

New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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3/5/2020

Dear NMSBVI Families and Staff,

NMSBVI is aware of the current issues around COVID-19 (coronavirus). Here at NMSBVI, we take our students' health very seriously. It is important to note that there are no known cases of COVID-19 in New Mexico. However, NMSBVI is in contact with the NM Department of Health (NMDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding this virus. One of the tricky things about this virus is that individuals carrying this virus can have symptoms that vary- anywhere from mild cold-like symptoms to more serious symptoms. The purpose of this letter is to let you know the steps that NMSBVI is taking in order to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. Right now, the recommendations regarding this virus include many of the same precautions recommended for preventing the spread of the influenza (flu) virus.

Keeping Current:

NMSBVI is receiving regular updates from the NMDOH and the CDC regarding this virus and we will take all recommended steps. More information regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf> as well as at <https://nmhealth.org>.

For more information on influenza, please visit this CDC site: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm>

Daily Disinfection Practices:

Here at NMSBVI, we take our students' health very seriously. Here are our daily practices:

- ❖ We have established procedures for cleaning and sanitizing the schools on a daily basis, including frequently used surfaces such as desktops, doorknobs, counter tops, and light switches.
- ❖ Classrooms are equipped with sanitizing products for immediate cleaning throughout the day.
- ❖ Hand sanitizer is available throughout the school. It is vital that all staff and students wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ❖ All NMSBVI vehicles will be wiped down with sanitizer daily.
- ❖ Conference rooms will be sanitized daily.
- ❖ Students will be reminded by staff and our Health Services Coordinator of the preventive measures listed in this letter. Posters and information in Braille will be posted and distributed.

Reducing the Risk:

Things we can all do to reduce the risk of illness from a variety of pathogens (germs):

- ❖ Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- ❖ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- ❖ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

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If you are sick, you can avoid spreading illnesses to others:

- ❖ Stay home when you are sick.
- ❖ Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- ❖ Clean and disinfect frequently touched items or surfaces.
- ❖ If you are prescribed antibiotics, stay home until you have been on medication for at least 24 hours.
- ❖ Please see your healthcare provider if you have fever, cough, shortness of breath, and/or body aches. Sometimes there may also be headache, vomiting and diarrhea. Sore throat is common with the flu.

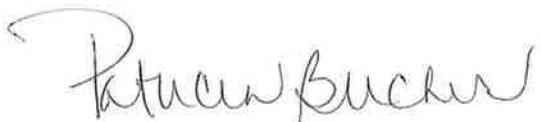
If your child is sick:

- ❖ Any child with a fever over 100°F, a persistent cough, unusual rash and/ or vomiting and diarrhea should stay home.
- ❖ Any child with a fever over 100°F, a persistent cough, unusual rash and/ or vomiting and diarrhea who has come to school will be sent home. He/she will remain in Health Services until transported home.
- ❖ Any child with a fever must be free of fever without the use of fever reducing medications for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

We are fortunate to have nurses at both of our sites who are knowledgeable and interested in keeping our students healthy and safe. Please feel free to contact the NMSBVI nursing staff with any questions that you might have.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this and observe these precautions.

Sincerely,



Patricia Beecher
Superintendent