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Dear GCPS Families:

As we are currently in the middle of the cold and flu season, there is much concern regarding **COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus**. The coronavirus is spread like the flu, through person-to-person contact, or contaminated surfaces. Infection may also be spread through respiratory droplets when the infected coughs, sneezes or talks. Gloucester County Public Schools are taking precautions to be prepared and limit the risk of exposure. We will continue to monitor the situation daily through the guidance of the Virginia Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention along with the Virginia Department of Education. As of today, there are no confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the state of Virginia. The CDC reports the general public's risk of coronavirus exposure to be low. At this time, prevention is our best method. The custodial staff at each building is working continuously to keep our schools clean with extra attention on commonly touched surfaces. The school nurses are diligently educating on the importance of hand hygiene. They are also looking for trends of illness within the schools. Following the sick day guidelines below can help prevent the spread of infection. They can also be found on the GCPS website under the department of safety and health.

Please stay home if you

- Have a temperature greater than 100.4
- Are vomiting or have diarrhea
- Have been on antibiotics or antivirals for less than 24 hours
- Students should not return to school until they are free of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours without the use of medicine like Motrin (ibuprofen) or Tylenol (acetaminophen).
- Students should not be treated with medication for active flu symptoms and sent to school. This will only mask the illness and not prevent the spread of infection.

Ways to prevent getting sick

- Get a flu shot
- Wash your hands. Use warm water and soap, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer when water and soap are not available.
- Hand washing should be done before every meal, after using the restroom, coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose and any time the hands are visibly dirty.
- Cough or sneeze inside a tissue, then wash your hands.
If a tissue is not available use the inside of your elbow, this will prevent the germs from spreading through hand-to-hand contact
- Avoid sharing drinks
- Eat a well-balanced diet with fruits and vegetables.
- Get plenty of rest
- Wash book bags, lunch boxes and jackets often.
- After your student is feeling better, wash bedding and use a new toothbrush.
- Wipe down frequently used surfaces like light switches, doorknobs, railings, and T.V. remotes.

Coronavirus Disease Resources

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Thank you for supporting our efforts as we aim to keep the students, staff and schools healthy. We will continue to monitor the situation and communicate any changes.