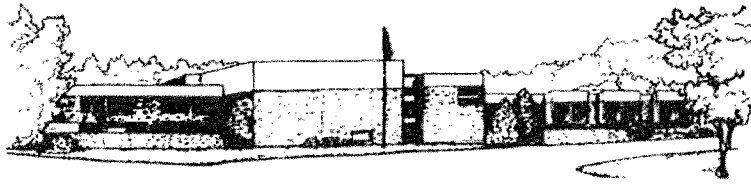


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## AuSable Valley Central School District

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March 6, 2020

Dear AVCS families,

By now I am sure that you've had some opportunity to learn about the COVID-19 (commonly known as "the coronavirus") outbreak through one of the many available media outlets. This situation is rapidly evolving and new information is arriving each day. The intent of this letter is to provide parents with general information about the coronavirus, with some specific details about the District's actions to limit the spread of viruses.

### Brief summary

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals. The particular virus which is currently receiving media attention is a novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. This particular coronavirus can feature symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. While the outbreak is believed to have an animal source, most cases are now likely to be spread from person to person by droplets when coughing or sneezing.

### Prevention

As with other respiratory viruses, there are simple steps which can help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- \*Frequent hand-washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- \*Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- \*Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- \*Stay home when you are sick
- \*Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then discard it in the trash
- \*Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects/surfaces

### Response

At AuSable Valley, we are fortunate to have custodial workers who already utilize strong practices for preventing the spread of viruses. Strategies which have proven useful during past virus outbreaks (SARS, H1N1) remain in-place, and include the regular disinfection of surfaces such as desktops, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, locker handles, faucet handles, etc.. Our district utilizes a wide variety of appropriately-listed products and devices to accomplish our cleaning and disinfecting goals. These practices have been successful in minimizing the spread of influenza and other viruses, and an aggressive approach to surface disinfection will continue.

Further, beyond the quality academic instruction which they deliver, our faculty and staff also work with students on matters of personal and community hygiene. Students should expect frequent reminders about washing their hands, respectfully coughing/sneezing, etc.

Ultimately, no one knows how extensive this outbreak will be, or if/how our region will be affected. In general, virus responses are directed by the NYS and/or Clinton County Departments of Health, but we may also receive direction from the State Education Department, the CDC, the Governor, or other levels of higher office. We will continue to

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monitor this matter closely, and will react as appropriate. At this point, there are no changes in our district-wide attendance policy. Excused student absences need to be supported by a doctor's note. Naturally, discussions about the use of technology, and about the impact of this virus on co-curricular activities, on traditional education, on transportation, etc. have begun, and any decisions will be made in consultation with local and state health officials.

### **Planning and Communication**

As of today, several school buildings in and around New York City -- where cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed - have closed for several days, to allow for thorough cleaning and disinfection. This strategy is just one of many that we are actively preparing for, in the event that cases are confirmed in our area. Should closure be required, the District will clearly communicate the impacts and expectations resulting from a short or long-term cancellation of school activities. Changes could also be possible for any event with a large gathering of people; these alterations will also be communicated as soon as possible.

Finally, the District will establish a web page [<http://www.avcs.org/coronavirus>] that will include the most up-to-date information for our students, staff, families and community members. Please feel free to check this page often for new information, as it becomes available to us.

For now, our best advice is to practice responsible prevention to the spread of this virus, to keep students who are ill home from school, and to consult your primary medical caregiver if any of the symptoms associated with the COVID-19 virus present. Together, we will successfully navigate this matter, as we have done with pandemics of years past. More information will be shared with parents as this situation evolves, and we look forward to your partnership as we all manage this fluid situation.

Respectfully,



Paul D. Savage II  
Superintendent of Schools