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Dear School Community Members:

Re: 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

I am writing to provide you with an update on the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Many school community members continue to request information on this situation, and given that many students and their families may be travelling in the coming weeks, I am providing the following information.

New public health recommendations have been issued in response to this situation:

Travellers from Hubei Province:

If you have travelled to Hubei Province in the last 14 days:

- Limit your contact with others for a total of 14 days from the date that you left Hubei. This means **self-isolate and stay at home**.
- Contact your local public health department within 24 hours of arriving in Canada.
- For Toronto residents, contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

Travellers from Mainland China:

If you have travelled from mainland China in the last 14 days:

- Monitor yourself for respiratory symptoms including fever, cough and difficulty breathing.
- Should these respiratory symptoms develop within 14 days after returning to Canada, stay home and seek medical care immediately.
- Call your healthcare provider or your local public health department about symptoms and travel history **before** seeking medical care.
- Remember, staying home when you are sick prevents the spread of respiratory viruses, such as influenza, which also circulate at this time of the year

Continued public health advice and recommendations:

Risk to the Public is Still Low:

The risk of getting this virus in Toronto continues to be low because the virus is not spreading in the general community. At this time, there are only two confirmed cases of this virus in Toronto. The Toronto residents who contracted this virus had a history of travel in Wuhan, China. Most cases occurring around the world got the virus from travel in the affected area, were in close contact, or live in the same household as known cases.

Travelers are Being Screened:

People who have travelled to the affected areas and return to Toronto are being screened at the airport. If they develop symptoms such as a cough or fever, they are told to remain home and call public health to avoid exposing others. Symptoms of the virus occur within 14 days after being exposed.

What Can You Do?

Members of the public are advised to take the usual measures to reduce the risk of respiratory illness, including:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap is not available;
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze;
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm;
- Get an annual flu vaccine, available from clinics and pharmacies; and
- If you or your family members are sick, stay home.

Prevent the Spread of Misinformation:

As this is an evolving situation, we continue to remind people of the importance of using credible sources to stay informed, and encourage others to do the same. We continue to update our website frequently as new information is confirmed. For more information, please visit toronto.ca/coronavirus.

Questions?

Call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on weekends from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Translation is available in many languages.

Sincerely,



Dr. Eileen de Villa
Medical Officer of Health