your support in keeping our school healthy:

**Health symptoms that require Program exclusion include (but are not limited to):**

- Severe pain or discomfort, particularly in joints, abdomen, or ears.
- Vomiting or diarrhea (2 or more incidents within a 24 hour period).
- Severe coughing or sore throat.
- Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or more accompanied by other behavior changes/symptoms. Fever without behavior change or other symptoms of illness do not necessitate exclusion. *Exception: infants under four months with any fever.
- Jaundiced (yellow) skin or eyes.
- Red eyes with discharge.
- Infected, untreated skin patches/lesions or severe itching of body/scalp.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Skin rashes (excluding diaper rash) if associated with fever or behavior change and lasting more than 24 hours.
- Swollen joints, visibly enlarged lymph nodes or stiff neck.
- Blood/pus from ears, skin, urine or stool.
- Unusual behavior characterized by listlessness, loss of normal appetite or confusion.
- Symptoms of chicken pox impetigo, lice, scabies or strep throat