

March 3, 2020

Dear Bellevue School District Learning Community,

The wellbeing of Bellevue School District students and staff is our top priority. Our district leadership team is in frequent contact with Public Health – Seattle & King County and we are actively monitoring the situation related to COVID-19 (coronavirus). This situation is evolving, and we rely on the guidance and information provided to us by our county and state public health offices.

This update is provided to you with more information on further steps we are taking to ensure our students and staff continue to be in safe learning environments.

Cleaning for health is a top priority and we have modified how we are cleaning and sanitizing our schools and buildings. We are using three disinfectants that are rated as virucides and approved for school environments. This is to ensure that all surfaces are sanitized at each cleaning.

### **What cleaning is happening?**

We increased the frequency of cleaning in areas that are touched often, including:

- Main office and reception area
- Nursing station
- Entryway door handles
- Classroom door handles
- Classroom counters and desktops
- Classroom sinks
- Cafeteria table surfaces
- School buses
- Other building touchpoints

Cleaning agents used by staff are known to be effective in killing viruses such as COVID-19.

### **Who should self-quarantine?**

To support our school community, we are sharing the guidance from Public Health – Seattle & King County regarding who should self-quarantine and who should seek testing for COVID-19 (coronavirus). ***In the case where a concern has been raised within a school community or district department, we are following the guidelines listed below.***

Self-quarantine means staying at home and away from others and self-monitoring for symptoms, including doing daily temperature checks. Individuals in the following categories should self-quarantine for 14 days:

- Recent travelers to [countries with widespread or ongoing community spread](#).
- Close contacts (e.g. close family members, members of the same household) of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

## **Who should be tested for COVID-19?**

Current Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) guidance recommends testing for the following people:

- Ill with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing **AND** have recently travelled (in the past 14 days) to [countries with widespread or ongoing community spread](#).
- Ill with a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing **AND** have been identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case or had recent close contact with someone who is being evaluated for COVID-19 infection.

If someone meets the criteria above, they should contact their healthcare provider by phone and call the Public Health Communicable Disease team at (206) 296-4774. Public Health is not currently recommending widespread testing for members of the general public. We anticipate testing guidance to change in the near term as more testing becomes available at commercial laboratories.

**In addition, there have been some questions about a communication that was sent out today to the Somerset Elementary families. The message included the following information:**

- A Somerset teacher sent an email yesterday to some fifth-grade families regarding her decision to stay home for two weeks, even though no one in the teacher's family has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (coronavirus) and no one in the family is displaying any symptoms of the virus.
- The teacher learned that there are confirmed cases at the Life Care Center in Kirkland where a relative of the teacher is receiving care. However, the teacher did not visit the Life Care Center.
- Neither the relative nor any other family members are displaying any symptoms of the virus.
- Somerset remains open. While attendance is very important, we understand that some parents may consider keeping children home from school. If parents choose to keep children, home, we ask that they contact the school to excuse the absence.

## **Stay Connected**

This guidance may change as this situation evolves, so please know we are committed to providing you with timely updates and guidance aligned with the best recommendations and guidance from our public health authorities. We will update our website on a daily basis.

- All updates from the Bellevue School District on COVID-19 can be found here: <https://bsd405.org/coronavirus>.
- Guidance for schools from the Washington State Department of Health can be found here: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus/Schools>