

March 11, 2020

Dear A.L. Horton Elementary school families,

Today, EIPS was informed that an individual, who is a parent of two students from our school, was diagnosed with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) following a trip outside of Canada. The spouse of the person diagnosed, along with their children, have not tested positive but are currently in self-isolation. The children, however, attended school earlier this week.

While we understand this news will be of concern to everyone, the risk to the general school community remains low. The novel coronavirus is spread between people by droplets, which requires close contact with saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose or throat of an infected person. As such, individuals not in direct contact with the affected person are at low risk.

With this information, and out of an abundance of caution, we are taking the following steps:

- Deploying custodial staff to do a deep clean in the school
- Shutting down the communal water fountains and supplying bottled water for staff and students
- Postponing the community use of our facilities
- Promptly separating any staff or students who show flu like symptoms and keeping them isolated until they can go home
- Following any additional recommendations or directives provided by Alberta Health Services

As always, Health Canada reminds us that the best way to protect yourself is to wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, and to cover your mouth and nose with your arm when you cough or sneeze and to wash your hands as soon as possible afterwards. To help students comply with this advice, we will reinforce these recommendations on our daily morning announcements and in classrooms and will ensure ample supplies of soap and hand sanitizer are available for staff and students. Although bottled water will be provided, students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles for personal use.

Alberta Health Services has a [webpage](#) with important information and answers to frequently asked questions regarding COVID-19. Symptoms for COVID-19 are similar to those for influenza or other respiratory illnesses. They can range from mild to severe and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

The majority of cases have reported mild symptoms. Older adults and people with medical conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and lung disease are more likely to become seriously ill. If you or members of your family are experiencing any of the above symptoms, please call the Health Link at 811 before going to a healthcare facility unless you are severely ill. If your children are not feeling well, please don't send them to school.

If we receive any additional information, we will be in contact with parents and staff. Thank you for your patience as we work through this together as a community and in close collaboration with our local Health Authorities.

Sincerely,

Mark Liguori, Superintendent