



Transforming Education for a Changing World

March 12, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

On March 5th, I sent a communication regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19). We are continuing to closely monitor notices from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the [L.A. County Department of Public Health \(DPH\)](#), and the L.A. County Office of Education on the status of the disease and what schools should do in the event of an infectious outbreak in our community. I apologize for the length of this communication, but there is a wealth of information important to share. Effective immediately, important mitigation measures are now in effect in ESUSD.

State of COVID-19

As of the time of this writing, Los Angeles County has confirmed another case of COVID-19 with unknown exposure. This makes for a total of two cases of community transmission, putting us in Scenario II of the [California Department of Public Health School Guidance on Novel Coronavirus](#) or COVID-19 as outlined below.

Scenario II: Measures to be taken if there are two or more community transmission cases of COVID-19, but no individuals within the school test positive.

If the local public health department has confirmed two or more community transmission cases, but no individuals (staff or students) at the school have tested positive for COVID-19, in addition to the items outlined in Phase I, LACDPH recommends school administrators implement the following steps. ESUSD's specific actions are noted in **bold** font:

- Teachers and staff with any fever and/or respiratory infection symptoms should not come to work. Teachers and staff should self-screen (i.e., check themselves for subjective fever and/or respiratory symptoms such as cough) for respiratory infection symptoms each morning before interacting with students.
 - **ESUSD's current sick leave policies allow for teachers and staff to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection. Our employees understand the COVID-19 pandemic is an ever-evolving situation and will err on the side of caution and are directed to stay home if ill.**

- Limit visitors to the school by not allowing those with symptoms of fever and/or respiratory infection or who have a travel history over the course of the last 14 days to an area identified by the CDC as Level 3 Travel Health Notice.

- **ESUSD values and appreciates our countless volunteers who support our educational program. Volunteers scheduled to be in a classroom are directed to also self-screen for fever and/or respiratory symptoms such as cough each morning. If a volunteer is not feeling well, he/she is directed to notify the teacher and remain at home.. In addition, volunteers who have traveled over the course of the last 14 days to an area identified by the CDC as a Level 3 Travel Health Notice should also remain home.**
- Consider alternates to congregate or group programming within the school including any large or communal activities such as assemblies. Alternate approaches which limit close contact may include conducting assemblies via webcasts or intercom announcements.
 - **ESUSD has suspended any assemblies, student performance or communal activities within our schools through April 13th. We will re-evaluate this practice at that point in time to determine if we need to extend the suspension based upon information received from LACOE and L.A. County Department of Public Health.**
 - **ESUSD commends PTA Council for taking a leadership role by planning to meet virtually next week.**
- Consider implementing staggered recess times to limit the number of students who are together; and, if possible, group recess by classrooms. (Also consider staggered lunch times.)
 - **ESUSD principals will ensure that large groups of over 250 students do not congregate in any one area at a time.**
- Consider relaxing requirements for a doctor's note for the child to return to school after illness.
 - **ESUSD will be instituting this practice. However, as educators, we are not qualified to assess your student's medical condition and will refer parents to consult with Public Health or a medical professional when necessary.**

Field Trips

LACOE has recommended to limit non-essential travel for students and staff on a short-term basis. Effective immediately, ESUSD will suspend school and district-sponsored field trips through April 13th as well. At this point in time, El Segundo High School athletics are not impacted.

School Closures or Dismissal

Los Angeles County superintendents are participating in a weekly call with Los Angeles County Office of Education. The county office provides support to all school districts within the county. Los Angeles County Public Health will contact, assess and work directly with individual school districts to determine if a school dismissal or school closure is necessary. LACOE has advised that the current understanding is that DPH would recommend closing a school if there is a

confirmed case of COVID-19 at a school. Currently, **there are no cases of any individuals with COVID-19 in ESUSD. Thus, at this time we will not be closing schools but are monitoring daily and determine the need for school dismissal or closure as follows:**

- **School Dismissal** – School facilities are kept open for staff, while students stay home. Teachers would develop and deliver lessons to maintain continuity of learning.
- **School Closure** – School is closed, and all students and staff remain at home. Teachers would provide lessons for students.
- **Impact to The Learning Connection (TLC) Childcare Program** – If school dismissal or closure is ordered at a location where one of the programs is hosted, the District has been advised that TLC there would also be required to close.

Maintenance Practices

Our custodians have shifted their focus and prioritized the cleaning and sanitizing of commonly touched surfaces in our schools. Every night, our staff are cleaning and sanitizing, to the highest degree possible, frequently touched surfaces including desks, cabinet tops, water fountains, faucets and doorknobs. We recognize and thank our custodians for making this shift and helping keep our entire school community safe.

Contingency Plans: In Case of School Closures

The CDC recently shared that COVID-19 has been spreading in communities in the U.S., and that preparations for possible school closures that could last weeks or longer should begin now. We are working with County school and health officials to establish protocols for our schools in the event of a closure. I have every reason to believe that if a school closure is directed by the County Department of Public Health, that ESUSD will receive funding for these days. On March 6th, our principals and teachers worked collaboratively to prepare lessons and plans regarding alternative learning plans. Secondary students (Grades 6th-12th) will work mostly virtually. Elementary students will have assignments developed by teachers that they can do at home. Hopefully we will not have to utilize the contingency plans, but if we do, we will be ready.

Precautions and Recommended Practices

In closing, students and school staff should go about their daily lives, practice, and same precautions they normally take during cold and flu season. As with other respiratory illnesses, there are daily steps that everyone can do to reduce the risk of getting sick or infecting others with circulating viruses:

- Staff and students who are ill should remain home.
 - **Persons who have been ill should stay home and be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school. Please abide by this. It is critical in prevention.** I have witnessed first-hand how it makes others feel when there is a sick student or staff member on campus. Please follow this guideline!
 - In addition to being fever-free, the County has recently advised that students and staff be free of a "productive moist cough spewing respiratory droplets." Persons

who have such a cough should stay home and be cough-free before returning to school.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. 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 eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- If possible, limit close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue or sleeve (not your hands).
- Get a flu shot – it's not too late to be protected against influenza.

ESUSD will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as needed. I wish all our families, teachers, and staff good health. You can get the most accurate information on the DPH website [here](#). Thank you for your support of our school community.

Take care,

Melissa Moore, Ed.D.

Superintendent

El Segundo Unified School District