



January 27, 2020

To all UGDSB parents/guardians,

Re: Wuhan novel coronavirus

As you may be aware, the [Ontario Ministry of Health has stated](#) that there are two “presumptive confirmed” cases of Wuhan novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Ontario as of today. At this time, health authorities say that the risk of spread to Ontarians is considered low.

Human coronaviruses are common throughout the world and can cause mild, moderate or severe respiratory illness in some people. Symptoms of the Wuhan novel coronavirus have included fever, cough and difficulty breathing, and studies are underway to try and understand this virus better. Health authorities continue to monitor this situation closely along with provincial and federal public health colleagues, and plans are in place to respond as this situation changes.

The Wuhan novel coronavirus has been identified at the same time as influenza and many other respiratory viruses are circulating, which is common at this time of the year. As a reminder, influenza, also known as the flu, can spread to others before symptoms even appear. Typical flu symptoms include sudden onset of high fever, chills, sore throat, cough and muscle aches. Other common symptoms include headache, loss of appetite and feeling tired. Recovering from the flu usually takes a week to 10 days, but for some people it can worsen pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma or heart disease.

Health authorities continue to advise members of the public, including school communities, to take the usual measures to reduce the risk of transmission of the flu and respiratory illness. These measures include:

- Get a yearly influenza vaccination, available from clinics and pharmacies (for flu only)
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm
- Parents/guardians should keep their child home if they are ill

Residents who return from recent international travel **and** become ill with respiratory signs and symptoms such as cough and fever are reminded to report their travel history to their family doctor or emergency department staff.

The Ontario Minister of Health has made this new disease reportable to public health so that if potential cases are identified in Ontario, they will be promptly reported to the Medical Officer of Health. Information has been provided to hospitals to increase their screening processes for individuals who

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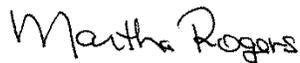
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present with signs and symptoms of this new disease, and have travelled to Wuhan, China. This will help ensure cases are identified promptly and actions taken to prevent its spread.

We will continue to share information promptly as we receive updates from the health authorities. For additional information, please visit www.ontario.ca/coronavirus. If you have questions, please contact Public Health at <https://wdgpublichealth.ca/content/contact-us>.

Sincerely,



Martha Rogers,
Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer

Upper Grand District School Board

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