

March 13, 2020

Information for Aspen View Public Schools families regarding COVID-19

Aspen View Public Schools understands that our students, staff, and families may have questions about COVID-19 (coronavirus). We encourage you to refer to [Alberta Health Services](#) for the latest information.

Aspen View Public Schools is implementing measures for the prevention and control of respiratory viruses following the announcement of presumptive and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Alberta.

What we are doing:

Aspen View Public Schools is reviewing procedures, safety practices, communication strategies and training as we continue to receive updates from Alberta Health Services.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Custodial time has been increased at each school to support additional cleaning and disinfecting.
- Cleaning supplies have been purchased in bulk to support the additional cleaning protocols.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in high traffic areas of our schools to support additional hand cleanliness.
- Additional hand washing signage has been placed throughout our schools.
- Students are being reminded regularly of the importance of regular hand washing and personal hygiene.
- Bus drivers and contractors have committed to increased bus sanitization.

Field Trips & Gatherings

All planned trips to international and out-of-province destinations have been canceled.

With information from Alberta Health Services, and the Public Health Agency of Canada, Aspen View Public Schools will eliminate any school events that may involve more than 250 people in one space. Other activities occurring across the division may be adjusted, rescheduled, or restricted.

How you can help:

Students/Staff who have recently travelled

In the last few days, our schools are receiving more questions from parents about travel and safety. Please refer to [Alberta Health Services](#) for updated advisories and advice.

Prevention

There are two important ways to prevent and control respiratory viruses in school settings:

The first is the consistent practice of good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. Good respiratory etiquette includes covering the mouth and nose during coughing or sneezing with a tissue or a flexed elbow and disposing of used tissues in a plastic-lined waste container, followed by hand hygiene. Hand hygiene is the washing of hands with plain soap and water, which is effective at removing visible soil as well as viruses.

Children in the school setting should clean their hands:

- Before leaving home and on arrival at school.
- After using the bathroom.
- After breaks and sporting activities.
- Before food preparation.
- Before eating any food, including snacks.
- Before leaving school.

If you have a younger child, support them at home by supervising and assisting in hand hygiene. In schools, instruction will be provided by staff. We are enhancing our communication to students about hand-washing, sneeze/cough etiquette, and preventing illness – including new signage and supplies at each site across the school division.

The second way to prevent and control respiratory viruses in school settings is for students and staff who are ill with respiratory illness symptoms (fever, cough, fatigue, and/or muscle aches) to stay home from school. If your child is not feeling well, we ask that you keep them home so that they can rest and recover. As always, remember to inform the school of the absence.

Food Sharing

Students should not be sharing food, utensils, dishes, and water bottles or drink containers. Although this practice is important for preventing exposures to allergens, it is equally important in reducing virus transmission between children.

Psychological Considerations

A new virus such as the COVID-19 can create anxiety and be difficult for students/children to understand, especially if someone they know is sick, or they see or hear troubling messages on the radio, internet or television. It is normal for children to feel worried and nervous and have questions.

Support your children by reassuring them about their personal safety and health:

- Limit their access to news and online stories about the issue.
- Maintain a normal routine unless otherwise advised by an authority.
- Encourage them to talk to you about their concerns.



- Reassure them they are safe.
- Advise them of steps they can take to stay healthy:
- Remind them to wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (sing the ABC's to measure time), especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Teach them to cough and sneeze into arm or tissue.
- Allow them to stay home if they are not feeling well.
- Encourage them to keep hands away from face and mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating healthy foods, keeping physically active, and getting enough sleep.

Health Information

Contact 8-1-1 ([Health Link](#)) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation.

This is an evolving situation requiring a rapid response. We will be sharing information with our school communities as it becomes available. We thank you for your patience as we work together to ensure that our schools remain safe, caring, and welcoming learning environments.