

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The recent news regarding COVID-19, or what's being called the coronavirus, has understandably caused worry. Please be assured that PCPS is working closely with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) in monitoring the status of the virus and current guidance from the VDH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Here are some answers to frequently asked questions.

What is the coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a type of virus that were first identified in the 1960s. The most recently discovered coronavirus that we are hearing so much about is a new or novel coronavirus, officially called COVID-19. While its origins have been traced to a live animal market in China, the virus is now spreading from human to human globally.

For more details on COVID-19, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/).

I have a child in school. Should I be concerned?

According to the CDC, "For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low."

What is PCPS doing to address the coronavirus? PCPS is working with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) in monitoring the status and current guidance from the VDH and CDC related to COVID-19. We are proactively reviewing and adjusting our plans that will be implemented if the virus impacts our community. We have also issued prevention reminders to school administrators and custodial staff on what they can do to help ensure a healthy school environment, particularly since this is still flu season. For example, PCPS custodial staff is following recommendations and guidelines as established by the CDC.

What can I do to help prevent the spread of illness?

Our school nurses and staff work with students to promote good hygiene and to keep everyone healthy and safe. We also work with our custodial providers to ensure our schools receive thorough cleaning every day. Parents are asked for help in reinforcing healthy practices at home with children. As a best practice for overall

health in cold and influenza season, the VDH recommends that individuals get the influenza vaccination. Below are reminders to stay healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Take flu antivirals if prescribed by your health care provider if you have the flu.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Will PCPS close schools?

There are no plans to close schools at this time. The decision to close a school will be made jointly by the school division and the Virginia Department of Health, should that become necessary.

Where can I get updates?

The [CDC](#) and [VDH](#) are updating their information regularly.

School-related information is available

at <https://www.poquoson.k12.va.us/Page/12097> and will be updated as needed.

What if I have additional concerns?

Medical questions may be directed to the VDH Hotline: 877-275-8343 (877-ASK-VDH3).

School-related questions may be directed to your child's school nurse.