



HUNTINGTON BEACH UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

5832 Bolsa Avenue • Huntington Beach, California 92649
(714) 903-7000 FAX (714) 372-8105

Board of Trustees:

Diana Carey
Bonnie Castrey
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Susan Henry
Michael Simons

Clint Harwick, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

March 12, 2020

Dear HBUHSD Community,

Our staff continues to follow guidance from the California Department of Education (CDE), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA), the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We are also fortunate to have six licensed and credentialed School Nurses dedicated to the health and safety of our students. They work very closely with all the agencies listed above, and have worked through a previous influenza pandemic as community health providers, and have deep experience in this area. They are a primary resource for our district as we manage our COVID-19 preparation and response.

This past weekend the CDPH provided updated school guidance on Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19. The CDPH has noted that “older people and people with certain underlying health conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example, seem to be at greater risk of serious illness,” and while risk of infection in Orange County is still believed to be low, we must all **take everyday precautions to protect ourselves and our community.**

We will continue to follow the Orange County Health Care Agency, Orange County Department of Education, and California Department of Public Health on a daily basis for updates in our County, so we can respond as quickly and efficiently as possible to changing conditions with this virus.

Please see below for the latest information from the Orange County Health Care Agency:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing, and then wash your hands with soap and water.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Additionally:

- Students and staff who present with fever and/or respiratory infection symptoms will be evaluated by a school site nurse to determine next steps.

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- Students or staff who have traveled the last 14 days to an area identified by the [CDC as Level 3](#) or above (China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, most of Europe) shall be excluded from school or work. Additionally, anyone who has been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 will also be excluded from school/work for 14 days from the day of their last exposure.

We have provided a list of frequently asked questions below:

1. What steps are our schools taking to clean and sanitize?

Our site maintenance staff follow proper cleaning and disinfecting techniques on a daily basis. We have emphasized sanitization efforts in all of our schools and throughout the District, especially in high-touch areas, such as doorknobs, desks, handrails, drinking fountains, and faucets. Our maintenance staff also ensures that soap dispensers are filled with our standard antimicrobial soap, and any damaged soap dispensers are either repaired or replaced, and then filled.

Our Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation (MOT) department cleans and disinfects our buses and vans twice each day.

Our business department is continuing to order hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes for use in classrooms and offices at each site. Enough supplies have been ordered for the rest of the school year and next year.

2. What is the District doing to coordinate responses and actions to the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

District staff work with local, state, and county health and educational officials to monitor the latest developments and coordinate our local efforts.

Currently the HBUHSD is at the lowest level of concern (Scenario 1) based on the California Department of Public Health document, "[School Guidance on Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19.](#)" The HBUHSD will follow the recommendations listed under the scenario that applies to this evolving situation. We will notify our students, staff, and families about any scenario change moving forward.

Today we have received further guidance from the CDPH regarding "social distancing," especially with regard to gatherings of 250 people or more. We are taking steps to

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immediately implement the recommendations contained in the Guidance as they pertain to these school related activities. "The goal of this recommendation is to prevent people physically coming together unnecessarily... **This guidance does not apply to activities such as attendance at regular school classes, work, or essential services.**" (CDPH, Gathering Guidance, 3-11-2020).

All extracurricular and cocurricular activities will be postponed until further notice. Examples include, but are not limited to, performing arts, banquets, field trips, conferences, etc. The Sunset and Goldenwest Leagues have postponed all athletic competitions until further notice.

We meet regularly with our school nurses, District, and site administration. We are following our pandemic response protocols in our school safety plans, and use other sources such as the OCDE pandemic response protocol as reference.

3. How is the HBUHSD handling student absences?

We follow the California Education Code in terms of excused absences. Illness and 14-day self-quarantine, as per health care guidelines, are considered excused.

4. What is the HBUHSD doing about field trips and teacher conferences?

Our District follows an approval process for all student trips (international and domestic) several months in advance of travel. We monitor all trips at the District level in consultation with our nurses, and use US State Department, Centers for Disease Control, and World Health Organization travel notices and advisories as an important reference. Knowing that circumstances could potentially change, we have the ability to rescind approval for trips at any time due to situations that pose safety concerns. **At this time, all field trips will be canceled or rescheduled to a later date.** Our nurses and staff use the same process for work-related conferences.

5. What if a student/staff member is suspected or tests positive for COVID-19 or any other infectious disease?

If an HBUHSD student or staff member is suspected or confirmed to have a communicable disease, we routinely work with the OCHCA, CDPH, and our nurses and



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follow their directives and guidance in preventing the spread of the disease, which may include exclusion from campus.

6. Who would make the decision to close schools?

Per CDE and CDC guidelines, in consultation with the local public health department, the appropriate school official may consider if school closure is warranted and length of time based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.

7. Are distance learning options available in the event of a school closure or dismissal?

We currently utilize distance learning in our District, and, if necessary, it can be expanded to all students.

8. How are new enrollees to the HBUHSD being managed?

We will continue to use our usual enrollment process for new students; in addition, the HBUHSD will follow CDC, CDPH and OCHCA direction for screening new enrollees.

All new families to the District from affected countries will be asked to willingly provide travel information, entry date, and will meet with school personnel to verify the accuracy of the information provided. If there is a concern about the information or the student's health status, District health professionals, county and/or state health agencies will be contacted.

Student information, including health information is not released to the public, as it would be a violation of confidentiality under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).



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REMINDERS:

Travel:

People who travel outside the country will be screened upon re-entry to the United States, as determined by federal and state officials. HBUHSD does not have the authority to monitor personal travel of our students or staff.

If you make a trip to any country with COVID-19 travel advisories during the upcoming spring break, you will be subject to the above guidelines and any new guidelines that may be implemented. Visit the CDC website for a list of destinations with risk of community spread of Coronavirus.

Resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Novel Coronavirus Webpage](#)
- [CDC Resources - Protect yourself and your family](#)
- [OC Health Care Agency Novel Coronavirus Webpage](#)

Thank you for keeping our community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Clint Harwick, Ed.D.
Superintendent