



Sumter County Board of Education

P. O. Box 10 • Livingston, AL 35470 • 205 652-9605 • FAX: 205/652-9641

Tommie Campbell, President
Julene Delaine, Vice-President
Daisy Bell Thomas-Quinney
Darla Spencer
Jeanette Brassfield Payne
Glen Harris, Jr.

MEMORANDUM

March 9, 2020

To: All Employees
FROM: Anthony L. Gardner Ed.D., Superintendent
RE: Coronavirus (COVID 19)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anthony L. Gardner", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

As we all know, our primary responsibility is to provide the best educational resources to the students we serve. However, the safety and well-being of our students and employees are of the utmost importance to our School board and Superintendent. This administration is closely monitoring the guidance of the ALSDE and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) to understand as best possible the COVID-19 threat and what actions we as a school system should take for prevention.

The purpose of this important notification is to make you aware of the guidance we have received, how you can assist in these efforts, and also specific actions we will take. During our regularly scheduled Board meeting the Board was provided a copy of this communication and are in full support of me as Superintendent to fully enforce the guidance from the Alabama Department of Public Health for all students and employees. That guidance includes the requirement that any student or employee who travels to a country or area with active community transmission of COVID-19 will not be allowed in our schools for a period of 14 days upon their return. We all need to communicate well with our students, parents and administrators to make them aware of any person who this might affect.

For students who may have to remain out of school for this 14-day period (calendar days, not school days), the absences will be coded as “excused” and we will work with the family in every reasonable way possible to assist the student in make-up work and the maintaining of academic pace. State School Nurse Jennifer Ventress (jventress@alsde.edu or 334-694-4717) is the chief point of contact for the ALSDE. If you have specific questions, please feel free to reach out to her directly.

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If you become aware of a confirmed case in your schools — whether adult or child — please contact Jennifer Ventress immediately. Of course, the health departments will be collecting this information, but it is important that we open lines of communication if a positive test is confirmed in a school community. According to healthcare experts, we understand that COVID-19 appears to be mild, absent other health issues, in the large majority of children who have been infected. However, they may be carriers of the virus and could infect others.

For employees who may have to remain out of school for this 14-day period (calendar days, not school days), you need to be aware that our leave policies will be fully enforced. An employee must have the earned vacation days, personal leave, or sick leave days to use for this 14-day period. In the event the employee does not have these days, then they will be placed on ‘unpaid leave’ status. It is important to note that an employee on unpaid leave has their pay docked **at their daily rate of pay** (to calculate your daily rate of pay, divide your annual salary by the number of contract days; nine-month employees are on a 187-day contract, 10-month employees 202 days, 11 month 222 days, and 12-month employees are on a 240-day contract).

Furthermore, we have prepared parent information letter to be placed on all school websites and that all schools must be distributing and making known to parents. Your attention to this information is essential. Also, this is not a time for panic. It is a time for education and prevention.

Thanks for all you do and your attention to this important notification.



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PARENT INFORMATION FOR DISTRIBUTION AND ON SCHOOL WEBSITES

SCBOE Families, Faculty, and Staff,

We want to let you know about our efforts to monitor coronavirus disease 2019, also known as COVID-19. The 2019 novel (or new) coronavirus causes a potentially severe respiratory illness. It was recently identified in China and is now being detected worldwide. Currently, there are no known cases in Alabama. We are coordinating with the Alabama Department of Public Health, local healthcare authorities, and the State Department of Education to be prepared with the most up-to-date information and guidance involving the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) have guidelines in place for anyone who has traveled internationally to certain affected geographic areas. Find more resources about 2019 coronavirus through the Alabama Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control. The CDC also provides specific information for travelers. This information includes a list of areas with sustained transmission of the virus and/or travel restrictions to the United States.

ADPH Coronavirus 2019 Information:

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/2019-coronavirus.html>

CDC Coronavirus 2019 Information: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

[ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) CDC Information for Travel:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

According to CDC guidance, those returning from China or areas with active community transmission of 2019 coronavirus will have at least some restrictions on their interactions for 14 days after leaving the affected areas. According to ADPH, any students or staff in this group must remain out of school for the duration of this period. On March 10, the Sumter County Board of Education authorized the Superintendent to follow all guidelines and exercise guidance from ADPH regarding 2019 coronavirus. This includes any amendments to the guidance moving forward. Parents/guardians, faculty, and staff should notify your school's principal of any upcoming out-of-country travel plans.

In our schools, everyday health practices remain important. We encourage our students and staff to:

- stay home when sick and until you are fever-free for at least 24 hours after the last administration of fever-reducing medicine.
- practice frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds at a time.
- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve.
- avoid touching your face, mouth, nose, and eyes.
- avoid being around those who are sick.

Although it will not prevent coronavirus, a flu shot is still recommended for those who have not had one this flu season. Ample cleaning supplies are in our schools and our custodians disinfect high-contact surfaces.

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In the coming days, Nurse Carolyn Gosa , SCBOE Director of Student Health Services will be coordinating a meeting among local healthcare and district administrators, to discuss monitoring and prevention of 2019 novel coronavirus.

Families can stay up to date on 2019 novel coronavirus and recommended actions through the Centers for Disease Control and Alabama Department of Public Health. If new information results in how our schools respond to 2019 novel coronavirus, SCBOE will communicate this information to you.